

*The
Albatross
Voyage*

THE ALBATROSS VOYAGE
A study on the effect of the Internet on Expedition
Communication

An exegesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Declaration

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the exegesis and durable record is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; and, any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged.

Nicholas Vere Grainger

10 March 2006

Dedication

To my wife, Tomoko Yata, whose inspiration and support made it all possible and to expeditioners everywhere who struggle to construct and communicate meaning from their experience.

Acknowledgements

I would like to give particular thanks to John and Marie Christine Ridgway of Ardmore, NW Scotland, for their invitation to participate in the John Ridgway Save the Albatross Voyage 2003-4, and for their un-reserved support for this research project.

In addition I would like to thank my academic supervisor, Professor Gregory Heath for his enthusiasm, insight, stimulation and guidance throughout the life of this Project.

I would also like to thank RMIT University for the granting of a Scholarship that assisted me to travel to Scotland to join the yacht and to subsequently return to Australia following the circumnavigation.

Finally I wish to acknowledge the contribution of my daughters Erica and Mariko, without whose understanding and encouragement I might not have embarked on the year-long voyage or completed this research study.

Nick Grainger
Melbourne
10 March 2006

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Abstract

Since the advent of the Internet expeditioners travelling alone or in small groups to remote locations have been using email and websites to communicate with sponsors, supporters, friends and family. This brings new communication opportunities to expeditioners and at the same time may be changing the expedition experience.

The author used the experience of participating in an 11-month sailing voyage around the world as a platform for this research by project. The purpose of the voyage was to raise awareness of the plight of the albatross. The author examined how the Internet shaped this expedition, the purpose of expedition communication and how meaning was constructed for a remote audience. Using a constructionist epistemology, a phenomenological approach is used in the development and analysis of a narrative account of the voyage, its preparation and aftermath.

The Exegesis contains a detailed account of one Leg of the Voyage, from Cape Town to Melbourne, with a particular focus on the online communications. A full account of the voyage, again with a particular emphasis on communications, is contained in the Durable Record.

The potential availability of Internet communication was found to have been intrinsic to the design of the expedition and enabled the Voyage to forgo traditional media sponsorship and yet still attract and engage a worldwide audience through an institutional community website. The lack of use of the Internet's capability to support online discussion and build communities on this Voyage and other expedition websites sampled, is explored and it is proposed to be an expression of these expeditioners' possible disinterest in feedback. The building of online communities around an expedition website is suggested to be an area of opportunity with the potential to engage site visitors, to enable new insights to be gained into the life of expeditioners, and to provide greater exposure for sponsors.

A simple classification of expeditions by their leadership, organisation, purpose and membership is proposed and the differing purposes of communication in each considered.

The use of email on the voyage was found to facilitate and improve contact with supporters, family and friends. Whilst adding a sense of security it was also found to be time consuming, stressful, power hungry and to build a sense of obligation to communicate. Its general reliability led to exchanges on non-critical matters and to a reduction in the feeling of remoteness that some expeditioners may be seeking.

Whilst on this voyage technical and budgetary constraints limited the full use of the Internet's capability to utilise text, images and sound to construct meaning, the effective and timely use of a short daily narrative, aimed at a known audience is demonstrated.

The author justifies drawing learning from his participation in the Voyage through the use of experiential learning and reflective learning theory arguing that the preparation for expeditions, participation in them and mediated reflection following them, are rich learning environments provided that good records are kept, particularly a frequently written personal journal.

Viewing the durable record

This Exegesis is supported by an extensive durable record of the Project.

This is located on a website at <http://www.dlsweb.rmit.edu.au/ngrainger>

Username: NGviewer

Password: viewer

Preferred system requirements

Platform	Windows 2000 Windows XP
Display Resolution	1152 x 864
Browser	Internet Explorer 6
Software	Adobe Acrobat Reader v7 Quicktime v7
Speakers	To listen to the interviews and sound on the videos.

The Albatross Voyage

**A study on the effect of the Internet on Expedition
Communication**

"Writing it down has helped me to see what has happened was meant to happen – it was our destiny..." (Ridgway 1992, p. 9).

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Thin snow, driven by a winter gale somewhere south of Iceland, settled on my sleeve. I was passing boxes of food and my bag down over steep icy rocks to John standing in an old army assault boat below. "I never thought I'd be back here, and certainly not in winter," I shouted over the wind. Home and summer in Melbourne were far away. Here in the north west of Scotland it was January, and the weather was forecast to worsen.

I was visiting John and Marie Christine Ridgway, an adventurous couple, who were planning to sail around the world. They wanted to stop the needless killing of albatrosses in the Southern Ocean by raising public awareness of pirate fishing with long lines. They needed another sailor and someone who knew the Internet. They'd invited me.

"I think you should go, you'll only be away a year," Tomoko looked me in the eye over her second glass of the best Sauvignon Blanc in the restaurant, "Why not use the research you'll have to do towards a PhD? And you'd better go and visit them, you haven't seen them for thirty years."

And so began a great adventure. One as intellectually demanding as physically rigorous.

Looking ahead I wondered just what it would be like to run a worldwide campaign on the web from a yacht deep in the Southern Ocean. Could we really help the albatross? And what would I learn about the use of the Internet on expeditions?

As our voyage plans became clearer, so too did my research thinking and in a curious way the twists and turns of the voyage were reflected in an academic journey every bit as tortuous.

This Exegesis and the accompanying Durable Record, is not a final statement about expedition communications and the Internet, but rather a beginning, for I see the subject of expedition communication expanding with, perhaps even encouraged by, the Internet. It will reveal much about the nature of the expeditioner and about how meaning may be communicated. Research may show how the Internet can free expeditioners but also imprison them in obligations, and how the Internet may enable non-expedition members to gain new insight into expeditions through a sense of virtual participation. This study starts to explore this area, but there is much still to be learnt.

In writing about this research I share my personal journey, through naturalistic inquiry, and the use of narrative to phenomenology, hermeneutics, learning from experience and reflection. In sailing terms each of them a small Cape Horn that I had to round to reach my present position.

But like our voyage, this exegesis follows a traditional route. I start by discussing and clarifying the question I plan to explore. I then give an overview of the voyage, which was the all-important basis for the research project. Following this, in the Literature Review I remind the reader of those who have gone before with discussion on communication, the Internet and expeditions.

Like the weather, methodology affected everything and in Chapter Five I explain my evolving thinking and learning. Truly a journey into new waters for me as I particularly explored the ideas of Lincoln and Guba (1985), Crotty (1998), Van Manen (1990), Jarvis (2003), Boud, (Boud, Cohen et al. 1993), Stake 1995, and Witherell and Noddings (1991).

Chapter 6 contains an illustrated account of one Leg of the Voyage, the 6,100 mile sail from Cape Town to Melbourne, a story of spring gales, more snow, email and a search for pirates. I include this in the hermeneutic phenomenological tradition as an account of my lived experience. Through it I seek to assist the reader to construct a sense of what it was like to be on the voyage and responsible for Internet communication. An account of the entire voyage together with short videos, interviews, photographs, and a great deal of supporting information about the voyage and about the communications, is contained in the accompanying Durable Record on a DVD.

28,000 miles and 11 months after the start of the voyage I was back in Australia, wondering how to make sense of all my memories and records, a process I describe in Chapter 7: Analysis.

In Chapter 8: Learning, I use a framework of six topics as the basis for discussion, these being the purpose of expedition communication, how the Internet shaped the voyage, how meaning may be constructed, ethical issues, my personal growth and some retrospective thoughts about the methodology.

Finally in Chapter 9: Conclusion, I summarise the key learning for me and discuss emerging questions.

"The Reporter today has no time to reflect."

(Trevor Fishlock in interview recorded aboard English Rose VI, 7th November 2003).

Chapter 2

THE RESEARCH QUESTION AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

50 years ago

Ed Hillary and Tensing Norkay reached the summit of Everest at 11.30am on the 29th May 1953, (Hillary 1955, p. 210) but it wasn't till late the next afternoon upon reaching the Western Cwm, that Times reporter James Morris, on Everest with the expedition, got the news and "...scuttled down the mountain that same evening, and by skulldug means sent my first report of the ascent off to London." (Morris 2003, p. 4) To ensure no-one scooped the news he sent it in code 'SNOW CONDITIONS BAD (=summit reached) ADVANCED BASE ABANDONED (=Hillary) AWAITING IMPROVEMENT (=Tensing) ALL WELL (=nobody hurt)'. It arrived in London late the next day, 1st June, and became widely known the day after, 2nd June, Coronation Day for Queen Elizabeth II. (Morris 2003, p. 5-6) It had taken three days to get there.

Today

All the way up, the expedition would have had detailed weather forecasts, near live satellite images of the weather approaching, and been reporting their progress step by step to a website and a worldwide audience. A brief phone call from the summit, plus probably a text account describing the ascent with accompanying photos and possibly a video interview. Sent directly to a website and available moments after the summit was reached.

The Research Question

There would be nothing unusual about the above today. But how does the availability and use of the technology influence the expedition experience? This Research by Project sets out to investigate how this change in communication affects people on an expedition, and to learn just what it is like to be on

an expedition and communicating via the Internet. In the process the research investigates the purpose of expedition communication, how the Internet may shape an expedition and how the Internet can be used to assist in the construction of meaning, in this case meaning about the voyage, sailing, conservation and personal identity.

This Research has been conducted through the form of a Project with all the attendant uncertainty and unpredictability of a live event. It is thus action research oriented in that as the project evolved so there was a continuous cycle of planning, action and review. The whole process being influenced by continuous reflection, the introduction of new ideas, and changing perceptions resulting from the ongoing experiences (Cherry 1999, Chpt. 1).

What is an expedition?

Whilst 'expedition' might be defined as any journey made for some specific purpose, as of war or exploration (Delbridge and Bernard 1998, p. 388), for the purposes of this study I decided to think of expeditions as those journeys which in addition extended over at least some weeks, often some months or even years, comprised an individual or small group of people (usually less than 20 and certainly no more than 50), and took the participants to remote parts of the world. Commonly the environment would be demanding, the travel means uncertain, resources limited and communication with mainstream society traditionally difficult.

Expedition Communication

The communication I was looking at was between members of the expedition and a home base, a sponsor or office, family or friends. Of course a hundred years ago there was little during the expedition itself. By 1931 expeditioners like Sir Hubert Wilkins were sending reports by radio to a newspaper every day (Nasht 2005, p. 229), but it is only with the Internet that expeditioners have been able to communicate directly and with a global audience via a website. And for such communication to be two way, either via a communal discussion board or individual email addresses.

Who is this relevant to?

The use of this facility has implications for expeditioners who may now need to think carefully about the sort of expedition experience they want, and how they want it reported; for potential sponsors who can not only promote their wares and support to a much wider audience, but may find failure occurring in a very public way; for supporters, friends and family members who may or may not want the closeness of communication the technology can offer; and for communications hardware, software and service providers who may construct their own learning from this research as they design new products for expeditioners, defined in its broadest sense.

What about the technology?

This study does not focus on the technical aspects of using the Internet, other than how this affected people and the expedition. I regarded the technology I was using as a passing thing, sure to be superseded before my research was even published. But nevertheless I had to become proficient in the use of it. A lot of effort to gain what would soon be redundant knowledge I thought.

If I had wanted to research the technology side I could probably have done this more effectively by staying at home, close to my broadband connection, and conducted a positivist type of study. I would have investigated technologies, performance, coverage, resource requirements, created a CHOICE review, such as a study of handheld computers (Baxter, Horrigan et al. 2002), of immediate relevance to expeditioners. It might have expanded to a resource guide on Internet technology for expeditioners, picking up where others have left off, such as *'Communications at Sea'* (Harris 2003), *'Using PCs on Board'* (Buttress and Thornton 2002), and *'Understanding Weatherfax.'* (Harris 2002) In this case the value of actually going on an expedition would only have extended to testing my recommendations in the field. Worthwhile, but a year away doing it would probably have been a bit excessive. Nevertheless the selection, set up, waterproofing and optimising of the technology was demanding and complex. It took an inordinate amount of time during the preparatory phase. The Durable Record contains full details of the communications technology used on the voyage.¹

The research platform

The research was based on the experience of going on a modern expedition. In this way I could experience the effect of the Internet myself. The expedition in this case was a voyage around the world in a sailing yacht with adventurers John and Marie Christine Ridgway on the 'John Ridgway Save the Albatross Voyage'.

Why go on an expedition?

Was it really necessary to have this 'lived experience' (van Manen 1990) to learn about the effect of the Internet on expedition communication? Could I have learnt as much from a non-lived experience? (Barnacle 2004, p. 57-67) For instance a study of other people's accounts of expeditions? Certainly research into this area could have been conducted without leaving shore, but would have had a very different character. I suspect I would not have gained many of the insights I discuss in Chapter 8: Learning, without actually being there and certainly some of the practical lessons, detailed in a paper prepared for the Royal Geographic Society, are difficult to imagine happening to anyone. But they did. Such is real life.

As a result this research is not a study of many expeditions, but of one. Through actually going on it, being away for a year, I was able to write a narrative about the experience, and the study evolved

into one having a strong phenomenological component. The resultant research broadened and explored unexpected areas such as reflective learning on and after an expedition.

Finally, actually going on the expedition surely led to more personal growth than might have been gained sitting at my desk at home for the year.

"We're sailing in the remotest oceans on earth in a plastic eggshell."
John Ridgway (often repeated on the voyage).

Chapter 3

VOYAGE OVERVIEW

Introduction

This Research Project, into the use and effect of the Internet on an expedition, was based on a high level of participation in the organizing and running of a yacht voyage around the world, known as 'The John Ridgway Save the Albatross Voyage.' The aim of the voyage was to stop the needless killing of albatrosses by illegal long line fishing through the raising of public awareness and the subsequent enactment and enforcement of legislation and consumer pressure.

The voyage provided the framework for this qualitative research project. Because it is so important, a general understanding of the story of the voyage may help the reader to place people, events and constructs in context, particularly as I have chosen to use narrative and a phenomenological method of inquiry. This Chapter therefore gives an overview of the voyage, its origins, the case of the albatross, how I became involved, the preparation, the voyage and the aftermath. A more detailed account of one Leg can be found in Chapter 6. An account of the whole voyage can be found in the Durable Record.¹



Figure 1. With a wingspan that can reach 3.5 metres, Albatrosses circle the globe.
DSCN0603.jpg

Background to key participants

The voyage was the initiative of John Ridgway, a prominent UK based adventurer and independent environmentalistⁱ who I had first met in the summer of 1971, when working as an Instructor at his Adventure School in NW Scotland. We got on well and I was greatly inspired by his adventurous approach to life.

I returned to work at the school in the summer of 1972. Subsequently, with support and advice from Ridgway, my wife and I fitted out a small engineless yacht and in 1973 sailed from Scotland across the Atlantic to the West Indies, then across the Caribbean and through the Panama Canal. Then across much of the Pacific. We eventually stopped in New Zealand (Grainger 1976).

Over the thirty years since then I kept in touch with Ridgway. In 2002 he told me about his concern for the albatross.

Ridgway claimed that during three substantial sailing voyages to the Southern Ocean and a number of other expeditions over the last thirty years, albatrosses had been his most constant and impressive companions.² Now approaching retirement, he was dismayed to hear of the danger they were in and decided to devote himself to their survival.

By the time we reach the albatross this autumn, I will have been in the Southern Seas in some part of each of the past six decades. For me the albatross symbolises the triumph of the human spirit. I'm going to help it.³

The case of the albatross

According to Birdlife International most albatrosses and a number of other seabird species are heading for extinction due to the longline fishing practices of unlicensed fishing boats.⁴

Albatrosses are being unintentionally drowned in large numbers by long line fishing boats. Long lining⁵ may be the single greatest threat to the world's seabirds. Much of it carried out by pirate (i.e. unlicensed) fishing boats.

Birdlife International's Save the Albatross Campaign is trying to stop the unnecessary killing of these birds by ensuring that relevant international agreements are implemented that will benefit both the birds and the legal fishing industry.

ⁱ For a brief background on John Ridgway see Appendix 3.1

The killing of large numbers of albatrosses is closely linked to illegal longline fishing for Patagonian Toothfish. There is much debate about the extent of fishing for Patagonian Toothfish that may be sustainable.⁶ Meanwhile unlicensed fishing boats continue to be active in the Southern Ocean, particularly around Prince Edward Islands, (South Africa); Crozet Islands and Kerguelen Islands, (France); and Heard and Macdonald Island, (Australia). Greenpeace has been an active protester on this issue and mounted voyages to the region in 1999 and 2000.⁷

Seabirds are killed during the open laying of long lines from a vessel. The birds dive on the bait, are snagged on the hook and then drowned as the hook is dragged down to the depth at which it is intended to set the longline. There are a number of simple measures that can be taken to avoid this.ⁱⁱ To gain a licence registered fishing boats are required to take these measures.

The breeding habits and lifespan of albatrosses in the Southern Ocean make it particularly vulnerable to losses in this way. Albatross chicks are fed and raised by both parents who have taken it in turns to incubate the egg and go on long foraging flights. The young bird will then spend a number of years encircling the world, rarely coming to land. At about twelve years old the bird will return to the remote island upon which it was born, and eventually mate with a partner with whom it will remain for the rest of its life. They will raise a single chick every other year. An albatross can live for up to sixty years. Obviously the loss of one partner anywhere in this process means no more chicks from the pair.

Research has been undertaken on the flight paths taken by albatrosses based in Hawaii⁸ and in South Georgia,⁹ showing the extraordinary distances these birds fly and navigate across the ocean.

The origin of the voyage and my involvement

Ridgway's initial idea was to publicise the issue by undertaking a solo voyage around the world in his 57' yacht English Rose VI, following the path of the albatross around the Southern Ocean. He refitted the Adventure School's yacht for such a voyage and completed an initial trial of the new rig by sailing from Scotland to Newfoundland and back in 1999 with a small crew. A solo voyage to Greenland from Scotland and back was planned for the summer of 2002.

Between 1972 and 2002 Ridgway and I had periodically corresponded. After a number of years in the sailing and adventure industry I had joined the corporate world but had continued to follow his

ⁱⁱ Measures to minimise the seabird by-catch include flying brightly coloured streamers ('torii) over the long lines as they are being laid, laying the lines at night when many birds don't feed, laying the lines through tubes underwater, ensuring the bait is unfrozen so it sinks more quickly, and not discharging offal at the same time as laying baited long lines.

adventures with interest and probably some envy. In 2002, whilst working on a Master's degree in Virtual Communication at RMIT in Melbourne, Australia, I had offered to upgrade the Ridgway's Adventure School website. Via email I learnt about his great concern for the survival of the albatross and his round the world sailing initiative to try to focus attention on the issue.

Using my newfound knowledge I suggested many ways he might use the Internet to stimulate worldwide discussion from the yacht. Despite little understanding of the technology, Ridgway was enthusiastic. But the solo trial voyage to Greenland was not a success. Prematurely returning to Scotland he said in an email on 22 November 2002:

The solo summer trials impressed on me that this particular 64 year old man and his 27 year old boat would not make it around the world without stopping.¹⁰

Instead, Ridgway now proposed sailing with his wife Marie Christine and a small crew, comprising no more than four, (a total of six persons in all), departing in August 2003. Explaining his new plan to me in a lengthy email he concluded with, "I think you'd better come with us Nick".¹¹

Receiving such an invitation is exciting to the adventurous, but the implications of accepting, such as being away for twelve months without any income, are just too complicated for many to accept. In my case it was curiously well timed. Twelve months before I had left my corporate career to complete an MA in Virtual Communication. With this now behind me I was assembling a portfolio of consulting and teaching work.

At the same time my family commitments were diminishing as my daughters moved into young adulthood and we had no debt.

Knowing my sailing background and desire for adventure, my independent self-employed wife took the long-term view and encouraged me to take the opportunity.



Figure 2. My first sight of English Rose VI, January 2003. NW Scotland.
PIC00021.jpg

I eventually agreed to participate in the whole voyage, providing back up to John on the sailing and taking responsibility for all online communications, still and video photography. There would be no pay, but the Ridgways

would provide free board and accommodation for the entire period aboard the yacht. I would be responsible for all other travel and personal equipment.

Preparation

November 2002 to July 2003 was devoted to preparation. I started by visiting the Ridgways in Scotland for three weeks, to check we really could get on well enough, after not meeting for 30 years, to live together for 12 months in the confines of a yacht. We used the time to discuss every aspect of the voyage.¹²

Voyage and Research Timetable		
From	To	Activity
November 2002	December 2002	Preparation
January 2003	January 2003	Preliminary visit to Scotland
February 2003	July 2003	Preparation
July 2003	June 2004	Circumnavigation: Scotland – Cape Town – Melbourne – Falklands – Azores – London - Scotland
July 2004	June 2005	Assembling & Collating data and writing voyage account
July 2005	January 2006	Analysis & writing Exegesis and creating Durable Record

Figure 3. Voyage and research timetable

Subsequently by email and on the phone we advanced the planning and preparation. We confirmed the support of Birdlife International and Richard Creasey, then a Director of h2g2, a rapidly growing BBC community website and decided to use this as the online base for the voyage and campaign rather than building our own website from scratch. A far reaching decision I discuss in Chapter 5.

Funding and Yacht Preparation

Whilst seeking sponsorship might seem an obvious course, Ridgway was against it. His past experience had clearly left him cynical. "You end up selling your soul for the trade price on a jacket",¹³ he claimed. Already having the yacht, sufficient personal funds to cover its maintenance and living costs for himself and crew, and a worldwide media platform via h2g2, he decided no sponsor was needed and instead the project would be totally independent. He saw this as an important aspect of the project. "We are small, mobile, flexible and independent. We want to exploit these strengths."¹⁴ At the same time Ridgway was prepared to accept limited support from a number of suppliers as is outlined in the website page detailing with the preparation of the yacht.¹⁵

The Albatross Campaign

In essence the plan was to follow the path of an atypical albatross flying around the world in the Southern Ocean, sharing the experience with a worldwide audience via daily Logs posted to the h2g2 website. We would pass through popular Patagonian Toothfish fishing grounds, where we hoped our innocent looking yacht might enable us to sight and even close with a pirate fishing vessel. We thought pictures and a live description of the killing of albatrosses at sea would demand attention. In conjunction with Birdlife International and its partner organisations around the world, we hoped to stimulate worldwide debate in the forum on h2g2 leading to consumer focused strategies and pressuring governments to sign the international Agreement for the Protection of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP).¹⁶ Whilst Australia had already signed and ratified the agreement, Britain was dragging its heels.

In addition it was planned to shoot video for two documentaries to be made as part of the Earth Report series by the Television Trust for the Environment (TVE). Shortly before we left video equipment was installed on the yacht to enable this.

BBC h2g2 Website

To make the most of the free h2g2 website, I built a suite of pages all about the voyage.¹⁷ These incorporated a number of discussion forums. Discussion about what web site visitors could actually do to help led to the setting up of an online Petition by New Zealand Forest and Bird Society staff member Carol Knutson.¹⁸ Carol subsequently sailed with us from Melbourne to Wellington. The Petition became a great success and was eventually signed by more than 105,000 people from 131 countries. During our stopover in London near the conclusion of the voyage John and Marie Christine, accompanied by an RSPBⁱⁱⁱ staffer, presented it to a meeting of the UN Food and Agriculture Committee in Rome, to some acclaim.

Crew

To encourage support from the Bird organisations Ridgway invited them to nominate a volunteer birder crewmember for the Leg ending in their home country. It was hoped they would help to arrange publicity for the yacht and campaign during a subsequent brief stopover. Sailing experience was not a pre-requisite. A number of such crew positions were subsequently offered but only three came to fruition and disappointingly only one volunteer who sailed with us actually arranged promotional activities in their homeport.

ⁱⁱⁱ RSPB, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

In addition to the Birdlife crewmember Ridgway wanted a media person for the Southern Ocean legs. In particular British, Japanese and Spanish reporters were sought however in the event only a British journalist, Trevor Fishlock, an old friend of the Ridgway's, accepted. He sailed from Cape Town to Melbourne with us.

Whilst John, Marie Christine and I believed that if necessary we could sail the yacht around the world by ourselves, we thought it would be safer and easier if we had a fourth experienced sailor aboard. A Canadian yachtsman accepted the role having been nominated by an ex-JRAS^{iv} Instructor now living in Canada. However he withdrew a week before we sailed following growing conflict with the Ridgways. Other possible crew members were considered, one of whom sailed with us to Tenerife, and another from Tenerife to Cape Town. The former decided the sea was not for him, and the latter was judged by Ridgway to not be a good enough fit for the Southern Ocean.¹⁹

In Cape Town a long time friend of the Ridgway's, Igor Asheshov, from Peru, joined the crew, and whilst having little sailing experience, or it turned out aptitude, was an excellent voyaging companion at sea. Unfortunately less so in port. He had an interest in video and thankfully took over this responsibility. He stayed with the yacht for the rest of the voyage back to Scotland, playing a significant role.

Internet Communication Technology

Prior to departure I spent many months investigating options and planning how we would communicate via the Internet. Hoped for financial support for this from the media did not transpire and we progressively wound back our plans. By the time we sailed we were limited to very slow connections, albeit having three possible channels to the Internet.^v This limited us to sending and receiving email, and to voice communication via an expensive satellite phone. Three possible channels, each with its own technology and email address gave most valuable flexibility but introduced unexpected complexity. A laptop computer and peripheral equipment I planned was assembled by an IBM engineer in Greenock, Scotland and delivered to the Ridgway's on the Scottish west coast shortly before I arrived. Waterproof enclosures for the computer equipment and a remote screen were designed and built in aluminium by an engineer friend, Neville Roberts, living near Bendigo. Neville travelled to Scotland with me and assisted with installation and testing, just days before we left.

^{iv} JRAS, John Ridgway School of Adventure

^v We were able to send and receive email via a satellite phone, via an HF radio and via Inmarsat C, a specialist marine satellite communications system.

I was able to send and receive email by one or other of the above systems throughout the voyage however many unexpected difficulties and tensions arose, as is explained.

The Voyage

We departed NW Scotland on 27 July 2003, briefly stopped in Tenerife, before sailing on to Cape Town, arriving on 5 October. Rigging failure discovered in Tenerife resulted in us sailing the Leg to Cape Town very gently to avoid dismasting. We sighted our first albatross well north of Tristan da Cunha in the South Atlantic and they were frequent visitors from then on.



Figure 4. The approximate course of English Rose VI around the world 2003-4. Map courtesy of www.theodora.com used with permission.

With the rigging repaired we departed Cape Town on 25 October 2003 and headed south for the Prince Edward Island fishing grounds. It was spring in the Southern Ocean and often very cold and rough. 700 miles to the south we sighted Prince Edward Island and turned east towards Crozet Island. Despite sailing right through this important fishing ground to Kerguelen, we saw no fishing boats at all. We called into Port au France, in Kerguelen for 24 hours, visiting the scientists at this small very remote research base. They held little hope for the survival of the albatross.

We sailed on to Melbourne taking 51 days in all for this 6,100 mile passage from Cape Town. A more detailed account of this Leg can be found in Chapter 6: The Voyage

Arriving in Australia just before Christmas, and later than Birds Australia had expected, they declined to assist us with publicity in any way due to involvement in an international birding conference. This was extremely disappointing to us all, having come so far. We sailed on to Wellington early in January to a very different welcome from New Zealand's Royal Forest and Bird Society who organised two weeks of publicity raising events culminating in Prime Minister Helen Clarke farewelling us on 28 January 2004.

On across the South Pacific, easing south to sail around Cape Horn, we encountered more very bad weather. In one storm a series of boarding waves stove in the rear of the Doghouse on deck.

We rounded Cape Horn on 29th February and headed up to Port Stanley and a short stopover in the Falkland Islands.

As we sailed north up the South Atlantic the RSPB was



Figure 5. NZ Prime Minister Helen Clarke saw us off from Wellington. DSCN1725.jpg

confirming plans for our return to the UK. To put maximum pressure on the British Government (who had still not ratified the ACAP agreement), they were planning we come up the Thames to London. Tower Bridge would be opened for us and then a high profile reception held at nearby St Katherine's Dock. The Fisheries Minister would be invited to give a speech. In order to arrange this they needed firm confirmation from us of an arrival date. Also to be taken into account was the now finalised date of the UN Agriculture and Fisheries meeting in Rome. Compatible dates for our London arrival were set, and suddenly whilst still 10,000 miles away, we had a timetable to keep to. To reduce the risk of unexpected delay, and considering the lateness of the brief summer season, we abandoned plans to sail to South Georgia, and then on back to Cape Town. Instead we would head north directly from the Falklands for the Azores and Britain.

It was a long slow passage, crossing multiple weather systems, but we felt relaxed and enjoyed it as much as possible. By now we knew each other, the boat and all its systems, very well. We felt as one. Sometimes I wanted to sail on forever.

We arrived in Horta, in the Azores, on 12 May 2004 and with time in hand enjoyed a relaxing 8-day break. Then it was on to Britain, via two short stops in France, then up the Thames and under Tower Bridge.

Meanwhile Britain had ratified the ACAP agreement, as proudly proclaimed in St Katherine's Dock by the Fisheries Minister.²⁰ Then the Petition was presented to the UN in Rome by John and Marie Christine, whilst I looked after the yacht back in London. On their return we sailed the last Leg, back up the east coast of Britain, across the north coast of Scotland, and back onto the mooring on the west coast at Ardmore. It was the 30th June, we'd been away 342 days and sailed about 29,250 nautical miles (54,205kilometers).

Post Voyage

Following the voyage John and Marie Christine were awarded the Ocean Cruising Club's 2004 Barton Cup for the most meritorious voyage of the year.²¹



Figure 6. John, Marie Christine and I arrive back at Ardmore, 342 days later. DSCN4670.jpg

In terms of the Albatross campaign, well-known British yachtswoman Ellen MacArthur gave it her high profile

support in early 2005, and it was also adopted by the prestigious Volvo 2005-6 Round the World Yacht Race. As at December 2005 there were eleven signatories to ACAP (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, France, New Zealand, Peru, South Africa, Spain and the United Kingdom. Of these, Australia, Ecuador, France, New Zealand, Peru, South Africa, Spain and the United Kingdom have also ratified ACAP.

The campaign continues.

Back in Australia in mid-July, I spent the next eighteen months assembling, collating and analysing records about every day of the voyage, particularly the communications aspect, and writing an account of each Leg and stopover. This process is described in Chapters 5: Methodology and 7:Analysis. An example of the story of one Leg is contained in Chapter 6: Voyage Story. The story of the entire voyage together with many supporting documents is contained in the Durable Record.

Appendix 3.1

John Ridgway: 1938 -

Ridgway first became known in the UK in 1966 when together with Chay Blyth he successfully rowed across the Atlantic, the first time it had been completed in the twentieth century. (Ridgway and Blyth 1966). In that same summer of 1966, another pair, David Johnstone and Michael Hoare also set out to row the Atlantic, however they were unsuccessful, their empty boat being eventually found in the mid-Atlantic on the 15th October 1966. (Naydler 1969) The fact that he and Blyth had survived whilst the other two had died, deeply affected Ridgway.

This knowledge is what forces me to regard everything since 1966 as a bonus, and to justify this bonus, life must be lived to the full. No coasting by. It could so easily have been Chay and I who died in the small dory English Rose III. (Ridgway 1988, p. 16).

“No coasting by” led Ridgway and his wife Marie Christine off on an adventurous career. First stop was John entering the 1968 Golden Globe race, the inaugural single-handed non-stop around the world yacht race, in which he and all but one of the eight other starters failed to finish. (Nicholls 2001)

Subsequent exploits were more successful such as travelling the Amazon from source to mouth, (Ridgway 1972), a traverse of the Patagonian icecap, (Ridgway 1974), a circumnavigation of the world as



Figure 7. John Ridgway in 2003 with the trans-Atlantic row boat of 1966. PIC0002.jpg

part of the 1977-78 Whitbread round the World Yacht Race (Ridgway and Ridgway 1978), a non-stop double handed voyage around the world (Ridgway and Briggs 1985), an expedition to the highlands of Peru (Ridgway 1987), and a voyage to the South Pacific and Antarctica. (Ridgway 1998). Funds for each expedition were raised from the establishment and running of the Ridgway’s Adventure School in the far northwest of Scotland, where courses for adults and young people were run over the summer months each year. (Ridgway 1971)

"Some people say that carrying radios on yachts has taken the romance out of sailing."
Sheila Chichester (Chichester 1969, p. 147)

Chapter 4

LITERATURE REVIEW: COMMUNICATION AND EXPEDITIONS

Introduction

Expeditioners learn from each other. Columbus carried a 1485 edition of Marco Polo's travels on all his voyages, writing copious notes in the margin (Bradford 1973, p. 79). He was clearly inspired by Polo and the writings and maps of earlier explorers.

The accounts of expeditions, and their communication of the traveller's experience have surely always been important. Without reporting on where they had been, early explorers may have had little claim to fame, and fame was essential to gain both sponsorship for the next expedition, and to recruit members. According to Trevor Fishlock, a student and writer on the history of exploration, travellers from the 16th century onwards were encouraged to make notes. "An explorer who had no document, no report, no book, had nothing to say. He was merely a man with sore feet." ¹ (Fishlock 2004, Chpt. 3)

In this review of the literature relating to this research, I look at the development of communication theories, particularly as they relate to expedition communication, the representation of experience and the making of meaning, and more recent writings about the use of the Internet. The development of expedition communication over the last 100 years is briefly outlined with particular reference to voyages in small craft. Finally the current use of the Internet by expeditions is briefly introduced with examples of current websites.

Communication Theory

Early in this study I adopted the definition of communication by Frey, Botan et al that "Communication is the management of messages for the purpose of creating meaning," (Frey, Botan et al. 1991. p. 28) however over the course of this study I have adopted the view that such meaning is not *created*, but *constructed*, by both sender and receiver, from the world and objects that are already there. (Crotty 1998, p. 44) Thus I am considering communication as *the management of messages to support the construction of meaning*. This is an important difference that has implications throughout this study.

Such a definition regards communication as a deliberate process and one which may have unexpected outcomes if it is not managed, and draws on constructionism;

The view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context (Crotty 1998, p. 42).

I consider the influence of constructionism later in this Chapter.

The understanding of communication that this research is based on is a derivative of diverse approaches over the last 110 years. The first approach I will consider is that of the rhetorician I.A. Richards.

Born in 1893 in Cheshire, England, Richards spent much of his life at Cambridge. In Richards' view "Communication is the generation of meaning" (Bowers and Bradac 1984, p. 72). He appears to have had little time for the then popular approach to rhetoric proposing it was "sales talk selling sales talk" (Richards 1955, p. 166). He focused on the comprehension of a message rather than how persuasive it was. Richards believed that information was lost in every conversation due to the nature of language itself. He sought ways to minimize this. He proposed that information was lost because words themselves have no inherent meaning (unlike signs, such as a road sign indicating a steep hill). According to Richards, words take on the meaning of the context in which a person encounters them. This may mean words changing their meaning with their context (Richards 1936, p. 23-43).

Richards appears to consider context as much more than the adjacent phrases, but also to include the whole life experience that can be connected with an event. In these terms it is unlikely that any two people, drawing on quite different life experiences for context, would derive (or construct) the same meaning for a word.

In his argument Richards appears to ignore the etymological origins of many words. Etymology reveals that in their original form many words and expressions were very self descriptive and perhaps relied much less on their context than they do today. The maritime world has been a particularly rich source of modern words.²

Nevertheless, working with a colleague C.K Ogden, Richards published his ideas in 1923 in *The Meaning of Meaning*, which included the Semantic Triangle illustrating the relationship between a symbol such as a word, the thought it conjured in a person's mind (based on their context) and the actual thing itself (Richards and Ogden 1969, p. 11).

Ogden and Richards went on to suggest a number of linguistic ways to improve the communication of common meaning. These included the use of definitions, metaphor, what they called "feedforward" (anticipating how another party might interpret words), and Basic English, (an 850 word "simple" version of English (Richards and Ogden 1969).

Richards' thinking about the importance of context in communicating meaning has particular significance for expedition communication due to the likelihood that expedition participants and those at home are likely to have widely differing contexts. Thus they are likely to derive very different meanings from the words used in any communication.

The message "Sighted our first iceberg at noon today" might be sent from the yacht.

Receivers of the message in Melbourne, referring to their context of "icebergs" may immediately think of the movie Titanic, Leonardo de Caprio, the band playing in dress uniform, disaster moments away. Meanwhile the sender was seeing a distant short white line, like a low island, near the horizon, in the sunlight, from the frost-covered deck of the yacht.

Whilst "Basic English" was soon buried, Richards' other suggestions for better communicating meaning still have relevance today for expeditioners.

As I discuss in Chapter 7:Analysis, Ridgway seemed to have a particular talent for viewing himself from the viewpoint of his target audience, in effect "feedforwarding" as he considered how he would present himself and the day's events in his Notes on the website to create maximum interest.

The ideas of psychologist Harold Lasswell are also relevant to this study. Born in 1902, Lasswell is known for his study of wartime propaganda (Severin and Tankard 1997, p. 111) and also for his model of communication theory. Lasswell's communication model is based on the answers to the questions; who says what, in which channel, to whom and with what effect?

"The Who" is who controls the message in the media, the "Says What" is the subject matter being communicated, "In Which Channel" are the studies in media analysis, the "To Whom" is the audience or the receivers, and "With What Effect" is the effects made on the public (Ibid., p. 47).

These important questions underlie many corporate communication strategies today including website design. Nielsen for instance emphasises their importance to the design of a website to improve its usability in his seminal text *Designing Web Usability* (Nielsen 1999) Nielsen's principles were certainly in my mind as I created a suite of web pages about the Voyage and grappled with the difficulty of creating something that we hoped would be viewed by audiences having a range of cultural backgrounds. A website difficulty that Nielsen recognises (Ibid., Chpt. 7).

One of Lasswell's students, Carl Hovland, in direct contrast to the approach taken by Richards, undertook significant research into understanding persuasion, particularly looking at the effectiveness of campaigns and various methods of communication.

Globally accessible websites have given expeditioners today a new environment to promote themselves and for sponsors to advertise themselves. Hovland's research has direct relevance to the effectiveness of these communications in influencing audiences. Hovland identified credibility as being the most important contributor to a communicator's persuasiveness. Credibility he identified as being the result of perceived trustworthiness, expertise, physical attractiveness, and power of the communicator, relative to the receiver (Hovland, Janis et al. 1953, p. 19-53).

Hovland's findings supported our use of the BBC h2g2 website as a base, rather than establishing our own (and having to build an audience and credibility). Coupled with Ridgway's simmering public profile, the Voyage web pages were up and running with near instant credibility and a nationwide audience, borrowing much from the BBC's position as a British institution.

Hovland also studied the importance of various aspects of the message and various types of appeal, such as the use of fear, vocabulary, humour, speed, accent and others aspects. All were components of the voyage story utilised by Ridgway and told in near real time on the h2g2 website.

In the late 1940s, Bell Telephone Company research scientist Claude Shannon took a scientific approach proposing that "Communication is the transmission and reception of information" (Bowers and Bradac 1984, p. 872).

By the 1960s, Shannon's mechanistic views on communication were paired with the ideas of Warren Weaver to suggest that whatever the communication problem, reducing information loss was the solution (Griffin 1997, p.23-4). This led to a simple linear model of communication comprising:

Source – Message – Channel – Receiver

This was popularized by Berlo in the 1960s (Berlo 1960), and can be found repeated in current communication texts with various expansions. For instance Tymson and Sherman (Tymson and Sherman 1987, p. 11) add en-coding, de-coding and noise to the model. (See Figure 8) Whilst useful as a very high level model the nature of 'encoding' and 'decoding' leaves much to be thought about.

The 1960s also saw the development of interest in close interpersonal communication in the form of non-verbal communication, trust building, self-disclosure and other interpersonal issues (Griffin 1997, p. 24).

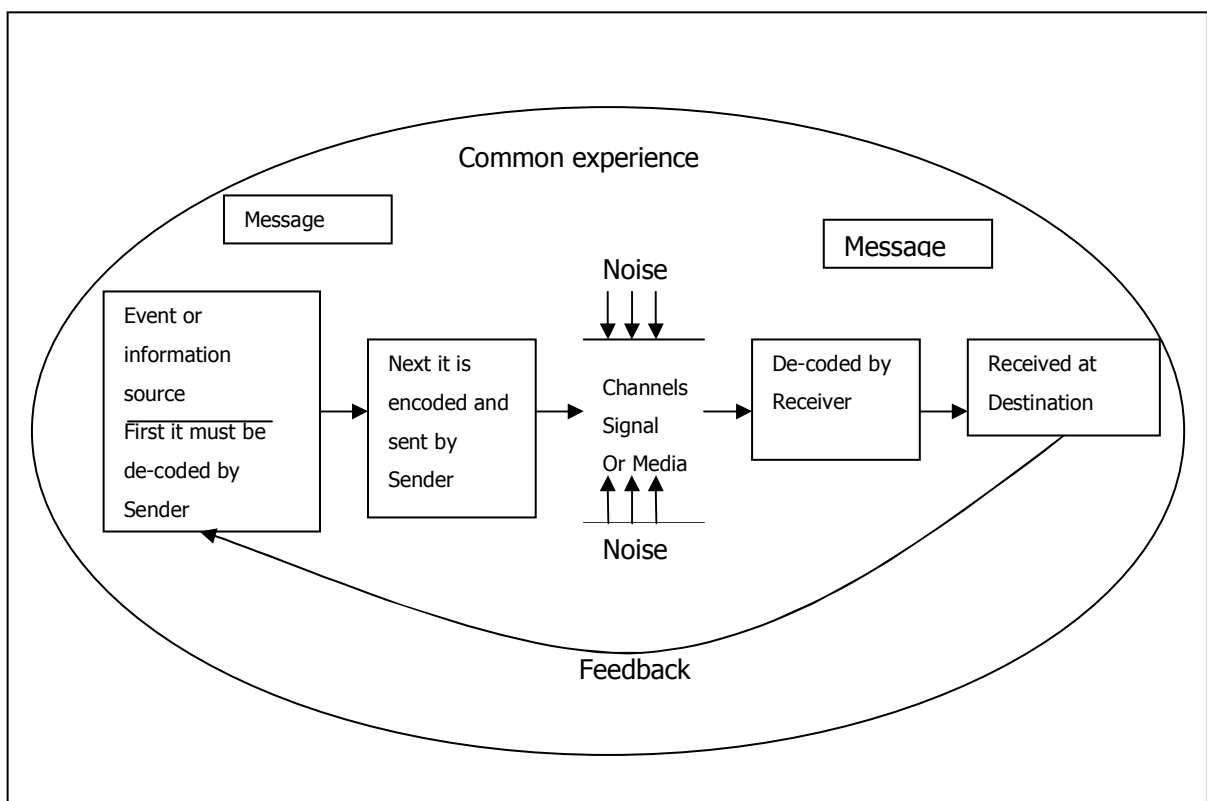


Figure 8. A view of the communication process (Tymson and Sherman 1987).

In 1965 approaches were proposed to analyzing messages in terms of the speaker who delivers it and the audience that hears it (Black 1965). It is proposed that the success of the protest movements of the 1960s and the effectiveness of their nonverbal communication prompted this thinking and led on to the examination of the growing power of television, film and popular music in shaping popular culture (Griffin 1997, p. 26), an extension of the ideas proposed by Richards back in 1923. This led to my thinking of the importance and power of celebrities today, (largely created by these media) and Ridgway's belief that his name would attract readers to the website and stimulate interest in the

Albatross issue. Ultimately I came to think of the voyage as a "Celebrity Expedition" as I outline in Chapter 7:Analysis.

Whilst group dynamics were not central to this research, it is acknowledged that relationships between expeditioners themselves and with home parties may influence the use of communication.

Social psychologist Kurt Lewin, (1890-1947) one of the earliest thinkers in this area, explored the field of group dynamics, action research and experiential learning. Without doubt the success of the Voyage was significantly influenced by the extent of cohesion both within the immediate crew and within the wider group of individuals providing land based support. A.V.Carron studied group cohesion, particularly with respect to sports teams, for more than 18 years. Based on the view that group cohesion is the most important small group variable (Lott and Lott 1965), Carron et al (1985) developed an operational measure of the cohesion in sports teams, (both recreational and competitive). Carron's model is based on three assumptions;

- Cohesion is a group property and can be assessed through the social cognitions of individual members.
- The social cognitions that members form in regard to the unity of the group are relating to the group as a whole as well as the group as a forum for the satisfaction of individual needs.
- The two fundamental foci for group members perceptions are the group task and the group as a forum for social relationships.

Whilst this study has not taken this any further, Carron's model would have been an interesting basis upon which to examine crew behaviour, particularly that of the Birdlife Volunteers who joined the yacht for just one leg, a period of from two to ten weeks. The three person (then fourⁱ) permanent crew aboard the yacht became a tight cohesive unit prior to the arrival of these volunteers. This longstanding team knowingly exerted considerable pressure on new crewmembers to conform to particular behavioural standards. In a cold wet, very demanding and for some frightening environment, this sometimes led to tension. Not a new experience for Ridgway although he often said this voyage was remarkable for having the least conflict of any in his experience and in particular contrast to the 1978 voyage recounted in *Around the world with Ridgway* (Ridgway and Ridgway 1978).

ⁱ John and Marie Christine Ridgway and Nick Grainger were with the yacht the entire way around the world. Igor Asheshov joined in Cape Town and remained with the yacht for the remainder of the voyage.

The final words of my definition of communication, "the construction of meaning" lead into a large field of thinking which I mention in Chapter 5: Methodology and Chapter 7: Analysis. This is particularly based on the views of Crotty (1998, p42-65), that all meaning is constructed by the individual, who draws on "the institutions within which they are embedded" (ibid., p. 53). Reflecting deeply on this during the course of this research I became aware of just how subjective judgements about the use of the Internet on expeditions were likely to be, based on the inevitably very different constructs of each expedition participant, or reader of this research. In Crotty's view constructionism teaches that meaning is always both subjective and objective (ibid., p.48), and certainly reading back over my Journal it seems that as the writer I was taking both positions. Now as the reader I find myself taking both positions again. Maybe other readers will too. At one moment caught up in the drama of the moment aboard the yacht, in another reflecting as an outside viewer on what was happening. But how individual are our constructs really likely to be? This is an important question if one is communicating simultaneously with many others, as we were via the Internet. Social constructionist thinking proposes that far from being individual, our constructs are likely to be based on the social institutions we are part of, or are part of us (ibid., p. 52). Fish calls this 'a publicly available system of intelligibility' (Fish 1990, p. 186), Geertz calls it 'a system of significant symbols' (1973, p. 53). For Crotty, it's culture (op cit p. 53). In social constructionist terms then the individual is likely to construct meaning drawing on the culture they are immersed in. This applies as much to the expedition reporter as the reader of their text and the reader of this study.

On the voyage itself this was not something we thought about in these terms. Ridgway wrote for the audience he knew. We lamented our lack of ability to reach audiences in other countries and cultures. Intuitively we believed we needed reporters from within other cultures (such as that of Japan) to communicate effectively with people in these other cultures, but were unsuccessful in recruiting such reporters.

Approaching this study, with an underlying constructionist epistemology, I sought ways to present the experience in such a way that would assist each reader to construct his or her own meaning. I decided to address this through using in part a phenomenological approach drawn from the ideas of van Manen (1990, Chpt.1) involved "a systematic attempt to uncover and describe the structures of the lived experience" (Ibid., p. 10), in this case what it was like to be on this yacht in the Southern Ocean and responsible for communication with the outside world via the Internet. This involved the use of a personal journal I kept on the voyage and drawing particularly on the work of Witherell and Noddings et al (Witherell, Noddings et al. 1991), about the power of storytelling in education.

The Advent of the Internet

Castells proposes that the advent of the Internet over the last thirty years of the twentieth century is as significant as the development of the alphabet itself (Castells 2000, p. 356). The formation of this hypertext and meta-language system integrates for the first time written, oral and audio-visual components of communication.

Unlike previous forms of mass communication, which were essentially one way communication (if you exclude "Letters to the Editor" and talkback radio), the Internet, being a global network enables not just one or two way communication, but communication between individuals and groups in any combination.

As a result this always on, widely accessible medium, has enabled an individual's personal communities to expand to include online or virtual communities. Internet users join networks or on-line groups on the basis of shared interests and values (Wellman and Gulia 1999, p. 388).

In his book *Design for Community* Powazek (2002) identifies the potential for a website to engage visitors through enabling them to become part of a community associated with the website. He emphasizes the importance of having good content in the first place (something to talk about), targeting the audience carefully and the importance of appropriate design of the interface.

Jakob Nielsen's seminal text *Designing Web Usability* (1999) addresses interface design in depth and brings together a wide range of what are becoming accepted standards in website design.

But is following accepted website standards enough to engage a visitor? Mae Ian Tomsen applies the concept of "value exchange" to websites (Tomsen 2000, p. 3-20) emphasizing that visitors to websites look for a fair exchange. They give their time and attention and they expect to easily receive valuable information. With competing websites a mouse click away, they have little patience with websites that are hard to navigate, slow to load or contain generic content or content that is uninteresting to them.

A central point of *The Cluetrain Manifesto* (Levine, Locke et al. 2000) is the potential for people to have conversations via the Internet. It is proposed that the Internet has enabled the creation of a marketplace, with all its display of wares, discussion, gossip, haggling and interaction, on a worldwide scale. Within the world of ecommerce there have been many examples of special interest communities developing around buying or using particular products such as individual cars or cameras. A good example is Nikon Forum talk, a threaded discussion site dedicated to Nikon digital

cameras, carrying as at 13 December 2005, 564,082 messages in 79,672 threads, with new contributions coming in literally every minute from all over the world.³

Gaining the participation of visitors in a online discussion about the features of the latest digital camera may be less of a challenge than engaging visitors in a website focused on less materialistic issues such as an expedition seeking to raise awareness of an environmental issue.

Despite the potential forums offer for the creation of communities, few expeditions websites in 2005 are using such a tool. In a brief study I conducted in December 2005, only 3 of 16 expedition websites actively encouraged reader feedback and only 2 of these offered to answer questions.⁴ Obviously some very small independent expeditions would be unable to cope with directly answering a lot of questions but nevertheless this tool seems greatly under-utilised. I discuss this further and explore some of the possible implications in Chapter 8: Learning. It's a topic worthy of further research.

An additional strategy to encourage interaction and thus engagement of audiences, was that of what Iser calls an "ambiguous quality" in the writing. Iser proposes that good literature writers invite their readers into the reconstruction of the virtual world of the text by carefully positioned blanks or gaps in the text. These gaps are "...the unwritten part of the text that must be filled by the active readers with personal meaning from their own experiences outside the text" (Iser 1974, p. 58).

Ridgway was certainly writing to engage his audience. To give them an opportunity to escape from their home or work reality, via the Internet, to the virtual world of the voyage, just a mouse click away, whilst never leaving their desk. Once there, to take John's words and using them construct personal meaning of their own. A daily transport to another world.

Castells argues that the Internet, with its ability to integrate a wide range of communication modes from typographic to multi-sensorial, has the potential to induce not a virtual reality but a real virtuality (Castells 2000, p. 403-406). This is argued on the basis that reality as experienced is always virtual because it is experienced through our interpretation of symbols which carry meaning over and above their strict semantic definition. In this sense all experience is virtually perceived.

According to Castells, a communication system that generates a real virtuality is one in which,

...reality itself (that is, people's materially /symbolic existence) is entirely captured, fully immersed in a virtual image setting, in the world of make believe, in which appearances are not just on the screen through which experience is communicated, but they become the experience (Castells 2000, p404).

Readers may sense that they are moving away from their everyday 'real' world and temporarily leaving it to enter one with which they are less familiar (Barone and Eisner 1988, p. 74).

The journey away from one's own lived in world into the realm of the literary text may thus be likened to that of an astronaut's voyage from the Earth to the Moon and back again. In each case the traveller visits a location near enough to a previously experienced object to recognise it, but far enough to place it in a revealing (sometimes startling) new context. A new set of meanings and values suddenly adheres to objects and practices previously taken for granted. Back on Earth, the voyager is a changed person. Old ways of seeing are negated in favour of a fresh outlook, perspective, paradigm, and ideology" (Ibid.).

Can the same be achieved with the experience of visiting a website? Possibly.

According to Barone and Eisner "Good art possess a capacity to pull the person who experiences it into an alternative reality." Writings in social realism are rich in this area with authors locating activities in recognizable socio-historical settings in which the reader is able to identify and relate the happenings to their own experiences. This gives the story, "...the virtual world' credibility as being an analogue of the 'real' world" (Barone and Eisner 1988, p. 74).

Another relevant aspect of the use of the Internet is the development of so-called 'Virtual teams'. Lipnack and Stamp define a virtual team as "...a group of people who work interdependently with a shared purpose across space, time and organisation boundaries using technology" (Lipnack and Stamp 2000, p. 18). In these terms two virtual teams were involved in this project. The first was during the pre-departure phase, during which key supporters and prospective members of the crew were living in different parts of the world and working together using the Internet to plan every aspect of the project. The second virtual team evolved once the yacht was at sea and again involved the crew and supporters of the project all over the world

Lipnack and Stamp emphasise the importance of trust in virtual teams, the removal of the importance of *place*, (when online, you may be anywhere physically), the life cycle of a virtual team, and the involvement and impact on the individual (Ibid.) The success of these teams was critical to the success of the voyage although the sense of place (of both the yacht and key support people ashore) and the inability of shore support people to always give the high level of support often sought, contributed periodically (and in hindsight unreasonably) to a diminishment of trust, and a reduction in effectiveness of the team as a whole. Feeling isolated I found we as expeditioners were particularly vulnerable to feeling forgotten by other members of our virtual team, a feeling reinforced by incidents such as our mailbox being accidentally deleted ashore as happened on Leg 3.

Finally it is unsurprising that with its ability to communicate with large chosen audiences using text, sound and audio-visual images, the Internet has become a channel for political communication (Abramson, Artertone et al. 1988). The use of the Internet by the Save the Albatross Voyage in this way was clearly well established.

The Use of Visual Images

During planning it had been anticipated that photographs would be an important component of the daily Notes published on the website and assist the reader to construct meaning. In reality the reduction of connection bandwidth to the yacht led to the decision not to send photographs from the yacht at sea due to the cost of doing so.

Photographs were sent from some stopovers and placed on the website. I saw this reduced use of photographs as a significant loss as I believed that photographs had an important role to play in the construction of meaning. As John Berger writes, "Seeing comes before words. The child looks and recognizes before it can speak" (Berger 1972, p. 1). He goes on to discuss the relationship between what we see and what we know "We never look at just one thing, we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves" (Ibid., p. 9).

Prior to departure on the voyage I researched the use of photography in social research and found it to have a rich history. However the very limited use of photography for communications from the yacht on this voyage led me to decide not to pursue further study of it at this time.

The Development of Expedition Communication

The published reporting of early expeditions and voyages to remote parts of the world during the last 100 years through to the advent of the Internet, largely appears to have been in the form of newspaper reports of the day and books subsequently published by the surviving adventurers.

Early publications of ocean voyages aboard yachts such as *The Cruise of The Alerte* by E F Knight (1891), subtitled *A Narrative of a Search for Treasure on the Desert Island of Trinidad* clearly draws on RL Stevenson's fictional writing about the mysteries and treasure of the south seas,ⁱⁱ and even possibly on Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (1851) or *Typee* (1846). Possibly the best known sailing story of this time is Joshua Slocum's account of his solo world circumnavigation between 1895 and 1898, still a popular text today (Slocum 1900).

ⁱⁱ Stevenson published *Treasure Island* in 1883. Stevenson, R. L. (1883). Treasure Island. London, Collins.



Figure 9. Landing on South Georgia.
Photo Frank Hurley.

In the first half of the twentieth century this style of writing about sailing voyages continued possibly drawing more on the literary tradition than early communication theory in the form of the rise of the study of rhetoric at this time. Now collectors items, books such as Ralph Stock's *The Cruise of the Dream Ship* (1921), and Alan Gerbault's *In Quest of the Sun* (1930) may be regarded as standards of the era. They read like travelogues of far away places, where the yacht provides the means to get there and a sense of liberation.

Expeditions to the Antarctic in the first half of the twentieth century are also interesting to study from a communications point of view. Whilst Apsley Cherry-Garrard's *Worst Journey in the World* (1922) may be the best known account of Scott's ill-fated expedition to the South Pole, Shackleton's Trans Antarctic Expedition of 1914-17 may be the most vividly remembered today thanks to the presence and persistence of the official photographer Frank Hurley, one of the first on such an expedition and certainly the most publicised today.⁵ It was Hurley's dedication that has left us with the awe inspiring photographs of their ship trapped and then sunk by the ice, and the subsequent lengthy but completely successful rescue of the entire crew. See Figure 9.

The biography of Australian adventurer Sir Hubert Wilkins tells of the pressure of expedition sponsorship in 1931, when Wilkins, aboard a cramped and failure-prone ex-WW1 submarine attempting to reach the North Pole under the Arctic ice, is committed to writing 1000 words every day for Hearst's newspapers. To be transmitted each day by radio. An early example. As if he didn't have enough else to do (Nasht 2005, p. 229).

Modern ocean voyaging as a form of expeditioning developed particularly in the 1950s and 60s. Perhaps one of the most notable early voyages of this time was the Kon Tiki voyage led by Thor Heyerdahl (Heyerdahl 1948). Sailing from the west coast of South America to the mid-Pacific, the Kon Tiki raft carried a radio transmitter, aials were supported by kites, and members of the Radio Amateur League of America asked to listen out for calls (Ibid., p. 61). A fair degree of success was achieved with nightly reports and weather observations being sent out and passed on to the requested destination by casual radio amateurs (Ibid., p. 96). Considering the nature of the craft and closeness to the water, they did well to keep their pre-transistor equipment powered and functioning. Transmitting with only 6 watts of power they appear to have regularly communicated by Morse code with radio hams in both Norway and California.

The development of short-handed sailing in the modern era since the 1960s had a number of important voyagers in its vanguard. Eric and Susan Hiscock may have inspired many couples to head

out on ocean voyages with their quietly understated books such as *Cruising Under Sail* (Hiscock 1965) and their extensive lecture tours.ⁱⁱⁱ They certainly inspired me. Communications from their various yachts were by High Frequency (HF) radio but only in their latter days. They primarily communicated by writing articles for yachting magazines of the day and the afore-mentioned books and lecture tours.

Perhaps the Hiscock's understated trans-ocean voyages were amongst the last vestiges of the 19th century adventurers that Whybrow is writing about when she says the voices of adventurers have changed [since then]:

In the dwindling of geographic conquests left to make, our celebration of individual achievement has grown and modern adventure writing is more personal and psychological than in the past. The mountaineers and travellers and scientists of the nineteenth century tended to downplay their achievements, stiff upper lips being the order of the day (Whybrow 2003, p. 17).

Of course the majority of these earlier accounts were written some time after the event, with all the benefit of hindsight, and the rigours of the expedition far behind and no doubt some selective remembering.

Sir Hubert Wilkins, already mentioned, was perhaps one of the first to be writing for the mass media during the expedition itself, commonplace now with the Internet, where the writer has no idea how the story will end, whether today's decision will prove wise and if not what the cost will be.

Francis Chichester (later Sir) took this much further, very publicly planning and undertaking a series of high profile single-handed yacht voyages across the Atlantic and around the world. This began with his very public participation in the first single-handed yacht-race across the Atlantic in 1960. This was notable also for its sponsorship by the Observer newspaper in Britain, creating the OSTAR, the Observer Trans-Atlantic Single-handed Race. To sell newspapers daily updates were needed. Chichester was the only entrant to carry an HF radio and thus was able to file regular reports (Chichester 1969, p. 89) . In this way he grew his public profile and just like Columbus five hundred years before, used this to gain more sponsorship for further worldwide yachting expeditions such as his solo circumnavigation in 1966/7 (Chichester 1967).

ⁱⁱⁱ Eric and Susan Hiscock, from the Isle of Wight, made a life of worldwide ocean voyaging on small yachts between 1952 and 1980, funding themselves by writing books and magazine articles about their voyages, but generally avoided the media.

This was the beginning of a long period of media support for yachting, primarily based in England and France. The OSTAR continued to receive sponsorship for thirty years and became a major event in the world yacht voyaging calendar. Increasingly reliable HF radio appears to have fuelled media interest.

In 1968, the Observer newspaper's major competitor, Britain's Sunday Times, launched the Golden Globe yacht race, in the form of a prize for the first yachtsman to successfully circumnavigate the world alone, non-stop. This required sailing around the world largely in the Southern Ocean, which with its remoteness presents bigger radio communication problems than the Atlantic. Nine yachtsmen (including John Ridgway) started in this very informal 'race', and as Peter Nichols tells only one made it back (Nicholls 2001,). Ridgway gave up in the South Atlantic with damage to his boat, wisely making the judgment that it wouldn't make it right around.

By far the majority of competitors in the Golden Globe Race had no means of communication with the outside world at all. One who did, Donald Crowhurst, a late and poorly prepared entrant (*ibid.*, p. 149-154), actually used his HF radio to send false positions, indicating he was making exceptional time around the world, whilst in fact he never left the North Atlantic. Chichester, one of the judges, had indicated his suspicions long before radio transmissions ceased. Crowhurst's yacht was eventually found abandoned in mid-Atlantic, his logbook revealing a sorry tale of deception (Tomalin and Hall 1973). Was Crowhurst the victim of the communication ability he had so prized?

Through the last thirty years of the twentieth century, ocean voyaging grew popular at two ends of a wealth and communication continuum. At one end were many individuals and couples who used entirely their own resources to fund small seaworthy yachts in which they sailed across the Atlantic, the Pacific and even around the world in a number of cases. Communication was limited, usually at best amateur radio, but commonly with no external communications capability. I myself sailed a small yacht across the Atlantic and Pacific in the 1970s with no radio communications at all (Grainger 1976).

At the other end of the continuum was the development of round the world races for large fully crewed yachts. Sponsored for many years by the Whitbread organisation (and latterly Volvo), these were mainly large fully sponsored yachts well equipped with the latest in communications technology. In the early days this only enabled periodic position and weather reports to be published in the media, but by the end of the century the yachts were carrying global positioning systems and high-speed data links. These enabled the positions of the yachts to be constantly tracked, and voice and images (still and video) to be transmitted from the yachts at any time. Today reporting of such events (arguably expeditions) on the Internet is a vital component of the major public relations exercise that sponsors may expect.⁶

John Ridgway himself competed as a privately funded entrant in the 1977/8 Whitbread Race in English Rose VI.⁷ External communication was limited to "sporadic HF radio."⁸

But smaller expeditions are the focus of this study. Today it appears that for some expeditions the Internet is a vital if not critical sponsor communication channel. But things do not always go as hoped. For instance in December 2002 a two man expedition set out to travel by kite drawn sledges from the South Pole to the Patriot Hills, the reverse of one of the traditional sledging routes to the South Pole. Extensively promoted on the Internet, the expedition had the misfortune to strike an unusually windless summer at the South Pole. The two expeditioners very publicly waited, and waited. When their food ran out they ignominiously and very publicly walked a few hundred metres back to the village at the South Pole.⁹

Despite the risk of such public failure, the Internet has been embraced by expeditions today. Amongst other benefits it has given a chance for ordinary people to communicate directly with expeditioners, without the need for heavy expensive unreliable radio equipment. For instance in 1997, Deborah Bogle writing in the Weekend Australian, described a very new and at the time innovative online chat session with Australian Antarctic base staff (Bogle 1997, p9). Now it appears commonplace to expect to be able to communicate with expeditioners online at least asynchronously by email if not in real time. Despite this facility, as has already been mentioned few expeditioners seem to go beyond email, a point I come back to later in this research.

Writing in the New York Times in June 2003, Andrew Revkin described how a the solo expeditioner to the North Pole, Ben Saunders,¹⁰ updated his website daily from the icecap, using a palm sized digital assistant, a pocket sized GPS, a small digital camera and a satellite phone (Revkin 2003). Indeed the demand for the sort of technology Saunders was using amongst Himalayan climbers, polar explorers and ocean rowers has spawned at least two business, Manhattan based Explorersweb,¹¹ which supplies software, hardware and a home on the Internet to people like Saunders and webexpeditions which has a web application for managing expedition websites.¹²

Meanwhile expedition websites may have assumed great importance in the attraction of sponsors. The need is just starting to be recognised commercially with at least two web design businesses advertising expertise in expedition websites, with one offering a white paper on the topic.¹³

The communications technology being used on large vessels, small craft and even light weight backpacking expeditions is becoming ever more specialised but also more similar as it becomes more compact, less expensive and more power efficient. Whilst not really the focus of this study, readers interested should see *Communications at Sea* by Mike Harris (2003) for an introduction to the technology available a the time of the Save the Albatross Voyage. The communications equipment

supplied to the 7 yachts competing in the 2005-6 Volvo Ocean Race (around the world) is probably the current state of the art with no expense spared to demonstrate the ability of the newest satellite systems. An important component has been the building of a very rugged and easy to use onboard media centre able to coordinate the data from 9 onboard cameras bringing near live coverage of the race from the yachts to an audience of at least 1.5 billion people. Quite how this is experienced by the already extremely hard-pressed crew is yet to be explored.¹⁴

Despite the growth in the use of Internet communication on expeditions, with even children's author Hazel Edwards compiling her emails from a visit to the Antarctic into a book, published both online and in hard copy, (Edwards 2002), the Royal Geographic Society's latest edition of its Expedition Handbook (Winser, Winser et al. 2004) fails to make more than passing references to the use of the Internet. An omission I hope will be rectified in the next edition.

Despite the omission from the RGS Expedition Handbook, it does seem as though the day is fast approaching when, as Ridgway says of an expedition to a remote location, "The sense of isolation and wonder may simply be replaced by a mobile, uncomfortable office environment."¹⁵

Hopefully not. Adventurer Peter Blake had a more optimistic view setting off on the world encircling Blakexpeditions voyage;¹⁶

We want to restart people caring for the environment as it must be cared for, and we want to do this through adventure, through participation, through education and through enjoyment. Technology gives us the ability to bring our experiences into homes, offices and classrooms around the world on an almost immediate basis, through the Internet and our website...

Our aim, using this technology, is to have as many 'crew' as possible travel with us and share our experiences. These people may then gain a better appreciation of the reasonably remote parts of the world that we visit. And, even more importantly, begin to understand the reasons why we must all start appreciating what we have before it is too late (Sefton 2004, p401-2).

This was exactly the potential of the Internet we were seeking to realise on the Save the Albatross Voyage.

Appendix 4.1

Expedition websites and the use of online forums:

Name of Expedition	Size	Sponsored?	Online Forum?	URL	Date accessed	File name (.pdf)
The Iceman of Ironbark/Atom Voyages	Small	No	No	http://www.atomvoyages.com/articles/iceman.htm	14-Dec-05	manfromironbark.pdf
Solo Non-Stop Circumnavigation by Tony Gooch	Small	No	No	http://members.shaw.ca/tonygooch/	14-Dec-05	tonygooch.pdf
McNair-Landry Family Polar Travel	Small	Yes	No	http://www.kidsonice.ca/index.html	14-Dec-05	mcnairlandry.pdf
Jesse Martin Expeditions	Small	Sometimes	No	http://www.jessemartin.net/index.html	14-Dec-05	jessemartin.pdf
Murray River Quest	Small	A small amount	No	http://www.murrayquest.com/murrayquest2005overview.htm	14-Dec-05	murrayquest
Irish South Aris Shackleton's Boat Journey Expedition	Medium	Yes	No	http://www.pelagic.co.uk/logbooks/log97index/arind.html	14-Dec-05	pelagicshackleton.pdf
Ellen MacArthur	Large	Yes	No, but readers can send emails to Ellen which are all displayed on a page of their own, but not replied to.	http://www.teamellen.com/en/ellen.asp	14-Dec-05	ellenmc_051214.pdf

Tim Cope Journeys	Small	Yes	No	http://www.timcopejourneys.com/	14-Dec-05	timcope.pdf
Hilary Lister Channel Challenge	small	Yes	No	http://www.hilarylister.co.uk/da/18355	14-Dec-05	hilarylister.pdf
Kure Atoll 2005 Cordell Expedition	Large	Yes	No	http://www.cordell.org/htdocs/KURE/KURE_pages/KURE_Corporate.html	14-Dec-05	kureatoll.pdf
Kayak Around South Georgia	Medium	Yes	No	http://www.adventurephilosophy.com/projects.php	14-Dec-05	aroundsouthgeorgia.pdf
Borobudur Ship Expedition	Large	Yes	Yes	http://www.borobudurshipexpedition.com/index.htm	14-Dec-05	borobudur.pdf
North Pole Solo - Wave Vidmar	Medium	Yes	No	http://www.worldwidelearn.com/northpole/index.html	14-Dec-05	wavevidmar.pdf
Kit Kat Ice Kits Antarctica	Medium	Yes	No	http://www.icekites.com/home.htm	14-Dec-05	kitkaticekites.pdf
Ben Saunders	Small	Yes	No, but does answer some email queries publicly on site	http://www.bensaunders.com/about_ben.htm	14-Dec-05	bensaunders.pdf
Explorers Web	Large	Commercial	No	http://www.explorersweb.com/	14-Dec-05	explorersweb.pdf

Notes on other expedition websites:

Copies of at least the home pages of most of the websites above can be viewed on the Durable Record DVD as .pdf files. Unfortunately some that utilise frames cannot be captured and stored in this way. For the majority however see, Durable Record Home>Expedition Websites>

"Naturalistic studies are virtually impossible to design in any definitive way before the study is actually undertaken." (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 187)

Chapter 5

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

How does the Internet affect expedition communication? In this Chapter I describe the evolution of the methodology I used in this research project.

The Chapter comprises three parts. In the first part I describe the planned methodological approach; the choice of epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology and methods, the scope of the research, the anticipated participants, the expected data gathering process, the expected approach to analysis and the ethical issues I anticipated.

In the second part of the Chapter I describe the practical gathering of data on the voyage.

In the third part I go on to describe how with this data in hand I explored first the use of narrative in education then phenomenology, in its own evolving form as a methodology, to draw and share meaning from the voyage experience. This development of my thinking defined the rest of this study.

I came to realise that it is in the nature of research by project to be to some degree open-ended.

The Planned Methodological Approach

Planning this research I proposed to primarily employ a constructionist epistemology, an interpretivist theoretical perspective, a naturalistic methodology, and use case study methods.¹ However the experience of the actual research and the subsequent analysis of the data I collected, led me to

question if this approach alone would really draw as much out of the experience as I came to think might be possible using other methods.

The methodology used in this research is still based on constructionist epistemology and an interpretivist theoretical perspective, but alongside elements of a naturalistic methodology I decided to also use the ideas of phenomenology and narrative inquiry to try to make the very most of the experience and records I had kept. Far from being confusing I think the integration of these approaches has supported research and subsequent analysis which has proved richer than expected and may go on to provide the foundation for further research by others in a way not fully envisaged in the initial research proposal.

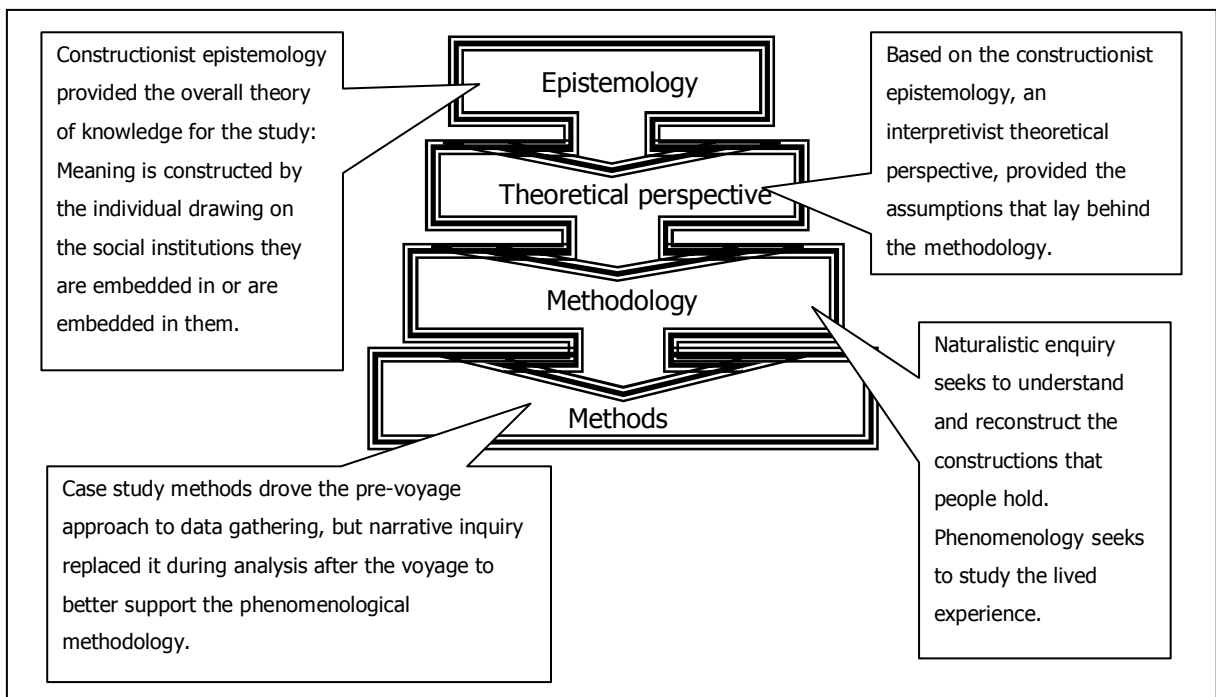


Figure 10. The four elements of social research (Crotty, 1998, p. 4)

In the following I will describe why I proposed the initial approach and its basis. This explanation is needed to show the development of my thinking about the methodology and its evolution over the course of the study period. I will show how I came to draw on elements of narrative inquiry and phenomenology.

Epistemology

It seems evident that the Internet in itself has little meaning. Computers and wires have of themselves limited meaning, like a still printing press. However the Internet, primarily with its websites, email and multimedia capability, enables expeditioners to send and receive text, images and

sounds over long distances with many fewer restrictions than more traditional forms of communication (Castells 2000, p. 356). This multi-media multi-way ability appears to strongly support a constructionist approach to making meaning. Contributors to meaning can be sent and received in a number of dimensions, which working together, for instance text, video, with sound, in near real time, reliably available and readily accessible, may have the power to arouse deeply felt emotions as the receiver constructs a whole (virtual) world.

By employing a constructionist epistemology I am therefore starting with the premise that both senders and receivers of messages construct their own meaning, drawing on the social institutions they are part of (Crotty 1998, p. 52-57). Becoming part of the individual's knowledge (Berger and Luckmann 1966, p. 13-30), these individual constructions may influence the behaviour of the expeditioners and others associated with the expedition.

Theoretical Perspective

The Project was planned to take an overall interpretivist theoretical perspective. In doing so I assumed a relativist ontology in which reality was viewed in terms of multiple constructions (Green 2002, p. 6).

According to Scott and Usher interpretivism focuses on everyday life and explores how meaning is constructed from the perspective of the researched (Scott and Usher 1999, p. 25). Whilst I anticipated life aboard the yacht during the voyage would be demanding and very different to my life on land, I expected it would soon seem 'normal', and come to follow set patterns. I didn't think it would be contrived in any way for the research. In a general sense I didn't think it would be so very different to life within any expedition, or certainly any yachting voyage type of expedition. This supported my taking an interpretivist approach, and thinking of it as an instrumental case study.

Within this paradigm, a subjective epistemology seemed appropriate in that the interaction between myself (the researcher) and the other participants would create meanings that were themselves influenced by our relationship with one another, the context and the environment.

Methodology

I proposed a naturalistic inquiry approach to guide the research and to gain an understanding of the constructions that expedition participants, including myself, would hold at different times about the effect of Internet communication on the voyage. At the same time I wanted to remain open to new interpretations as information and understanding improved.

Starting with five axioms of a Naturalist paradigm, Lincoln and Guba identify fourteen characteristics for conducting research within this paradigm (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 39). These appeared to confirm the suitability of this approach to the research and give guidance to the research process as I outline below.

The use of a case study for Naturalist research was supported as it was suited to the description of multiple realities and because it was suited to the description of researchers interaction with the participants and the consequent biases that may result (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 41).

Naturalistic ontology suggested that realities were wholes that couldn't be understood in isolation from their contexts (Ibid., p. 39). This supported my actual participation in the expedition and my role running the Internet communications. I would hopefully understand the context of all the communication issues.

With multiple realities likely to be perceived and the research environment heavily influenced by external weather and other variable conditions, (such as power available and security), I believed the type of data that I wanted could not be gathered by mechanical or electronic means, other than through the use of a voice recorder and camera. Lincoln and Guba support this view that human beings need to be used in order to adjust to the variety of data gathering situations and effectively evaluate the meaning of interactions. They can allow for the influence of the instrument and differing values of researcher and researchee (Ibid., p. 39). In this inquiry I would be both the researcher and an active participant in the expedition and well placed to conduct this research.

I believed the holding of tacit knowledge about this expedition and ocean sailing would be valuable to effectively understand both emic and etic issues.ⁱ Lincoln and Guba argue that the use of tacit knowledge in addition to the knowledge expressed in spoken or written language is needed in order to identify and understand the nuances of multiple realities. I anticipated that much of the interaction between researcher and participants might occur at this level (Ibid., p.40). In the case of this research I expected to be working with other members of the crew in close proximity for twelve

ⁱ Emic and etic refer to two different kinds of data concerning human behaviour. An "emic" account of behaviour is a description of behavior in terms meaningful (consciously or unconsciously) to the actor. An "etic" account is a description of a behaviour in terms familiar to the (external) observer/researcher. Based on Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emic> accessed 15 February 2006.

months. I anticipated there would be a high degree of tacit understanding between us that could be accepted and used within this research paradigm. As the researcher I also had the benefit of the experience of having previously participated in a significant expedition (an ocean voyage) in a small yacht in pre-Internet days (Grainger 1976).

As a participant in the Save the Albatross Voyage I was deeply involved in the planning; as a member of the crew I was responsible not only for online communications, but also for running a Watch, took a major role in the sailing of the vessel at all times and was responsible for the running and maintenance of many important pieces of equipment. In addition I was undertaking this research. The ability to conduct meaningful research in such a position is an important consideration in terms of the credibility of my observations and interpretations. Prior to the Voyage I planned to employ a number of credibility techniques as part of the naturalistic inquiry process including triangulation of multiple data sources, member checking and follow up with participants in other expeditions. In addition I anticipated reviewing and re-evaluating my own notes after the conclusion of the voyage, with the cold, wetness, violent motion and tiredness a distant memory. I thought hindsight and the perspective of a third party reviewer might reveal new insights.

In terms of data collection methods, qualitative methods are recommended within the naturalist paradigm due to their greater adaptability to multiple realities. Within this project I planned to use qualitative methods such as interviews, document analysis and observation. At the same time I didn't want to rule out quantitative methods thinking it might become apparent that some data could be most effectively gathered using a quantitative method, such as a short survey of participants.

When selecting subjects to interview, I planned to use purposive sampling as opposed to representative sampling as I expected this to better demonstrate the full range of multiple realities (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 40). For instance I anticipated all members of the yacht crew being asked to participate, together with active shore based supporters.

Looking forward to the analysis of the data, I initially proposed the possibility of using a number of accepted approaches and processes that fall within the bounds of Naturalistic Inquiry. It was probably unrealistic to propose using them all, and their mention was really a reflection of my uncertainty about the nature of the data I might collect and the findings that would emerge and the lack of any pre-existing research or theory on this subject.

For instance inductive rather than deductive analysis (Ibid., p. 40) and a grounded approach to the development of guiding theory (Ibid., p. 41) drawing on previous work done on Virtual Teams (Lipnack and Stamp 2000).

I anticipated using thematic analysis to identify patterns and re-occurring underlying issues, leading to the search for more data to support or qualify emerging trends (Liddell 2002 p. 66). I hoped that the analysis of themes would progressively build up a picture of the effect of Internet communication on expeditions.

I acknowledged the danger of making broad generalizations from the findings of a naturalistic case study, as they were likely to be dependent to some extent or other on the unique relationship between myself and the other participants (Ibid., p. 42).

Despite any semblance of a confident approach to this research in the above, I was uncertain how the research would actually unfold and proposed allowing myself the flexibility of the Emergent Design (ibid., p. 41) approach which recognises that the multiple realities that may be identified cannot be sufficiently well anticipated to enable an adequate research design to be put together beforehand.

I planned to discuss the meanings and interpretation of the data with the subjects themselves, as it would be their realities under study (Ibid., p. 41). I anticipated this would take the form of follow up interviews to discuss the outcomes and conclusions drawn from previous interviews, events and documents. I believed this process would contribute to the credibility of the research.

I intended to use Idiographic interpretation and the drawing of conclusions from data (i.e. in terms of the particulars of the case) rather than nomothetic, (in terms of law like generalizations) as I expected different interpretations to come from different realities, the interpretation depending heavily on the local situation and the relationship between the participants in the case, and myself, the researcher (Ibid., p. 42).

Finally, as Lincoln and Guba propose, it was acknowledged that the conventional criteria for trustworthiness (internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity) would be inappropriate for this study. Such criteria imply a single reality that the researcher seeks to identify and validate. This is inconsistent with the whole basis of naturalistic inquiry that accepts multiple realities. The criteria for generalization (replicability), and objectivity (independence of the researcher and their values) would clearly not be met in this approach either. Nevertheless, it was proposed that empirical procedures could adequately affirm the trustworthiness of this style of research (ibid., p. 43). As has

already been mentioned these were to include the triangulation of multiple data sources, member checking and possibly follow up with participants in other expeditions.

Methods

The primary setting for this research was the John Ridgway Save the Albatross Voyage. In the original research proposal it was proposed the voyage be treated as a qualitative instrumental case study. Stake identifies an instrumental case study as one that is "...examined mainly to provide insight into an issue," and in which "...the case is of secondary interest, it plays a supportive role, and it facilitates our understanding of something else" (Stake 2000, p. 435). Whilst the Save the Albatross Voyage was expected to provide the primary environment for the research, after the voyage it was proposed that some research also be undertaken into communications within other expeditions both past and present.

But the focus of the research was to be primarily on the voyage and the effect of Internet communication on it. Stake regards a case as a specific, a complex functioning thing, an integrated system (1995, p. 2). It had a clear beginning (my receipt of an invitation to participate), an end, (anticipated to be at some point not very long after my return to Australia, probably approximately 21 months after my initial involvement) and clear boundaries in terms of the issues and who was to be involved.

Stake proposes using issues to provide conceptual structure for a qualitative case study, arguing that their study leads to,

Observing, even teasing out, the problems of the case, the conflictual outpourings, the complex backgrounds of human concern. Issues help us to expand upon the moment, help us to see the instance in a more historical light, help us to recognise the pervasive problems in human interaction. (1995, p. 17}

Even before departing on the voyage I was coming to realise that the overall research question was not focused so much on issues as on developing qualitative understanding of the effects of Internet communication on an expedition. At the time I justified the Case Study approach saying I expected that issues would emerge early on in the study, and would provide an important framework for research. For instance, the use of the Internet in the planning stages appeared to have enabled crew members and shore-based helpers to discuss and plan important aspects of the voyage, but did this lead to the best decisions in hindsight, and if not, why not? On the voyage itself, I suggested that the availability of Internet communication, and the easy familiarity with it by most participants, may lead to expectations of high levels of interactive communication between crewmembers and their families.

However technical problems, time limitations and cost may lead to these expectations not being met. Would this be so? And if it was, what were its effects and how might this be minimized in the future?

But overall it was proposed that the Voyage be regarded as an integrated system, an almost stand-alone entity with a life of its own. Whilst the yacht itself would be travelling around the world, the project had clear boundaries and, I proposed, could be studied as a case in Stake's terms.

I concluded that I would follow Stake's suggestions on the use of issues and that these would be limited to the focus implied by the research question.

Participants and Scope

When planning the research I expected to include the following, all of whom I intended to regard as participants:

- People who joined the crew of the yacht for one or more legs.
- People who gave significant support but were not on the yacht.
- Family and friends of the crew.
- Members of issue based supporting organisations such as Birdlife International and their member organisations.
- Members of media organisations such as the BBC.
- Supporting suppliers (although these were limited but nevertheless significant).
- Members of the public who become closely involved in the project including organisations such as schools, local yacht clubs, and individuals.

Geographically "the voyage" was expected to have a worldwide spread, with crewmembers being drawn from the UK, Canada, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Shore-based participants would be even more widely spread and I anticipated this might present some data-gathering difficulties.

Whilst it was acknowledged that a case study should be clearly defined, Lincoln and Guba suggest that within the naturalist inquiry paradigm, the boundaries are likely to evolve based on the emergent focus of the study. This enables the multiple realities to define the focus rather than the preconceptions of the researcher (Ibid., p. 42). In this case the voyage project appeared to define the case, but still I expected decisions would need to be made about the extent and focus of the study. For instance the crew of the yacht clearly represented only one part of the communication matrix. Other participants in the project with an interest and view on communications included the

family and friends of crew members, members of supporting organisations such as Birdlife International, and their member organisations, actively involved media organisations such as the BBC, and so on. As the study evolved I expected themes would emerge, the study to become more focused and the boundaries more clearly able to be set.

The Data gathering process

From a research point of view I expected the environment to be a difficult one to work in, but one rich in data. Voyages around the world in the Southern Ocean aboard a yacht are physically and emotionally demanding. Crewmembers are commonly under a lot of stress for weeks at a time due to the weather conditions, the demands of the yacht and constrained living quarters. Fatigue and sometimes fear, in a perpetually cold and wet environment mean that small irritations can become triggers for tempers fraying.

I set out planning to gather data in the following ways:

- Observation and recording personal notes (my daily journal).
- The collection and retention of written documents (all public communications).
- Unstructured interviews with crew and shore based participants.
- Recorded with hand written notes.
- Recorded on mini disc.
- Recorded on video.
- Group discussions with the yacht crew and other participants.
- Still photographs;
 - Of the environment.
 - Of normal life aboard the yacht.
 - Of significant events.
- Video photography.
 - Of the environment.
 - Of normal life aboard the yacht.
 - Of significant events.
 - Of interviews.
- Searching the Internet and bibliographical databases for the records of other expeditions (both pre and post Internet).
- A post-voyage survey of participants to gather their perceptions of the effect of Internet communication on the Voyage.

I expected that whilst active unstructured interviewing and recording using both video and sound alone, would be an important part of the data gathering process, observation and the recording of the same together with the collection of documents would probably be the predominant active data gathering process. Kellehear proposes that these unobtrusive data gathering methods have a number of advantages over more active methods. These include the ability to assess actual behaviour as opposed to self reported behaviour, they are more likely to be repeatable, they are discreet and non-involving of people so there may be less reaction to the researcher and they are non-disruptive and therefore suitable for longitudinal studies where activities are carried on for a sustained period, as in this case for more than a year (Kellehear 1993, p. 6).

However, Kellehear acknowledges a number of potential disadvantages. The potential for original records to be distorted (though there seemed little motivation in this case so I hoped unlikely), emic and etic issues which can arise through an outsider viewing issues from the point of view of a stranger (etic) and failing to understand group meanings (emic). As the primary researcher and part of the crew I planned to avoid this through cross checking. Other potential disadvantages include the potential to selectively record observational data. Inevitably observers have their own interests, biases and backgrounds. Each will record a different view (Ibid., p. 7). I expected to be no different. At the same time I thought this could prove in itself interesting. I expected to write a weekly reflective journal to try to place on record at the time my view. In subsequent analysis of the data, away from the rigors of the Southern Ocean and with all the benefits of hindsight, I hoped to be able to look at my own records, both written and photographic, with fresh eyes. I anticipated seeing detail and being able to identify themes which may have gone un-noticed at the time (Ibid., p. 74).

Planned Analysis of data

During the voyage I planned to collect and store data on the boat. Data analysis would primarily occur on completion of the voyage. I expected the analysis would proceed using a variety of methods and processes largely driven by the nature of the data and the emerging themes.

Thematic analysis was expected to underlie the investigation of the data. Whilst acknowledging the multiple realities, I expected to be looking for patterns in text, interviews, and visual records to develop themes. Kellehear suggests that the validity of using thematic analysis rests to a considerable extent on how well the researcher's view of a culture parallels that of the culture's view of itself (Ibid., p. 38). I anticipated that through living as one of the crew on the yacht for a year, my view of the culture (my reality) would not be too dissimilar to the realities of other members of the crew, giving some credibility to my identification of themes.

Kellehear also advocates the analysis of audio visual records, seeing them as providing an alternative and complementary source of information valuable in being available for re-checking and checking by others, and also being effective for revealing details perhaps un-noticed at the time they were taken (Ibid., p. 74). Kellehear explores various approaches to analysing photographs and these were to be considered as part of the emergent design of the research.

Anticipated Ethical Issues

I expected ethical issues that might arise would relate to the following topics. These were the subject of the initial research and ethics approval proposal;

- The privacy of participants and confidentiality. I saw this as requiring me to respect the confidences of participants and to avoid including personal or relationship issues.
- Gaining the consent of participants to participate in the study.
- Not using any deception to gather data.
- Storing data in a secure way.
- Not including minors in the study.
- Not using the research in a negative way, such as to demean any participants or their contribution to the voyage.

These seemed clear enough at the time but during and after the voyage reflection led to a growing awareness of additional issues. These included questions about the moral judgements we were making about fishing rights, an issue outside the scope of this study but nevertheless interesting. More relevant was the deeper than expected feelings about the loss of privacy in communications felt by John Ridgway, and the struggle I went through during the post voyage review period trying to decide the extent to which I should reveal my own negative and critical feelings about some aspects of the voyage and other participants. These ethical issues did not go outside the scope of the issues for which approval had been gained, but did present greater complexity than foreseen, the subtle nuances of issues relating to the above issues taxing me throughout the Project. I discuss these issues in Chapter 8: Learning.

The methodology: On the voyage

Setting out on the voyage the planned approach seemed to fit the environment and experience I was entering into and I believed would support the gaining and sharing of knowledge. I gathered data largely as planned, as detailed below, with the exception of video data. It became apparent by the end of the first Leg that I could not take video and look after all my other responsibilities on the yacht, so this was passed to another crewmember, Igor Asheshov, who joined the voyage in Cape Town.

As the voyage progressed it became increasingly clear to me that the true Project was the web of stories and meanings around the Save the Albatross Voyage. My Journal became increasingly important as I tried to capture these and intertwine them in a narrative describing my everyday life on the yacht. In the following I describe how I went about this and the collecting of other data on the voyage itself.

Data Gathering During the Voyage

Daily Journal

I quickly formed a habit of writing a daily journal about what was going on and my feelings about it. A practice I kept up throughout the eleven months of the voyage. As the voyage progressed, so the scope of what I wrote about grew. Diaries are well regarded as a way to give order to experiences that otherwise may seem chaotic. According to Noddings, "Diarists report that when they sit down and put pen to paper their most immediate and pressing concerns emerge before them on their paper" (Witherell, Noddings et al. 1991, p. 105). I think my journals are true to this. I wrote them with the expectation that I alone would read them in the future, that I would use them as a record of what happened and how I felt about it. I wasn't thinking of a wider audience and felt free to write anything in my mind.

During this time my writing evolved from being purely an aid to remembering what happened, to becoming a creative expression in its own right as I increasingly tried to capture the spirit of a moment, to tell stories and to express my feeling.

Despite having the laptop computer on board I handwrote my journal throughout the voyage for two reasons. Firstly power generation limitations quickly restricted the use of the power hungry laptop and screen, and secondly I wanted to write my Journal in various locations, such as in the Doghouse whilst on Watch, in the aft cockpit whilst on Watch in fine weather, and in the Saloon when John or Marie Christine were using the laptop. The laptop hardwired into its protective casing was not transportable. I believe this saved it from otherwise inevitable damage. I may also have subconsciously preferred the hand-writing medium to express my personal feelings, although I am not convinced this is so. As an early adopter of personal computers I feel very comfortable writing to screen too.

Nevertheless, by the end of the voyage my Journal filled six A4 spiral bound hardback notebooks, 720 pages in all. Looking back sixteen months after my return, I realise that steadily the stories in my

Journal are becoming my core memories of the voyage. It seems in time only they will remain. As Kim Stafford says in *Stories Lives Tell*;

A story saves lives a little at a time by making us see and hear and taste our lives and dreams more deeply, I do not make the story, the story makes me (Witherell, Noddings et al. 1991, p. 15-28).

Daily Log

An official ship's log was updated every hour the yacht was at sea, usually by the Leader of the Watch. This recorded the position of the yacht, weather and sea conditions, details of sails set, barometric pressure, temperature, and other details of the moment such as maintenance undertaken or needed, any damage sustained and birds, fish, whales, dolphins or ships sighted.

Each day I transcribed this information for local noon, to a form I created and subsequently entered to the laptop to send to h2g2. Prior to the voyage I hadn't thought about the detail of how I would do this. I created the first form early on Leg One, then subsequently improved it with experience during the voyage.² This was helpful because it was our practice not to move the Ship's Logbook from the Doghouse. Previous experience had shown that doing so in the narrow confines of the boat quickly aged it. Initially I asked that someone on the Watch transcribe the information at noon, but quickly found they forgot or interpreted the requested information differently to my expectations. After a while I stopped asking them and did it myself. This at least gave consistent interpretation.

Interviews

As planned I conducted interviews during the voyage, recording these on a mini-disc (MD) recorder.³ The majority of these recordings were one on one however even on a 60ft boat with a small crew it's hard for conversations to be private. This may have influenced what people said however quickly getting to know the acoustics of the boat I was generally able to record with some semblance of discreteness. During Legs One and Two I interviewed John and Marie Christine (individually) about their experience with communications on their previous expeditions. Subsequently I interviewed most members of the crew once during the voyage to collect a total of nearly fifteen hours of recorded material. These recordings are all contained on the Durable Record DVD.⁴

Still photographs

As a moderately keen photographer I went on the voyage planning to take many pictures. With the availability of digital photography and an Internet connection I wondered how practical it was on an expedition to take photos and send them to a website and if this had any effect on the expedition. My

original plan had been to send digital photos to the website from the yacht to illustrate the daily Log on h2g2. However before we even left it became apparent I would not be able to do this due to the narrow bandwidth of the link to the Internet from the yacht. The plan was changed to send a CD of selected pictures from each stopover to Richard Creaseyⁱⁱ who would then use them to illustrate subsequent Logs. This turned out to be more difficult and time consuming than expected. As a result photographs did not feature in a big way in our communication and I have not studied their use further here. Nevertheless I did take nearly 5,000 photographs and have drawn on these to illustrate the voyage story contained in the Durable Record. An extract from this, with some illustrations is contained in Chapter 6.⁵ Details of photographic equipment taken and some lessons in its use can be found in the Durable Record.⁶

Video

As already mentioned I passed responsibility for video to Igor Asheshov who joined us in Cape Town, and with it all Direction and Production control. He set out to focus on the story of the elderly couple trying to prevent the needless killing of albatrosses, but unfortunately production values and record keeping were not quite what they might have been. Following a huge crew effort on the final long Leg between the Falklands and the Azores, a comprehensive Shot List was prepared,⁷ however following the voyage a dispute about direction and production control between John Ridgway and Richard Creasey halted progress on their inclusion in documentaries about the Albatross. Nor have they been available for viewing or inclusion in this research in any way.

Other records

- Daily Notes: John Ridgway wrote daily Notes to accompany the technical information about the yacht's progress. These were published each day on h2g2. Copies of each day's Notes were retained on board as Word files.⁸
- Emails: File copies of all emails sent and received during the voyage were retained, mainly as .txt files with the exception of those sent and received by one crewmember who specifically asked that all their email traffic be deleted.
- Satellite phone data transmission records: A spreadsheet record was kept of every data call using the Iridium phone system detailing date, length, emails sent and the size of each in kilobytes.⁹

ⁱⁱ Richard Creasey, then a Director of the BBC h2g2 community website, was my principal shore contact for communications. Each day I sent him the Daily Log via email and he would load it to h2g2.

- Sailmail transmission records: A spreadsheet record was kept of every successful Sailmail connection detailing date, time (UTC), emails sent and received, size (bytes) land station, frequency transmission speed, and receiving speed from 16 April to 30 June 2004.¹⁰
- Weather forecasts: File and printouts of all weather fax forecasts, grib files, satellite images, and weather forecasts assembled on the yacht were kept.¹¹
- To Do Lists: Copies of To Do lists assembled prior to Stopovers were kept.¹²
- Doghouse Manual: Prior to returning to UK waters and a larger crew joining us, I prepared a Manual detailing standard sailing practices, Rule of the Road, Emergency Equipment, Procedures and other essential information for the Watch to be kept in the Doghouse.¹³
- Inventory of items taken: List of all items of personal kit I took on the voyage.¹⁴
- List of people associated with the Voyage and their role.¹⁵

Data not collected

The following planned data was not collected:

There were no interviews recorded other than with crewmembers during the voyage. Though I originally proposed interviewing others, and also post-voyage interviews, I decided to focus on the experience of being on the expedition rather than on a more general study. I increasingly felt the experience of friends and supporters did not fit within the narrower phenomenological study I gravitated towards. The experience of friends and supporters not on an expedition remains to be studied.

I did not organise or record any group discussions on communication other than with John, Marie Christine and myself. At sea the need for people to be on Watch throughout every twenty-four hour period meant that there were few opportunities to talk with a bigger group. There were however informal discussions on the yacht about communication issues that I often wrote about in my personal journal.

Although video recordings were made during voyage, none of these have subsequently been available for this research¹⁶ apart from the short QuickTime videos I took with my digital still camera.¹⁷

Post Voyage – The Evolution of the Methodology

Following the voyage I set about collating and analysing the data and it was during this process the methodology evolved from a case study approach to one employing elements of narrative inquiry and phenomenology. As previously mentioned I had come to feel that the research project was really about the web of stories and lived experience on the Albatross Voyage. As a dynamic entity the

Project required a way of uncovering implicit knowledge as well as explicit etc elements. The evolution of this approach is described below.

Freshly returned from what had been a very intense eleven-month experience I was conscious of being very close to the whole thing and had differing and even conflicting emotions about it together with nearly 450,000 words of collected records, nearly 5,000 photos, and fifteen hours of interviews. I wondered how to make sense of it all. There seemed to be a number of important themes, but now I realised I couldn't clearly remember how I had felt even at the beginning of the voyage.

I decided to systematically organise and then work through all the information I had returned with. Ultimately, I wanted to write a summary of each Leg and Stopover highlighting the main points pertaining to my research. I thought doing this would enable me to not only identify the obvious main points, but to become aware of underlying re-occurring themes.

I describe this process in the Analysis Chapter. It took much longer than expected. Twelve months in all, as long as the original voyage.

During this summary writing process I became aware I had learnt a lot about using the Internet at sea, particularly the very inhospitable and remote Southern Ocean. The effects of the often atrocious conditions, the very slow and often unreliable links, the daily pressures to communicate with those ashore, managing expectations and exhaustion, unreliable shore-based suppliers and vulnerable equipment afloat. But the benefits too of daily contact with people ashore. There were many lessons I thought for expeditioners and immediately following completion of the Summaries I brought these together in a practical 'How To' paper¹⁸ I submitted to the Royal Geographical Society, as a possible chapter for the next edition of their Expedition Handbook.¹⁹

But I believed there was more to be gained from the experience and my records of it, than just this.

Use of Phenomenology

It seemed easy to say I learnt this or that, but how could I justify this, and what sort of learning process had I gone through? I wondered if there was anything here for educationalists, or those seeking support for expeditions as learning environments or for personal growth?

I researched learning theory (Boud, Cohen et al. 1993), (Jarvis P 2003), (Schon 1983), which validated my claim to learning but increasingly I came to feel that what I thought I had learnt was just my own personal construct from the voyage experience, greatly influenced by my own personal

history. Might another person have constructed very different learning from the same experience? It seemed limiting to restrict the reader to just my construction. This led to thinking about using a phenomenological methodology as the philosophic foundation for the research.

Whilst Edmund Husserl, the father of phenomenology, advocated a form of reflection that sought to describe events and objects with no pre-supposition, later thinkers, Martin Heidegger, Hans Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur (Sharkey 2001, p. 19), brought together the study of interpretation of texts, hermeneutics, and phenomenology.

Increasingly I realised my evolving study of using the Internet on an expedition had an important hermeneutic component and warmed to the view of Gadamer (1989) that the reader, that is the interpreter of the text, is not reconstructing what was in the mind of the author, but building their own meaning "...co-determined by the hermeneutic situation of the interpreter and the horizon that the text projects" (Sharkey 2001, p. 25). In other words each reader's interpretation would be unique. For instance some might see my experience as one of great hope for the future, for a time when non-participants could directly share in the expedition experience in real time, whilst others might view it negatively, perhaps as a sign of the end of the age of self-reliant adventuring. If the story could speak directly to the reader then each could take what they wanted from the experience.

Greg Dening (1996), Paul Sharkey (2001) and Max van Manen (1990), apply these ideas of hermeneutic phenomenology to social research and it was within their broad framework that I decided to let my text speak for itself.

I had copious texts written at the time, which in the year following my return I had turned into a shortened narrative. Witherall and Noddings and their writing about the use of narrative in education (1991), and personal journals influenced me. Now I wondered should I not leave it to the reader to immerse themselves in the experience, to become engaged (Sharkey 2001, p. 17) in the subject, to construct their own learning, "...challenging the reader to reflect deeply on what it is the text of the field has to say" (Ibid., p. 31). After all there were few facts here. Some to be sure, such as details of being disconnected from mailboxes, equipment being damaged and failing, numbers of emails sent and received. But much more of the story is in my subjective account. My Journal had been written daily, during the lived experience. There was some reflection but I was immersed in the onboard experience for eleven months, our life on the yacht became my life. I was trying to record what my life was like, not as a special event, a weekend away on a boat story, nor from some objective viewpoint, but as the everyday life I was experiencing.²⁰ In my journal I wrote about events, the responses of others and myself, and about personal feelings of the time. I wrote about the pressure

to communicate daily, to respond to emails, how I felt about news from home, and about what the Skipper wrote for the Internet. I got tired, irritable, excited, ambitious, frightened, sentimental, and proud, sometimes all on the one Watch.

Am I being too optimistic about the power of the text? I hope not, the reader must judge.

I was aware that creating summary accounts added another layer of filtering and construction, and I had much debate with myself about what should be left in and what left out. Hermeneutic phenomenology is "...fundamentally a writing activity" (van Manen 1990, p. 7). Being so close to the events themselves, both as the participant and in terms of time, it remained a subjective experience and not 'bracketed' in the terms of Husserl (Sharkey 2001, p. 18).

In the narratives I created I describe the experience I was part of, the Save the Albatross Voyage, from start to finish. The preparation, the voyage itself, and subsequent reflection on it. They are based on emails sent and received, the daily Log written by Ridgway and published on the Internet, together with the personal journal I wrote myself, supplemented by more than 4,000 photographs and my memories. They tell the story. Well, not THE story, there is no such thing, but they are a rich resource which readers can use to construct meaning.

With this development of the methodology I looked again at my summary accounts of each leg and stopover. My style of writing the Leg and Stopover summaries had evolved over the year, much as my approach to writing my Journal had changed at sea. Initially I wrote the summaries as bullet points, to assist in the identification of themes, covering what happened, particularly as it affected communications. They were brief and to the point. But then became longer and more free flowing as I found myself trying to write a narrative account of the Leg that would be interesting, that would engage the reader in the experience I had had on the voyage. I found myself wanting to tell the story of the whole experience, not just those parts directly related to using the Internet. To understand about the effect of the Internet, a much bigger story needed to be told.

Now I realised I needed to go back and re-visit the early, rather sparse accounts, to immerse the hard facts in the soft issues of each day, of feelings, ideas, the responses of others and the relentless daily activity needed to keep the yacht ploughing it's way across the ocean.

I drew on Brearley's view that phenomenological writing needed a semiotic approach that would "...empathetically engage with another human being's experience" (Bentz and Shapiro 1998), that would "...combine cognitive and non-cognitive ways of knowing" (van Manen 1997), and "...explore

the essential and perennial themes of the human condition" (von Eckartsberg 1998) quoted in (Brearley 2001, p. 74-84).

Considering my own closeness to the material, the descriptions of the experience that I had written myself, I seemed to have departed from the traditional phenomenological approach of Husserl and "bracketing" my wider knowledge of what was going on in order to be open to interpretations (Sharkey 2001, p. 18). Being both subject and object I wondered how I could do this even allowing for the subjectivity accepted by the methodology. But I think doing it this way has enabled me to ultimately get beneath the subjective experience and discuss the underlying structures and essences of the experience. I do this partially in the story itself, and also in Chapter 8: Learning. A position supported by Sharkey (2001).

But my methodological difficulties were not over. Whilst I believed the summaries had the power to engage and speak to the reader, they covered the full eleven months of the voyage, and totalling more than 143,000 words, were simply far too long.

Instead of including the whole story I now decided to just include the Summary account of one Leg (Chapter 6: Voyage Story) and then take the reader on to a discussion about learning from such a story and the processes that may come to bear and influence us all, (Chapter 7: Analysis), and then conclude by discussing, in this context, my learning from the experience as a whole (Chapter 8: Learning).

In doing this I am following the view of James Edie that phenomenology supports the use of descriptions of experience as the basis for theoretical conclusions, the abandonment of any attempt to be objective or idealistic in the description, and the emphasis on a total construct of the experience, "...in all it's multi-layered concreteness, rather than with reductionist abstractions" (Edie 1965, p. 9-10).

Conclusion

Looking back, my original constructionist epistemology, interpretivist theoretical perspective and naturalistic methodology seemed to provide an important base and initial framework upon which I could set out on this study. But then returning from the voyage it seemed that the data had its own story to tell and the evolution to a form of hermeneutic phenomenology influenced by narrative inquiry seemed almost natural.

I concluded that such a development was consistent with an expeditionary project such as this. In this context the original methodological setting of constructionism and naturalistic methodology remains valid, but in the unfolding of the Project it became clear that phenomenology and narrative gave a refinement to the methodology within the interpretivist methodological framework.

The whole philosophical journey described above led to unexpected study and learning about methodology that I summarise in Chapter 8: Learning.

"We read about journeys of any age to find the world's edges and our own, to learn the best and the worst of ourselves, to be scared witless, to bolster our courage, to be in awe. We need them, and for that reason adventure stories endure" (Whybrow 2003, p. 15).

Chapter 6

THE VOYAGE

Introduction

I wrote accounts of all the Legs and Stopovers during the year after the voyage, as part of a process of assembling and analysing the data and memories of each part of the Voyage.

During this writing process my approach changed, from one of gathering and collating key points, aimed at thematic analysis, to that of writing a narrative that might engage the reader and help the latter to construct a view of what it was like to be in my role on this voyage. A phenomenological approach. This required a revision of the earlier thematically based summaries.¹

Covering the 11 months of the voyage in some detail, and the 9 months of preparation, these illustrated accounts extend to more than 143,000 words

The Leg of the voyage I have chosen to include here is that from Cape Town, South Africa to Melbourne, Australia. A voyage of 6,160 nautical miles that took us 51 days. This included a brief stop at Desolation Island in the French Kerguelen Islands, about half way.

I have chosen this Leg because it was the first that truly followed the path of the Albatross in the Southern Ocean, a course that took us through the fishing grounds in which we were most likely to find pirate fishing vessels. But generally it is representative of our Southern Ocean legs.

To read the account of the whole voyage go to: [Durable Record Home>The Voyage Story](#).

Leg 3: Cape Town to Melbourne



Figure 11. Igor on the helm in the Southern Ocean. DSCN1216.jpg

Leg 3:	Cape Town to Melbourne
Departed:	Cape Town 25 October 2003
Arrived:	Melbourne, Australia, 14 December 2003
Total days:	51 days
Distance:	6,160nm (11,415km)
Miles/day:	120.8nm (223.8 kilometres per day)
Average speed:	5.03knots (9.4 kph)
Crew:	John Ridgway, Marie Christine Ridgway, Nick Grainger, Igor Asheshov, Trevor Fishlock and Quentin Hanich

Figure 12. Leg 3 Dimensions.

Cape Town Departure

It was a grey blustery sort of day. Out there I guessed the wind to be straight out of the southwest at probably forty knots or more. Even the sheltered marina pontoon heaved and groaned in the swell. I wondered if leaving today was really the best idea. "No commitments to sponsors, free to come and go as we'd like" had been our cry. All forgotten now. People would always ask when we were leaving, and wanted a date, which became fact. Then with fresh bread, fruit and vegetables loaded, fresh

silvery cakes passed over in their foil packs, stews cooked for the first few days, the water topped up and all gear stowed, who is man enough to say, "Not today, it looks a bit windy"? Not us.

"We'll motor due west for maybe 6 or 10 miles," John proposed, "that should enable us to clear the Cape when we tack south."

With all aboard I was the last on the pontoon, hurrying around to cast off in the difficult conditions. John tried to control the boat with the engine in the strong cross wind. Suddenly the wind caught the stern and she swung out. "See you in Melbourne..." I could almost hear John crying. A giant leap and a catching hand saw me aboard. But we still had one line umbilically holding us, now like a rod of steel, and going click, click, click as the full weight of the wind on the boat came to bear on it. Well-wishers rushed forward to cast it off. I could see it would be jammed impossibly. It would break any moment, the recoil taking the end back into their faces like a fierce flashing whip. "GET BACK" I yelled at them. They paused, and stood back. "The knife Nick, beside you," it was Igor, nearby. I grabbed the sharp deck knife and touched it to the line. BANG!

We were off.

Rough Seas

Our departure from the Cape Yacht Club pontoon was just a prelude to conditions outside the harbour. Our plan was to motor southwest for just 6 miles into the wind, and then turn and sail SE to clear Cape Point, with the wind on our starboard beam. Only 6 miles, we thought, 2



Figure 13. For a while Cape Town was almost stationary astern as we battled current, wind and big seas. DSCN0932.jpg

hours at most. But as we cleared the shelter of the harbour we quickly felt the true strength of the wind. Waves which had been building all the way from South America, were now piling up on themselves, forced upwards by the rapidly rising sea floor, to produce steep sided building sized waves with breaking crests. Up, up, up we'd go, through the breaking top, the boat would tip violently forward, then down and down, then up the next. The Mercedes rumbled on as the yacht see-sawed,

and we crept further out. Our speed slowed. Picture-book like Cape Town and Table Mountain first receded behind us, then slowed to a standstill, despite the roaring Mercedes and fairground motion.ⁱ

Suddenly above the engine, and noise of the wind and sea, I heard our name being called on the VHF. It was the Royal Cape Yacht Club. "English Rose VI, are you planning to return?" It was rough, but only mid-morning, I wondered why we would want to return. Did the yacht club know something we didn't? I wanted to ask. I consulted with John on the wheel. "No, tell them we're not going back" he shouted. I told them. Christina Barlow, our enthusiastic local supporter, had worried watching our progress come to a near halt in the big seas off the Cape, and returned to the Yacht Club and persuaded them to call us.

But we were making some progress. Inching past transit points ashore on our port quarter. The engine thundered on. Within a few hours we were all seasick except Marie Christine. She said she'd got her sea legs the day before while stowing food and vegetables, becoming seasick due to the violent plunging movement of the boat in the rough weather, even though still tied to a marina pontoon.

Making less than a knot it was late in the afternoon before we could turn to the SE to clear Cape Point, and to skirt the western edge of the notorious and dangerous Aghulas Bank, to the south of the Cape of Good Hope. John and I set a bit of sail and cut the engine. I felt awful but at least we were on our way.

This was my only seasickness on the entire voyage. John and Marie Christine used to say it was unfair I didn't even know what seasickness felt like. Now I did. I found lying on my bunk sipping water the best place. Getting up to go on watch, putting on oilskins before vomiting, the worst. But by 6am the next morning I wrote I was feeling a little better, and steadily improved as the conditions eased. A lazy morning in my bunk helped, my first since Scotland.



Figure 14. Immature Black-browed Albatross. DSCN1247.jpg

ⁱ Should we have delayed our departure I (and others I'm sure) wondered? We talked about it but decided that in reality it wouldn't make much difference, and it was best to get on. I agreed.

Satellite phone mailbox down

Later in the day I wedged myself into the Communications area to send the Log. For speed and convenience I used the Iridium link, but found I couldn't log into the mail server. I realised I hadn't used it for more than a week and wished I'd tested it again before we'd left. But I couldn't think of anything I'd changed in the set up. Meanwhile each login attempt was costing one or two pounds at least. "Login failure" was the only response. I checked the handshake protocol "Cannot find IP address." Here we were, second day out on a 6,000 mile passage, and the Iridium link was already down, I thought to myself.

Whilst worrying about the Iridium link overnight, the weather deteriorated and soon the wind was back up over 30 knots. I shortened sail and we pressed on south-southeast towards Marion Island. Rolling heavily, and shipping a lot of water, most of the crew were seasick again, but luckily my health was improving.

With the Iridium satellite link down I set about trying to get a link with Sailmail. First I had to install an upgrade to the Sailmail software and secondly to install a firmware upgrade to our Pactor modem to enable it to function using the Pactor 3 protocol. These were upgrades I'd downloaded from the Internet in Cape Town but not got around to installing. How I now wished I had. In the rough seas I tried to concentrate. Firmware upgrades are particularly fragile I'd found. A mistake can render an entire device unusable.

But all seemed well. Then with the Raymarine Autopilot and Instruments switched off,ⁱⁱ I crawled astern and switched the aerial from the weather fax receiver to the radio, then tried calling the Mauputo Sailmail station in Mozambique, and got through. I was amazed. I quickly copied and pasted the daily logs from Friday, Saturday and Sunday into Sailmail and tried again. All went through at > 800 bytes/minute.

I decided that the next day I would use Sailmail to ask Sam Semple at the BBC to try to access the Iridium mailbox (from land). I suspected the Iridium link problem was not on the boat or with the phone, but with the ISP and/or Mailbox. If Sam couldn't log in to it successfully from land, my case would be proved and Sam could arrange to have it fixed.

ⁱⁱ I'd been warned Sailmail was very sensitive to electrical interference and to switch off other devices unless I was certain they were not interfering with transmissions.

The phone itself seemed to be functioning normally. On the second day John was interviewed on it for the UK Today programme (the one and only time on the voyage). He also rang Christina Barlow and Bob Duncan back in Cape Town, to thank them for their hospitality, but neither answered.ⁱⁱⁱ

Watch arrangements and our new crew

We steadily settled into our 24-hour routine of Watches with our three new crew-members:

A Watch: John and Marie Christine, Midnight-2am, 6am-10am, 6pm-8pm.

B Watch: Trevor Fishlock (Freelance journalist), Quentin Hanich (GreenPeace Oceans Campaigner, on leave); 2am-4am, 10am-2pm, 8pm-10pm

C Watch: Nick Grainger (Communications), Igor Asheshov (Video), 4am-6am, 2pm-6pm, 10pm-midnight.

Trevor Fishlock had completed two Atlantic crossings on English Rose VI but did not regard himself as a competent sailor. "Nothing in the Atlantic," he was heard to later say, "Prepared me for the Southern Ocean." Newcomer Quentin had sailed aboard a protest yacht in French Polynesia, between Tahiti and Mururoa, and aboard a trailer yacht in Australia. Confident and enthusiastic, his ocean voyaging and sailing experience were nevertheless limited. Both were joining the yacht just for this Leg to Australia.

John instructed them on their Watch to monitor our course and speed, the weather and to keep a lookout. If anything changed either he or I were to be called. He didn't want to risk inexperienced hands using the big powerful winches to make changes to the equally large powerful sails. We had too far to go to risk injury or damage.



Figure 15. Quentin Hanich and Trevor Fishlock, B Watch.
DSCN1052.jpg

Asheshov (40) had joined us from New York where apparently he had been working for a small video company. A friend of John and Marie Christine's since their early visits to South America, he was half Peruvian and half Russian. Fluent in Spanish and English. He'd sailed from the Magellan Straits to Brazil with the Ridgway's in 1996 aboard ERVI but had no other sailing experience. The plan was that

ⁱⁱⁱ This was a common problem and very dispiriting to John. He would put off calling people and then having built himself up to make a call, would find no-one home. It further discouraged him from making calls.

I would teach him all I could on this Leg to Melbourne, then from Melbourne he would lead B Watch for the remainder of the voyage back to Scotland. He would also take on responsibility for shooting video.^{iv}

Early in the first week the weather eased and with it people's seasickness. Although we had an electro-mechanical autopilot (repaired at great expense in Cape Town) and the Monitor (wind powered) self-steering system, we decided the Watch would hand steer during the day. We could then sail faster without risking breaking the Monitor steering oar, and also build the crew's knowledge and sensitivity to the boat.^v

Inexperience leading to small errors irritated me as we adjusted to short sleeps and the confines of the yacht. For instance Quentin, unused to the ways of the boat, opened the deck hatch in the forward sleeping cabin one fine morning, and then unwittingly closed it on a headsail sheet lying across the deck. This prevented it sealing. With the foredeck often awash, Igor found our cabin sopping wet. Luckily plastic spray sheets diverted the worst from our bunks. Very luckily we neither went about, gybed nor attempted to furl the sail attached to the sheet. Any of these would probably have torn the hatch out of the deck.



Figure 16. Igor, after the first few days on each Leg became a good shipmate at sea. DSCN1063.jpg

Sailing south from Cape Town we saw many birds (Cape Petrels, White Chinned Petrels, Storm Petrels, Antarctic Prions and big Black-browed Albatrosses). Whales in the distance and a small brown seal.

^{iv} After initial seasickness I found Asheshov to be a good Watchmate. Although he had little experience or aptitude for sailing, he was a good travelling companion at sea. He would willingly take on a fair share of deck work in bad conditions, studiously learnt the functions of all the lines coming back to the cockpit, would be the first to volunteer to make a hot drink or cook a meal if needed. I particularly respected him for carefully avoiding speaking badly of anyone on board, despite some serious provocation.

^v A good idea in my view. It engaged our new crewmembers in the running of the boat however it meant that a lot of my own time was consumed too.

After reading the Manual carefully in Cape Town, I now had the dedicated Weather fax machine working satisfactorily. Turning it on set to the correct frequency a short time before an expected transmission would result in it automatically printing out a weather fax (from Cape Naval, South Africa in this case). John often reminded me of the limited quantity of fax paper we had on board and its expense.^{vi}

By Day 5, about 800 miles NW of Marion Island, we were into fog. We slipped along in a grey, damp and quiet cocoon. I received an ice report by radio that told of a sixty-foot high iceberg to the north and a bit west of us. In the Log John commented, "Steering in the fog sharpened a bit."

Preparations for pirates

That same day we had a meeting of the whole crew (never normally all together) at which Quentin outlined the possibility of seeing pirate fishing boats. He had sent an email the day before to his contact in an Australian fishing company seeking informal industry information and rumour. Overall our chances seemed slim. Our best chance was around the Kerguelen Islands or Heard Island, still some thousands of miles ahead. We discussed what we might do if we did see one. Photograph it. Video it. Call the BBC on the satellite phone. Try to look like an innocent yacht passing by. Knowing John's love of drama I was a bit worried that he might initiate some sort of incident.

Our nights were getting shorter. Heading south mid-spring. On 31 October, down to 43° south we saw the Aurora Australis for the first time. John wrote in the Log "The whole southern sky was bathed in light, deep red to the east, palest green to the west. Sometimes you feel small and vulnerable out here."

By Day 7 my Sailmail link to Mauputo had failed, with no response to my signals. I tried Iridium again but continued to have "Login failure." Fortunately Richard Creasey, now back from Alaska, saw my email note previously sent by Sailmail to Sam Semple and copied to himself. He rang us and promised to follow up with the BBC (who were hosting the Mailbox we were accessing via the Iridium phone), the next day.^{vii}

^{vi} I was initially surprised to find that John didn't know how to operate the weather fax receiver, nor any desire to learn. Someone else had looked after it before "It can't be that difficult" he would say. I got it working but heading deep into the Southern Ocean I struggled to get clear weather maps and wished I'd learnt more about the technology before we left.

^{vii} I was frustrated it had taken so long for someone to come back to us on this. An ongoing problem was that Creasey, our volunteer primary communications shore agent, was a busy traveller himself. In his emails to us he would often recount his most recent travel, be it to Moscow or Alaska. He would log in and post our Log to h2g2 from wherever, but understandably

Both Sailmail and Iridium data channels were now out of action. I wondered if the corrosion of the aerial switch could be reducing the Sailmail signal strength. I crawled up beneath the port aft cockpit lockers, alongside the steering gear, and took the exposed copper gate switch to pieces. It was corroded but intact. I filed and sand-papered all the copper contact faces and re-assembled the switch. Signal strength seemed improved, but still no response from Mauputo. I wondered if was off air again? ^{viii}

As on the previous Legs, Marie Christine soon turned to me for help with the aging kerosene cooker. This time it was the oven burner leaking liquid kerosene. We took it to pieces and put in two new washers. It worked, at least to start with and we were rewarded with delicious Pizza for lunch.

Error traced to BBC housekeeping

Late on Day 8 Creasey phoned again to say the BBC had erroneously erased our (Iridium) email mailbox. As John wrote "Auntie BBC was doing a spot of house-keeping – around October 15th – obliterated us, but forgot to tell Nick." I thought it laughable that such a thing could happen to an expedition's site. But was relieved to find the problem wasn't at our end, and cross with myself for not checking the system before we left Cape Town. Most importantly it was re-instated and I was able to immediately access it to send and receive email via the Iridium phone.



Figure 17. The wind was up to Force 9 and breaking waves were filling both cockpits. DSCN1067.jpg

An email to Sailmail guru Jim Corenman about access via Mauputo was less rewarding. He suggested checking all connections and possible sources of interference. I did so but nothing seemed to help.

there often seemed some delay. John often voiced his frustration. Understandably he wanted a local agent solely dedicated to handling his onshore communication needs.

^{viii} Crawling up into the stern to the aerial switch beneath the aft cockpit side lockers was a laborious job. I resolved to find a better way. If possible I would receive weather faxes via our SSB radio and the laptop computer, then I could leave the aerial permanently switched to the radio.

By Day 9 the weather had deteriorated again. The wind was up to Force 9 (41-47 knots), and both cockpits were being filled by breaking waves.

Closing with fishing grounds

As we neared popular fishing grounds we debated if we should reveal where we actually were. Were illegal fishing boats monitoring our every step? I suspected they didn't even know we existed, let alone our location. But equally there seemed no point in shouting it out. The uncertainty, the deteriorating weather and the lack of any insurance were possibly influencing John when he wrote in his Notes for h2g2,

Writing like this, in a continuous email in the present is quite unlike writing a book when hindsight plays such a large part. We are all a bit ragged just now, as we approach one of those situations where hindsight is probably going to be used in a few days.²

By the end of Day 9, now only 150 miles to the NW of Marion Island, we were starting to feel the cold. On Watch I was wearing thermal long johns and vest, a mid-layer salopette (thick fibre pile) and top, sea boots, balaclava, and full Musto oilskins. I was sleeping in my thermal underwear, socks and balaclava inside a sleeping bag with a duvet above and below me. And still I woke with icy feet.

Self-steering servo oar lost

3rd November, our 10th day out. "Not a good morning" I wrote in my journal. A major understatement. I came on Watch at 0400 with Igor. We still had a Force 9 storm blowing but Trevor and Quentin were snug and dry in the Doghouse. "The Monitor wouldn't hold the course so we disengaged it about an hour ago, and switched on the AutoPilot" they said. "Only an hour ago, no need to call you." Strange, I thought, a worry rising in my stomach, the Monitor usually liked these conditions. "Did you check the steering oar? Maybe the sacrificial tube broke." Their response was lost in the wind as I struggled out through the aft hatch and across the storm blown aft cockpit. Peering over the stern, I saw that not only had the sacrificial tube broken, but the safety line on which it would then have been towed along on, had also chafed through. The one and only stainless steel steering servo oar was well on its way to the bottom 3,000 metres below us. Without it the Monitor Self Steering system was useless. I was shocked. I didn't know how to express the enormity of our loss to the others. And what about John's reaction I wondered? Our alternatives for the next 5,000 miles to Australia would be the power hungry Autopilot or hand steering. After the Leg 2 experience I doubted the Autopilot was up to it. That meant hand steering. For weeks.

Whilst disappointed the Watch hadn't investigated the problem more deeply, possibly discouraged by the inky black night, fierce wind and breaking seas, I blamed myself on two counts. Firstly, in Cape

Town I had noticed the safety line on the oar was showing some chafe near the metal staple used in lieu of a knot or eye-splice where it was attached to the oar. It had been on my list of things to attend to. But I hadn't got to it. Secondly I obviously hadn't briefed B Watch clearly enough on the likelihood of the sacrificial tube breaking, and the response needed, ie to immediately pull in and land the trailing oar.

John always took bad news philosophically. A quality I admired in him. "I'm a pessimist" he would say, "I expect the worst." But he too immediately understood the dreadful significance of the event. For months afterwards we would look at each other, roll our eyes and joke about this dreadful moment.

Six hours later we had more bad news when the AutoPilot failed. Expensively serviced in Cape Town, a telltale chattering from it's grey computer box adjacent to the aft Heads alerted John. Then warning beeps and an error message signalled its end. Now there seemed no alternative to hand steering all the way to Australia.



Figure 18. John took bad news philosophically.
DSCN1059.jpg

Quentin suggested we try replacing the steering servo oar with something, perhaps a cut down wooden dinghy oar. I didn't think it would be strong enough, but by keeping the blade small maybe the pressure could be reduced. At worst it too would break. I knew we had at least two sets of dinghy oars on board. "No", said John, "It'll just destroy the oars, they were handmade for us by..." It seemed a pity not to try it, but he wouldn't be moved. I cynically wondered if he wanted us to have to hand steer for the rest of the Leg. Maybe it made for a better story?

Rough weather

Already the weather was deteriorating further. We had 50 knots of wind and more from astern as we surfed down huge swells on our eastward course, waves regularly washing across both cockpits.

In such conditions broaching is the biggest fear. Accelerating down the face of a large wave overtaking the boat from astern, the boat can start to swing one way or another. If the top of the

wave starts to break, the moving white water may then push more on one side of the stern than the other, forcing the boat around and across the face of the breaking wave. If large and steep enough, the breaking wave may then engulf the whole boat, rolling it over sideways before it. Over the centuries it's been the biggest fear for sailing vessels.

Hand steering in such conditions requires concentration, to feel and correct the slightest swing of the boat, to keep the vessel square with the waves and the wind astern; confidence as the boat repeatedly plunges forward over the edge of a green and white precipice; and competence to not over-correct and broach the other way. Furthermore it was often pitch dark.

Trevor and Marie

Christine bowed out. "I just don't think I can do it," said Trevor, "I can't see the compass bearing well enough. I don't trust myself to prevent us broaching." With a long frightening night ahead of us, we changed our



Figure 19. Immature Black-browed Albatross. DSCN1279.jpg

Watch hours. John, Igor, Quentin and I each did hour-long tricks outside on the wheel, while Marie Christine and Trevor did two-hour spells in the Doghouse supporting us. In my journal I wrote "A long cold scary night, wind to 50 knots." There was no log sent that night.

Via Quentin's contact in the fishing industry we'd been told of a legal Japanese long liner operating in the area we were entering. Its last known position was about 200 miles east of us. But now we thought we were closer and tried calling it on VHF. With the aerial on top of our tall mainmast we were confident of reaching at least 30 miles in any direction. But there was no reply. We wondered if it was just the language barrier. I emailed my wife, a professional Japanese interpreter, for a Japanese phonetic translation of our message we could read out, asking them to call us. She soon sent it back and for the next 7 hours we took turns broadcasting into the ether of the south Indian Ocean.

"Hello Koryi Maru 11. Kochira wa 'Ingurissu Rouze Sikkusu' toch iuh yotto desu. Eigo ga dekiru hito o musen ni dashite kudasai." Maybe our attempt at Japanese was even more confusing than our English or perhaps they were simply out of range. We'll never know. They didn't reply.

We continued to run before the storm. During the day I loved the grandeur of the big seas, and the capability of the boat. But at night on the wheel I strained to see the instruments in the Doghouse, the wind direction indicator and the digital compass, and had to concentrate every minute to keep the boat on the best heading for the seas. But, from my experience, I always felt we were doing the best thing for the boat's safety.

Quentin didn't agree and during this first spell of bad weather lobbied me, saying he thought we should stop, heave to, "Do some campaigning." I neither agreed with his approach regarding the safety of the boat, nor his way of influencing the Skipper. It seemed divisive, one of inciting rebellion. I knew we had far to go, we just needed to keep going. "The boat is safer running steadily before the weather, reducing apparent wind and sea speed." I told him. "If you've got an issue about it, raise it with John. Personally in my experience we are doing the safest thing." Quentin did raise it with John but got nowhere. He didn't seem happy. Clearly Quentin was used to having more say.

Hand steering at all times started to put pressure on many different aspects of our day. For instance Igor and I agreed to extend our 4-6am Watch, to 7am, so that John would not have to steer for 4 hours (although we observed he rarely did anyway), whilst Marie Christine did Galley duties. Our later finish disturbed our morning sleep time; I was up later and found my time for keying in the Log before lunch shortened. Similarly at the end of the day we extended our 2-6pm Watch to 6.30 or even 7pm to allow John time to eat dinner. We were on again at 10pm.^{ix}

Quentin sighted Prince Edward Island, 15 miles to the north of Marion Island on Wednesday 5 November. It was 35 miles to the south of us, on our starboard beam.

The snow gleamed on its 2,370 ft peak

Jim Corenman (Sailmail founder and guru) replied to an email query about adding stations to the Sailmail fax listing. Having just got through on Sailmail at good speed (sending 5 emails at 1234 bytes/min and received 8 at 1728 bytes/min) I was optimistic about Sailmail for maybe the first time, writing in my journal. "I find myself becoming keener on Sailmail now – it seems ingenious and as I learn more I like it more."³

^{ix} I wanted to give John and Marie Christine as much support as possible. I often thought Marie Christine the hardest worker on the boat, producing a hot lunch every day at sea, and a hot dinner six hours later. From a tiny galley that was really just a passage, using an elderly and cranky kerosene cooker. Plus she cleaned the aft end of the below accommodation daily. (I did the forward half). John meanwhile would plot our position daily, write a piece for h2g2 and take a longer-term view.

A lull in the bad weather on Day 12 turned into 50 knots from the east (dead ahead) by mid evening with driving snow. Rather than attempt to beat SE (towards the Crozet Islands, or NE, we set a tiny bit of staysail and tied the wheel to leeward setting the boat to lie a tri on the starboard tack, very slowly making way northwards (away from Crozet). Conditions on deck were terrible, not just rough and windy but very cold and icy as well. Snowdrifts started to build around the cockpit, on the deck and windward faces of the masts. But with this rig no one needed to go outside. A Watch member could sit in the Perspex dome to keep a lookout, the rest of us tucked up in our bunks, securely held by tight lee-cloths. Although moving a lot, and occasionally being hit on the starboard bow by a large breaking wave, I felt the boat was very comfortable. I'd learnt to lie 'a-tri' like this on The Aegre, and often felt it was one of the most secure arrangements when faced with very bad weather from ahead. This night, with a full gale from dead ahead forcing us to abandon sailing, turned out to be the only such night on the entire voyage.



Figure 20. Prince Edward Island. 1000 miles southeast of Cape Town. DSCN1051.jpg

By dawn (Day 13) it was easing but deck work seemed dangerous due to great lumps of ice that were falling from the windward sides of the mast to crash loudly on the deck. We stayed below till late morning and let it fall while the seas eased.

Power generation problems

Down below, power generation drama was back on centre stage. In Cape Town marine electrical engineer Urdo Hortig had overhauled the Panda diesel generator set up, configuring it to start up if the battery voltage dropped below a (rather high we thought) specific level. He recommended this in order to ensure the IT and radio equipment would always have more than the 24v necessary in his view to work well. The result had been the Panda frequently coming on for just 12 minutes. Irritating

but re-assuring. Now, just 13 days out, it started as per usual, then immediately stopped, sending us into a mild panic. Hardly unexpected, such was our low confidence in it (after Leg 1), but so soon!

Would it ever go again? John explained to a shocked Quentin that maybe he wouldn't be able to charge his computer or phone. At least the wind and towing generators were still spinning, but bearings in the latter were grating and I didn't expect them to last long. This was the beginning of power generation problems that dogged the whole Leg. One by one the generators failed until we were left with just the main engine alternator. But that was in the future. Now John and I surveyed the silent Panda. With the covers off

it was a complex mass of wires, pipes, boxes and fierce warning notices in German. Where to start? John idly flicked the On switch again. Suddenly it started up and kept running for it's standard 12 minutes! Dampness in somewhere I thought, but at least temporary relief.



Figure 21. Rough weather in the Southern Ocean. Photo Francois Nouailhas. DSCO1359.jpg

The next day it failed again. This time I tried bleeding the fuel system. A little air came out. Then it started. Another temporary relief.

Two weeks out and now Quentin was lobbying me that we go into Perth before Melbourne. I wrote in my journal,

I think he wants to get off asap – he mutters about weddings to attend and work to get back to, normal 21st century life. Somehow it doesn't fit with the harsh reality of sailing a yacht through the Southern Ocean from Cape Town to Melbourne – a huge undertaking, full of peril, easily underestimated because it's been done before many times - my respect for people like yachtsman Peter Blake^x has gone up a lot.⁴

^x Yachtsman Sir Peter Blake, whom I had come to know in New Zealand, a past winner of the Whitbread Round the World Race, Leader of the successful NZ America's Cup Challenge, and many long distance ocean races. Tragically killed by river pirates at the mouth of the Amazon Sefton, A. (2004). Sir Peter Blake An Amazing Life. Auckland, Penguin Group Australia 2004.

Quentin took his suggestion to John who seemed to take think the same as I. Our Melbourne destination remained unchanged.

By Day 14 and 300 miles due west of the Crozet Islands, I was achieving a good Sailmail link in the early evening, with a record-to-date transfer speed of 2,500 bytes per minute. My confidence and enthusiasm for the system was growing.

15 days out the stress of keeping the comms going, the generator running, and the boat sailing optimally must have been getting to me. Describing the crew in the Log that day John wrote,

“Nick, ashen, devourer of manuals. Worries about communications and everything he thinks others are not worrying about. Driving the boat forward, longest at the wheel. Solid gold.”⁵

I was certainly focused, though I think the “ashen” refers to the titanium dioxide based sun protection cream I unfailingly put on at lunchtime every day before my long afternoon Watch. It gave me a ghostly pallor but at no time over the year did I suffer sun or windburn to my skin. Rubbing it in every day I thought of the words of my 18 year old daughter Mariko, “Coming home looking sun and wind burnt won’t be smart, just stupid.”

“Quentin,” John described,

Comes on Watch, rushing up the ladder into the Doghouse, throws a pile of gear ahead of him, ‘Made it on time’ he gasps. Never mind the course, get those yellow lights going, switch on the mobile satellite phone and the Palm Pilot. Call up Wagga Wagga, Washington or wherever, there’s a world to save out there.⁶

More than any other single Leg crewmember, Quentin came equipped to communicate with the world and expected to be able to do so. Laptop, Iridium satellite phone and Palm Pilot. All needed to be charged from the yacht’s fragile power supply. With the incompatibilities of voltages and plugs, we settled for charging his laptop via our power hungry 240v Inverter, and a converter plug (ship UK to Australian); his phone and Palm Pilot from our 12v DC supply (Converted from 24v DC ship standard). But he was not set up to transmit data via his phone, so relied upon our system. In line with our policy of one piece of equipment, one user, one person responsible, I did not give him access to our PC. Instead he would save his emails to 3.5” disk, I’d import them and send, keeping a record for charging purpose as agreed with John.

Issues with the Log on the website

Quentin was the only crew person to bring a satellite phone. This raised interesting issues such as feedback on the day's Log. Writing each day's Notes for the daily Log, to be placed on the h2g2 website, John appeared to usually read it to Marie Christine, but commonly not share it with anybody else, at least at this time on the voyage. I would read it during the process of entering or sending if John had entered it. Other crew-members would be oblivious to it's contents.

Quentin's friends however would read it on the website, then ring Quentin on his phone, sometimes in indignation it seemed. Quentin would then challenge John about what he had written. John's comments such as "Quentin, who has been accused of working for the KGB before now...."⁷ no doubt eliciting some response.



Figure 22. Trevor Fishlock, writer, reporter, historian and steadfast shipmate. DSCN1065.jpg

Helping readers make meaning

15 days out I interviewed Trevor Fishlock, one time Times correspondent in New York, author of travel books, now freelance correspondent, expected to write stories about the voyage for The Daily Telegraph. He reflected on expedition communication today;

As always, the expedition must have a story. There must be a quest. But now there is no time for reflection. Today the Expeditioner is expected to file a report before each day's end. The more newsworthy the day, the more stressed and exhausted the reporter is likely to be, and the more important it is that a story be filed.

People want to hear and imagine how bad it is. Today's adventurer has to be a 'great communicator' able to evoke images, bring the expedition to life for the reader back home, to make it gripping, after a hard day and with no time for reflection. At the same time they have to cope with the technology. A tough call."⁸

I talked further with him about the effect of TV, and the influence of reality adventure on TV, the women in the jungle genre, where conflict is deliberately created. We wondered what this sort of TV show taught about expeditions and what sort of expectations they might raise. We wondered if we would soon see "The Ellen MacArthur Show"^{xi} for instance. A yacht race where you get to vote off crew-members who contribute the least or are just plain obnoxious.

Trevor also pointed out that no significant writing, commentary or word pictures had emerged from space. He wondered if this was just a skill astronauts didn't have and if this had affected their ability to gain public financial support.

Why am I here?

On the 17th day out, (107 from Scotland) in perhaps the coldest sailing conditions I'd experienced, I found myself reflecting on my own motivation to be on the voyage.



Figure 23. On deck, ice and biting wind. The coldest conditions I'd sailed in. Photo by Brent Stephenson. DSCN1855.jpg

Was it really "To prevent the needless slaughter of the albatross"? Yes, but I saw the albatross as symbolic, I felt I was really protesting about greed being allowed to flourish unchecked at great cost to the whole world eco-system. But I can't pretend to be passionate about saving the environment, its seems a most worthy cause, but I didn't really think that's why I had left my family for a year, abandoned earning an income, and in some people's eyes put my life at risk.

^{xi} British yachtswoman Ellen MacArthur came to fame in the late nineties winning a single handed around the world sailing race. A slightly built young woman she beat very tough competition. Subsequently involved in a series of heavily sponsored record breaking sailing attempts. To see the home page on her heavily sponsored website go to the Durable Record Home>Expedition Websites>Ellen MacArthur

Was it just to sail around the world in a well-found yacht with a small team of people I knew and trusted? Yes, partly, I decided. I realised I liked shipboard life and the routine. I liked the challenge and excitement of sailing the large yacht alone every day. With everyone else asleep below, the boat steering herself, bursting through waves in showers of spray, a huge world circling machine, I'd stand on deck taking in the wonder of it all for hours. I was Eric Tabarley, Alain Colas, Robin Knox-Johnston, Bernard Moitissier. Idols of my teens and twenties.

So was it really the opportunity to sail the world's oceans, round the great southern capes, challenge the strongest winds and wildest seas, follow the course of the most famous ocean passages of the world? Yes, but not that alone.

What then of the opportunity to run the onboard communications, to set up and work with the Internet from mid-ocean? Yes, that too.

And the opportunity to research the effect of the Internet on expedition communication? This idea developed after I had decided to go. But curiously now on the voyage this work was giving my daily life meaning. It had become an important motivator to study the voyage, to become an observer and analyst as well as participant.

But I wondered how my reasons compared with adventurers of the past. I wasn't seeking fame or wealth, or new lands, nor was I running away from something, nor intent on scientific discovery. My motivation started to seem hard to define. Was it shallow, just selfish private ambition? Was it of value to anyone else? Did it need to be? How could I justify causing so much difficulty and upset to my wife and daughters? I was becoming unsure. Looking deeper into myself I didn't much like what I was seeing. But meanwhile the Watch had to be run, the yacht kept safe, a positive spirit kept alive. I would put my doubts aside, my oilskins on, and wearing a grin, head for the deck. "OK everyone, it's my turn now to sail the boat, off you all go, what a great breeze! What a sea! Wonderful!" I'd breathe deeply, and mean it.

By 11 November we were 180 miles west of Crozet Island, one of a small chain of islands near 50°S, mid-way between Cape Town and Melbourne. Largely desolate and uninhabited. Some people cruise the West Indies I thought, but us? We cruise Prince Edward, Marion, Crozet and Desolation. In my Journal I wrote of a grey foggy world, and freezing hands and feet. Hand steering for hours. The following winds were kind, except to maintain our course required frequent gybing in the near freezing conditions. But I was proud too. Anyone, I thought, can cruise the Caribbean.

The pressure starts to get to me

As always only John and I made significant sail changes, such as gybing, and in these bitter conditions I sometimes found this trying. For instance coming on Watch at 6pm to relieve me on the 11th

November, John decided we should gybe again. Another hour's work for me on deck in the bitterly cold conditions. The effort left me sweat soaked under multiple layers of clothes despite the new age breathable fabrics. I was hungry, frozen, and exhausted by the time I finished. Below, dinner was finished but I still had to eat, and then try to send the day's logs. I was due back on Watch at 10pm. I felt very sorry for myself.

Coming off Watch at 8pm, only a short time after I had come below myself, John could only tell me about a bad lead I had made with one line on deck, or rather that's all I heard as I sat frozen in the Comms area typing his handwritten log notes into the PC while he headed off for bed. "No John," I wanted to say, "Wrong comment right now, start again, try something like, 'Thanks for staying on to do the gybe Nick, hope you've warmed up, have you got much more to do? Is there anything I can do to help?' " But I knew he too was cold and tired, worried about what might happen if we saw an illegal fishing boat, and probably feeling seasick as well. Nothing to be gained by being provocative "Goodnight John, have a good sleep" I mumbled instead, through gritted teeth.

That night an email received via Sailmail from "Ron at Scanmar," the manufacturer of our now disabled Monitor wind powered self steering system, brought us up to date on spares for it. A sorry and confusing tale.

The spare safety (sacrificial) tubes we had ordered by emails and asked to be sent to South Africa, and which had never arrived, turned out to have never left the US "Held up by Customs" apparently. They were now being sent to Australia, to my home address care of my wife.

Ron was surprised we'd broken so many sacrificial tubes on our voyage down to Cape Town and finally lost the paddle. He offered to send a replacement paddle to Australia for half the listed price. He had never heard of the safety line failing. He made some suggestion for reducing future breakages, (but we had already tried them all to no effect), and had attached a diagram showing a

factory modification to reduce breakages. The attachment was automatically deleted by Sailmail (which didn't allow attachments), so we were none the wiser.^{xii}

Which email address?

In this email of 11 November Ron also raised the issue of who he should write to about the problem. He appeared to have received emails from Creasey (from two email addresses), myself in Cape Town (on my Telstra webmail account), and from



Figure 24. Marie Christine brought a touch of glamour to the Southern Ocean. DSCN1081.jpg

John Ridgway (me really) on the Sailmail account. He addressed his email to all the above addresses saying, "With several people writing to us about this problem, it's hard to keep track of who got answers to what, so here's to all:" I felt his confusion was justified, and a frustrating by product of our attempts to get through on one system or another and having more than one email address. There was also a lack of consistency on our part about who was following up ashore on what. Issues with suppliers were at times addressed by Richard Creasey, Rebecca Ridgway, ourselves on the boat, my wife in Melbourne, supporters in ports we visited and short term crew joining us for a Leg. Ron was understandably confused.

^{xii} In Australia, re-commissioning the system with the new paddle and safety tubes made up by Neville Roberts with a slightly thicker wall, I replaced the bottom bracket with a spare fitting we were carrying on board. From then on we did not break a single sacrificial tube. Was it just due to the slightly stronger tubes? I thought so until I serviced the system in the Azores, about 12,000 miles later, and noticed the replacement bottom bracket I had installed in Australia actually had longer inserts and gave much more support to the sacrificial tube. I now believe the lack of these was the cause of the earlier breakages. Had this information been contained in the deleted attachment from Ron at Scanmar back in the South Pacific? I wondered why were we not alerted to this possibility by Scanmar when we reported the tubes first breaking? I felt our difficulties had been magnified and ultimately our lives had been unnecessarily endangered by poor product support from the supplier.

Meanwhile on board we were having our own technology problems. On 12 November I wrote in my Journal that the Iridium phone link was failing and becoming useless for sending data. Just when we might need it most with an illegal fishing boat sighting possible at any time. Sailmail was working well, but only in the mid evening when atmospheric conditions were just right.

John had agreed we should switch to our new Iridium phone card (with £3K credit) now, rather than have to change in the midst of some incident in the next week or two. A good decision I thought. We put the new number in the day's Log to be published on h2g2. Unfortunately we didn't know this number, supplied by the agent we had bought the card through in Cape Town, was incorrect. We did wonder why we stopped receiving calls but assumed this was due to our very remote location and possibly an aerial problem. Callers similarly put down failure to get through to the same problems. It was to be many weeks before we realised the correct cause.

Toothache (again)

But for John toothache was now dominating everything. He was soon back in the dentist's chair in the Saloon, a missing filling causing pain.

While Marie Christine operated, encouraged by Trevor, I breakfasted in the Doghouse having no interest in the drama. I cynically wrote in my journal "It has to happen every leg... good job nobody else gets sick – he has no sympathy – but demands all." John said he never normally visited dentists because he thought they just created problems. With so much focus on preparation in other areas I



Figure 25. John's toothache was returning. Igor and I tried to be sympathetic. Photo by Marie Christine. IMG_0646.jpg

couldn't understand his attitude, and wasn't very sympathetic.

Planning with Birds Australia

On this day we also received the first email from Birds Australia. A lengthy and friendly outline of proposed activities in Melbourne based around a visit to Victoria Wharf in Docklands, close to the city. The writer, Merrilyn Julian, first said how difficult it had been to contact us,

I do hope this message gets to you! We have had such difficulty trying to figure out how to make contact with you (did you ever send us your email contacts for the boat?), and in the end I rang your home number and spoke with your young daughter Mariko.⁹

She outlined various proposed plans such as a VIP lunch and a number of public events over the weekend of 6/7 December including 4 public presentations. She emphasised the need for confirmation of our arrival date and her alarm that according to Mariko we were running a week late on our plan. We noted Merrillyn's title "Donor Liaison", and I could feel John's suspicions rising. He felt Birdlife South Africa had tried to use him as a fundraising tool for themselves. He replied rather tersely I thought, via Richard Creasey,

Dear Merrillyn, Thanks for your emails, which we received today. We are unlikely to arrive before 7th Dec due to our involvement with pirate vessels in the Southern Ocean. We just cannot give you a firm date for sure and therefore maybe impractical. Please keep following our log and keep in touch.

So began a relationship that steadily degenerated.

At the same time John was talking with RSPB's Euan Dunn in the UK via phone and email about media opportunities. He was concerned that Creasey was travelling abroad, that there were plans apparently to downsize h2g2 and that anything occurring over the next few days on board (such as an encounter with a fishing boat) might go un-reported. He sent Dunn a number of possible sighting scenarios by email.

We sailed on in the icy fog, slowly drawing closer to Kerguelen's Desolation Island.

The next day John sent a longer, more considered and positive email to Merrillyn Julian at Birds Australia. He emphasised that entry to any presentation should be open to the public and free, but was non committal on dates; "Realistically the best I can offer by way of dates, is a re-think after Heard Island, with some 3,000 miles to sail to Melbourne."



Figure 26. The Panda generator, leaking diesel again.
DSCN1091.jpg

More power problems

Meanwhile power generation was now coming to the fore again with the towing generator making loud grinding noises as it's rotation speed accelerated when we surged down waves. The Panda generator was also leaking diesel again. This had been a problem from Scotland to Tenerife and we thought we'd fixed it with a replacement fuel line within the generator unit. But now diesel was

dripping again from the inboard end of the unit. I couldn't see the source. The smell, slipperiness if the drip container got knocked over and possibly a fire risk added, to our worries. I wondered precisely what I should do in the event of a fire. I lay in my bunk worrying about it and put together a detailed action plan. I would spring out of my bunk...

How a Positive Self Image Helped

In his daily log notes John continued to wonder at himself, to be doing such a thing at his age, at the opportunity having the yacht offered, his own mortality (a constantly re-occurring theme) and his decision to have "One more fling - beyond the far horizon." I wondered if he was being unusually frank about his own motivation, when he went on to say;

The price you must pay, for there's owt for nowt' is that you must concentrate on the seabirds which surround you as you stand alone at the wheel. Over time, among these swirling birds, a pattern emerges, it's your own life: childhood, youth, adulthood, seniority.

I had come to think that amazement at himself was one of John's traits. I wondered if this helped him write about his own adventures in a way that was interesting to other people, as it clearly was. Did it enable him to see himself and write through the eyes of an admirer? He was unashamedly egoistic, even to the extent of making fun of his own egoism. For instance one day whilst Marie-Christine and I talked cameras, he butted in with, "I don't have a camera. Why would I want a camera? The only pictures I want are of me. You can't take pictures of yourself!"

We all laughed. But we knew it was true too.

More Satellite Phone and Sailmail Woes, and a Solution

On the 15 November our already fragile Iridium phone gave me an error message, "Blocked" and became unusable. I was mystified. I reverted to the old card (which still had some time left on it) and the message disappeared. At the same time our Sailmail link to Mauputo in Mozambique went down. I copied everything over to the Iridium/Eudora system and sent it slowly on the old card. I sent an email to our Iridium card supplier for help to unblock the phone. Their reply advised the phone could only be blocked by entering the incorrect PIN code three times. I couldn't think of anyway this could have happened. But I learned it could be unblocked with a PUK1 code which was in the phone literature. I found this and unblocked it, but even then the connection was now very poor and within a day became unusable. So now we had neither Iridium or SailMail. I eventually concluded that the phone had been un-wittingly blocked by an attempt by Trevor to call his wife when I was asleep. No-one had mentioned his unsuccessful attempt to me at the time. But that now seemed like a minor problem as I searched my mind for ways to improve the phone's performance. I was suspicious of the

aerial on the stern of the boat. It had been hit and damaged shortly after we left Scotland. I'd read that the aerial model we had was prone to hairline cracking and failure. I suspected it was contributing to our problem. Now I tried rigging up a small car aerial for a satellite phone I had in my spares, mounting it amidships close to the phone, just under the clear observation dome. Phone performance immediately improved. It looked a bit rough, but worked. A small success that I was proud of. It continued to work well for the remainder of the entire voyage.

Planning for the Australian Stopover

At this time we started to re-discuss our PR (public relations) plans for Australia. We reflected on the success with the media in South Africa and decided to try and repeat the success in Australia. This would mean a focus on PR through the media rather than encouraging public visits to the boat. If we did this we would not need to visit Victoria Wharf (part of Melbourne's redeveloped Docklands area) but could stay at Sandringham Yacht Club for our entire visit. This was a popular choice at the time. Moving the 57ft yacht from one berth to another wasn't easy for our very small crew. With no bow thruster the vessel was difficult to control in a cross wind, and always we were nervous in the close vicinity of other boats because we had no insurance. A fact we kept to ourselves. Staying at Sandringham YC was also more convenient for me, being only a 10-minute drive from my home. It was also secure and had good facilities for a visiting yacht. But it was far from the city and would have no city strollers passing by. Strangely this seemed like a benefit at the time. John wrote an email to Merrill Julian at Birds Australia advising her of our view and change in plan.

On 16th November, thinking more about our plan for Australia and NZ, I proposed to John and Marie Christine that rather than splitting boat maintenance work between Melbourne and Wellington, that we focus on boat work in Melbourne only, and stay two weeks, which with our now later arrival date, would mean we could be there for Christmas and I could be with my family. A further benefit would be arriving in NZ in the second week of January, when people were coming back from holiday. I believed it would be hard to get much publicity in NZ if we arrived any earlier when many people were away on their summer vacation. John was unconvinced but Marie Christine supported the idea and I hoped she'd win him round.

Desolation Island stop

Whilst our thoughts were 3,000 miles away in Australia, aboard the yacht we were in grey freezing fog, approaching the Kerguelen Group of Islands, deep in the Southern Ocean at 53°S.

Trevor sighted lonely Rendezvous Rock, a stark outlying islet that emerged out of the fog. We first picked it up on the radar and mistook it for a fishing boat. We headed on across the northern coast of Desolation Island and then down the more sheltered east coast into Port au France, staying 24 hrs.

We were welcomed by the small community of French scientists based there. They have very few visitors. Some of the scientists were studying the albatross and gave us depressing news about declining numbers. The words of one young scientist, Cedric, we often repeated later, "Je suis desolee," he said with a Gallic shrug, "The best chance for the albatross is for the fishermen to catch all the fish – then they will go way."

They gave us hot showers and dinner. For the first time in many weeks the 6 of us were off the boat and not all together. Whilst John and Marie Christine visited the medical officer for another dental session for John; Quentin, Trevor, Igor and I had showers, real coffee and fruit juice. In a relaxed mood we discussed the voyage and Quentin commented on the differences he noticed between this, what he called a "Celebrity Expedition" and those he



Figure 27. Three weeks out from Cape Town, Rendezvous Rock, an outlier of Desolation Island, emerged out of the freezing fog. DSCN1101.jpg

was used to with Greenpeace, "Organisation expeditions" as he called them. The major difference was in the decision-making he thought, being more democratic in Organisation expeditions in his opinion. I thought it an interesting comparison and began to think of how the leadership style affected the communications on an expedition as well.

We were on our way again the next day, the 18th November.

Leaving Kerguelen our plan had been to head SE towards Heard Island, but email advice to Quentin indicated there were no fishing vessels there at this time. A gale from the south made the decision easy and we set a course to the ENE for Melbourne, still 3,000 miles away.

Departing Kerguelen, I took a photo of John at the wheel, the snow capped mountains of Desolation Island above the wake astern. I decided to try sending the photo directly to Creasey, for h2g2. If it were successful and valued, maybe a photo would become a regular accompaniment to the daily Log

I thought. Using Macromedia Fireworks^{xiii} I minimised the photos to less than 10kb and attached it to an email, and sent it by Iridium. It took longer than I hoped, 8 minutes, 6 longer than the regular Log. Anxiously I awaited a response. And waited and waited. It never came. I was discouraged. It was hard to justify the Iridium time. I sent no more photos by Iridium from the yacht at sea.



Figure 28. Desolation Island, Kerguelen, astern as John set a course for Melbourne, 3,000 miles to the east. DSCN1208.jpg

Now heading directly to Melbourne, Australia, my spirits seem to lift in my Journal. At lunchtime on the 19th November I wrote exuberantly of the sailing: "Boring along at 8 knots on a tight reach across a freshening northerly." And later at 1550:

On Watch, Igor steering – on caffeine – a hot coffee on a cold watch:
 Which sends warm energising blood to my cold fingers and toes;
 Stimulates positive thoughts and helps me value the moment;
 Gives me energy to do yet another sail change;
 Makes me value the wind for driving us along and not fear it;
 Brings a smile to my mouth and laughter to my eyes.

John too was in better spirits, writing in his Log Notes;

By midnight the land had fallen away and we were treated to a grand display of the Aurora Australis. It was as if the white Antarctic had bathed the sky in light, as if the sun might be going to rise in the South rather than the East.

Later he wrote about the birds that were so often with us,

^{xiii} Macromedia Fireworks is a software application primarily used for processing images to be placed on websites.

Our old chums were there as usual, mostly in ones or twos: Wandering, Black Brow, Light-mantled Sooty and Grey Headed Albatrosses, the odd White –chinned Petrel, a pair of Pintados and the normal flock of Prions. With just the occasional Storm Petrel.

But I found continually having very cold hands and feet de-motivating. On 20 November I wrote a list of tasks I wanted to do, but couldn't seem to get round to;

- Make a new steering oar for the Monitor (from an old dinghy oar, but John believed it would just break anyway so what was the point?).
- Start the 'to do' list for Melbourne.
- Go through the pictures taken and produce edited versions to send to h2g2 from Melbourne
- Interview John (no interviews on this leg so far).
- Write Journal.
- Enter Log to PC (Can't, JR still writing it).
- Find and install new bolt for Forward Heads pump handle.

Then the power supply within the computer box appeared to fail. I was able to continue running the computer by drawing power from an external power supply plugged into an inverter which created 240v AC from the ships 24v DC batteries, however this was less efficient than the power supply we had built for the computer. But in the very damp cold conditions I didn't want to open up the waterproof computer casing to investigate.

Bad news from Birds Australia

Also on the 20 November we received a disappointing reply from Birds Australia. Julian acknowledged our decision not to go to Victoria Wharf in Melbourne, but to concentrate on getting media coverage from a base at Sandringham YC. Couched in positive friendly terms, Julian then suggested that maybe Greenpeace was better equipped to organise media coverage, and that;



Figure 29. My breakfast every day (to Igor's amazement). Cold muesli, and apple. Photo by Marie Christine Ridgway. IMG_0712.jpg

...in any case, in the week 8-12 December, we will all be working towards our Council Meeting in Canberra on Sunday 14 December, This is followed by our major annual ornithological congress, also in Canberra in the week beginning 15 December. Jim, Mike and I will all be out of the office during this period. So won't be upset if Greenpeace (rather than Birds Australia) takes up the baton for the Save the Albatross Voyage, and do hope this will be possible.

So ended all support from Birds Australia.

The Birds Australia suggestion re Greenpeace no doubt stemmed from a meeting that Quentin and I had had with Birds Australia management back in June 2003. At this there had been some suggestion that Greenpeace might take some role in the PR, but Quentin had said then this was unlikely, partly because Greenpeace HQ and his own network were in Canberra, not Melbourne. I also felt it unlikely John and Marie Christine would want the Voyage to be associated with the more activist approach of Greenpeace. I was right and there was now no talk of seeking help from Greenpeace.

Now the 21st of November, our 118th day out from Scotland, 2,700 miles and still three to four weeks from Melbourne. Suddenly we had no local publicity agent in Australia, and no PR plan. Furthermore we were leaving the area where we had the greatest chance of sighting a pirate vessel without seeing any. It was very cold and rough. Disappointment was everywhere. This was probably the low point of the Leg, if not the voyage.

At about 9.45am, with John at the wheel running before yet another gale, the yacht went into a wild broach, pressed far over onto her side, travelling sideways down the face of a huge breaking wave. I was wedged into the Comms area below and hung on. Around me in the main cabin nothing much moved, but aft I heard crashing sounds as our fresh stores went flying, breaking most of our fresh eggs. From the galley, Marie Christine headed aft to rescue what she could, and for once her irritation boiled over, "I hate boating, it's cripplingly expensive and miserable and I hate it," she shouted to the world. On behalf of all of us.

That evening, as I worked at the computer trying to send emails and the Log to h2g2, the combination of darkness, the roaring of the Panda generator beside me, the violent motion of the boat and John's arrival down below at 8pm in his usual fault finding mood, almost boiled me over too. His complaining turned into a loudly shouted conversation with Igor just beside me as I sat trying to concentrate on deciphering his writing. I realised (even) my tolerance had a limit. I noisily switched off the screen, stowed my papers, and pushed past them to go forward to escape to my one haven. My bunk. About the limit of the protest I could make.

At least our Iridium phone link was now improving (the aerial in the dome proving effective) and an hour later, with John now retired to his bunk, I was up again and using it to send the Log and an email to my business partners in Melbourne, Nan Allen and Susan Cowan, asking if they could help find a PR agent to promote our Melbourne arrival and visit. It seemed a lot to ask. I included a press release about the voyage and participants prepared with the help of Trevor Fishlock.

Whilst our Iridium link was now functioning, I still couldn't establish a link with Sailmail. Worried that important email might be building up there I asked Creasey to check the Sailmail mailbox and to compile a summary and send it to us via Iridium. His compilation arrived on the next day and included emails from Birds Australia going back to the 13th November, a week back, and one from my wife Tomoko. In it she wrote that the results of her elderly father's medical tests were due "...on Thursday." I wondered which Thursday and what the implications of bad news might be.

23 November. The weather worsened. From my Journal, "A wild, windy, rough cool night as we ran before a NW'ly of F7-8-9-10-11, then it swung 60 degrees to WSW about 11pm producing a very confused sea - difficult to sail in the pitch dark."

Trevor captured the weather in the Log:

I've letters here," the Postman calls,
 "For Mr. Gale and Mr. Squalls,
 and Messrs Sleet and Hail and Blow.
 I've mail for Berg and Storm and Grey.
 And here's some post for Wilde I'd say."
 "I'll take those, lad" our Skipper says,

 (As ever proud and haughty),
 "I know where all those blighters live –
 It's in the Roaring Forties."¹⁰



Figure 30. Igor at the helm; there were days of wonderful sailing in the Roaring Forties. DSCN1232.jpg

More power problems

Still 2,300 miles to Melbourne and power generation was back on my list of worries. The wind generator had stopped supplying any current at all while bearings in the towing generator were making frightful grating noises. Email advice from George Durrant of Ampair, the supplier in England, suggested possible causes and remedies but they were impossible to do in these sea conditions. To avoid further damage we had stopped them both. Now the Panda generator, our mainstay, failed to start. With much trepidation I approached it with the Manual and multimeter. To my own surprise I identified the problem as a sticking relay and it was soon going again. One of the contributors to our power generation problems was the continuing heavy draw on power, and the impossibility of measuring and thus controlling this. Quentin's laptop, for instance, plugged into the ship's power supply every afternoon. He seemed unconcerned and oblivious to the problems of generating the needed power, which I found annoying.

About 2,250 miles west of Melbourne I received the first weather fax from Wiluna, on Australia's west coast. Weather faxes always gave us huge re-assurance, the weather map giving an explanation of conditions now and to come. They dispelled the imaginary storm just over the horizon and always gave great comfort. I also managed to make the first contact with the Sailmail station at Firefly, on the east coast of Australia. Whilst I couldn't complete the handshake protocol with Firefly on the 25 November, every day we would draw closer, and soon full contact would be established I believed.

On the 25th November my colleague Nan Allen replied regarding a PR agent in Melbourne, saying another friend, Sarah Baston, who had recently set up a PR company in Melbourne was willing to help and to send her more information. I thought she was being optimistic. I knew Sarah to be very busy, and expensive.



Figure 31. Wandering Albatross
DSCN1256.jpg

In an interview I recorded with Quentin on 25 November, he suggested our communication issues on this Leg were more due to a lack of communications strategy than the technology.¹¹ Our strategy had been to work jointly with Birdlife International and the international Save the Albatross Campaign. Whilst we focused on being able to communicate from the yacht and getting the boat around the world, we thought we could surely rely on the Birdlife member organisations in each country to make

the most of our visit. Unfortunately the Leader of the international Birdlife campaign resigned a few weeks before our departure leaving a serious leadership gap. Now approaching Australia the local member organisation, Birds Australia, was bowing out. Our trust seemed to have been misplaced.

On the 26 November I finally got through to Firefly in NSW on Sailmail. 9 messages were waiting for us. These were mainly the ones seen by Creasey, summaries of which were sent on to us previously, but not deleted from the Sailmail server. Pulling them down consumed valuable connection time. We were only allowed an average of 10 minutes per day, easily used with a connection speed of only a few hundred bytes per minute.

Who does the online voice speak for?

On 27 November over lunch John suggested that he could write his Log Notes directly into the laptop each morning, rather than first creating them in his hand written notebook. I found myself being a bit protective of the system. I remembered that during my visit to Ardmore in January 2002 I'd been constantly helping him with his PC. He was keen to use it but had difficulty remembering routines and would unwittingly create problems. Now we were dependent on our one laptop. Furthermore he was suggesting using it during the late morning, my prime time when I used it to edit pictures, do emails for the evening and the Log. I was none too keen. "But you see it's not really from me at all when you type it in," he said, "it becomes from you, censored, not really from me at all." Recording the conversation in my Journal I wrote that I hadn't thought of it like that. I remembered only two occasions when I had questioned what he had written and suggested changes. I felt that although it was from him and had his name on it, it did in some way come from all of us, and in some way must be seen as reflecting our collective view. We, after all, had given ourselves to this Expedition. We must surely support the Leader to a considerable extent by implication. So I felt that to no small extent his Notes were coming from me. I felt it important that I supported them. In hindsight I think he felt restricted when he was hand writing them, knowing that I would be reading and typing them into the computer, and making some judgment. He possibly feared my criticism, and wrote accordingly. By typing them in himself he seemed to think he might feel freer, less likely to be judged. But my first reaction to his suggestion was more visceral. As if I were protecting my territory. My computer.

He sensed my mood and as Igor and I went up on deck to take over the Watch at 2pm things were a bit tense. Igor took over the wheel and I trimmed the rig using the big winches in the aft cockpit. The weather had improved, the sea was down and it was sunny and bright. We had a light following breeze. Now up to 45°S it was definitely warmer. "Silly to be so discouraging," I wrote in my Journal, staring out to the far horizon from the shelter of the Doghouse. "I'll help him do it tomorrow." I wondered if it really mattered who such "Notes" came from on an expedition. Our aim for "one voice"

already seemed compromised by Trevor Fishlock's writing for the Daily Telegraph and Quentin's group emails. Was it misguided thinking from the beginning?

Sailmail going again as we approach Australia

Each day we drew closer to Australia and our Sailmail link with Wiluna improved. On the 26th November Creasey forwarded to us copies of contributions to h2g2. Such as this one from "Graham,"

No I am not a friend of John. We just wished to send him our support and tell him how we found out about the voyage. My son was moored next to English Rose in Cape Town a few weeks ago. He is now on his way to the Caribbean on board the AlleyKat, and they have put a link to the Save the Albatross site on their own voyage web site. I am an academic at the University of Birmingham, who has done some work on albatross vision in South Georgia, so I am very keen to support the Campaign. To this end I have circulated details to all of my students (they are mature and study ornithology with me part time) and also circulated around one of the British Ornithologists Union news groups. So my main message is one of support and the hope that more people will now be logging into the web site regularly. We very much enjoy reading the daily log, which gives an immediate impression of what they are going through. All best. Graham.

I felt so frustrated that we couldn't reply directly to Graham and the others. The idea of hosting an online discussion on the Internet live from the yacht as we sailed around the world following the albatross had been my vision from the beginning.

This would have been just so effective in building a widespread

community I thought. At the same time I wondered how practical it would have been.

Would we really have had the time and power to support it? Might it have grown way beyond our capacity to support it? What would we have done then?

Another email was from a reporter in Melbourne wishing to interview me (not John). He worked for a local free newspaper in Melbourne. I had studied at RMIT University with the Editor. He'd tried to phone, but now just emailed me a series of questions. I replied, seeking some advice from Fishlock,



Figure 32. Young Wandering Albatross. DSCN1312.jpg

the reporter. With this interview came the first glimmer of a problem in Melbourne, my adopted hometown where John Ridgway, British National Hero (1966),^{xiv} was almost unknown.

But rougher times were on their way.

Bad news from home

The 28th November and a stormy night just under the staysail. A Thursday evening. I thought there might be news of Tomoko's father's medical results. There was. A short bleak email came in via Iridium saying he had been diagnosed with terminal lung cancer and had 6-8 months to live. I picked up the phone and rang her. As usual the phone call was awful. Full of miscommunication and confused messages. Tomoko was very angry and said she now understood why Mariko^{xv} was too angry to write to me or reply to my emails. I was very hurt. I felt devastated by the news and her mood. We were 1,700 miles and about 2 weeks out from Melbourne. Compounding my problems, the Panda failed again. In the faint light of my head-torch it looked like it was the overheating cut-out, perhaps a failure in the sea water cooling impeller. I wasn't so sure I could repair it this time. Would there be insufficient power to even send her an email?

I spent the Watches on this wild night thinking about Tomoko, her father and what I should do. Knowing my need to talk to develop ideas, I was open with my Watch mate Igor, but asked him not to share my thoughts with John and Marie Christine. I decided there was nothing for it but to leave the voyage at Melbourne, to return home to be with Erica and Mariko, to give Tomoko the freedom to be with her father as much as she could. I would email her as soon as I could. I hoped we would have enough power. Could I fix the Panda again? I wondered what she would say.

Having made the decision I wrote in my journal;

How do I really feel? A slight sense of relief maybe, the voyage on from Mel-NZ-Cape Horn – Cape Town seems like just an awful lot more of this same routine, cool grey days, 24 watch routine, cold wet feet, broken sleep, repairing gear, periodic frustration with JR, in meantime

^{xiv} John often laughed at his own egoism. In one story he told of being stopped for speeding in 1966 as he drove up the MI in his MGB GT, shortly after the Trans-Atlantic Row. There had been huge publicity about the safe arrival in Ireland of Chay Blyth and himself. Now he gave his name, "John Ridgway" and occupation, "National Hero". "And I got off too" he laughingly said, his eyes sparkling.

^{xv} Mariko, my younger daughter, 17yrs old at this time.

missing family and feeling relationship with Tomoko, and E and M diminishing – they never even write to me! Seems like never. No replies to my emails at all. + losing fitness – is it all worth it? I feel myself thinking as I come on Watch again and again ... here we go again ... so maybe ...yes.

Huge nervousness about telling John and MC. – they seem to depend upon me a lot. Both for sailing, practical repairs, comms etc ... Timing? Concern about my PhD? – Not very much – probably got enough now to base the PhD on, could interview more expeditions etc.

Regret? Yes – at not doing what I was going to do – no rounding Cape Horn or visiting S Georgia or 'sailing around the world' ah well, I guess it wasn't meant this time – or ever because I don't think I'll ever go to sea again. I knew [what] it was like in 73/4, now it just has the bad parts really.

It was one of the lowest points of the voyage for me. I felt desperately sorry to be letting down John and Marie Christine, but knew that having got this far they would soon find someone to help them get back. My priority just had to be with my family.

But Tomoko has always been the master of the unexpected and a farsighted thinker, nevertheless I was still surprised by her response in an email the next day. She had changed her mood. She was apologetic for the phone call and went on to say;

I'm surprised at your decision. I'm so moved and thankful to you but at the same time I can't help feeling guilty. I feel totally confused..... Please give me more time. Perhaps don't tell J and MC yet.

I found myself breathing deeply. I realised that despite all the difficulties I felt, I wanted to go on with the voyage if I possibly could. I felt very positive and close to her and went to sleep feeling optimistic.

Power generation...

The problems of the Panda generator failure brought me back to reality the next day. It was overheating and then being switched off by a safety relay. I checked everything I could think of, but it all pointed to a faulty seawater impeller (pump). Access to this was extremely difficult around the back of the very compact motor-generator unit. We had a spare impeller blade, but to fit it the cover had to be removed. We were in typically wild weather. The cover was secured by 4 small, almost inaccessible, wing nuts. I was very reluctant to attempt taking it off. The chances of removing all four nuts, withdrawing the impeller, inserting a new one and replacing all four nuts, without dropping

anything into the depths of the motor seemed very slim. But we couldn't run it now, so ... I had to try. I struggled with it for perhaps two hours. Lost one nut and eventually abandoned the attempt. The Panda was now out of use till repairs in Melbourne. All the power would now have to come from the Alternator on the main diesel engine. In some ways I regretted trying to fix the Panda. Now I felt it was my fault it wasn't going, which I knew to be not true.

1543 miles, maybe two weeks, out of Melbourne. We had to retain battery power to run the mainsail in mast furler. But apart from that how could we save power? We agreed on the following restrictions and generation:

- All instruments off during the day except in periods of rapid weather change. (ie no wind speed, wind direction, boat speed, electronic boat course or boat heading)
- No lights at night
- VHF off
- No PC except for short daily log sent via Iridium
- No SailMail (transmitter very power hungry)
- Weatherfax alternate nights at known times
- Quentin's PC; no charging. Satphone on, charge as required.
- Ship's satphone, on.
- Use main engine to charge accommodation batteries as required maintaining sufficient charge for In-mast furling.

Meanwhile John, Marie Christine and I continued to discuss Melbourne plans. Our general conclusion was that we should depart about 27 December so that we could enjoy Christmas ashore and use the 26th as a final preparation day. We would ask Carol Knutson, our new crew-member to arrive from New Zealand on the 26th. Aim to arrive in Wellington the second week of January for a brief media/re-supply stop-over.

That night Tomoko emailed me again, saying she had spoken to her father. His strong wish was that I continue. That he was looking forward to coming to Scotland with Tomoko in July to welcome us home. Tomoko's only request was that I stay longer in Australia, to help prepare Erica and Mariko for university (due to start in March). Could I not stay while John, Marie Christine and the other crew sail the yacht to NZ, then join the yacht in NZ? Ever the unexpected, I thought. Two days ago I had been prepared to give up the whole venture. Now I was reluctant to give up the shortest Leg. Going into my night Watch I was puzzling over what to do.

Back on Watch the needs of the yacht immediately dominated my thinking. The wind was quickly strengthening and Igor and I progressively shortened sail in both our 10-12pm and 4-6am Watches, the cold front finally coming through the next morning with wind speeds well over 50 knots.

Mainsail stitching failure

The night had been costly. Gybing in the dim early light of the dawn Igor and I had a mishap with the starboard running backstay. No damage appeared to result however in checking the sail out carefully

we noticed what seemed to be un-related damage, a seam high on the mainsail's leech (back edge) gaping open for about 30cm. At the Watch changeover with John we discussed the potential for the seam to un-ravel further and the possible consequences. In the worst case we thought it might cause the sail to split

right across, and jam when we tried to furl it into the mast. In extreme conditions we might then have to cut the mainsail down. A prospect we could not allow under any circumstances. We decided to furl in the sail now as far as the small split so there was no stress on it, and not to use it further unfurled until we could get it repaired in Melbourne.

The unavailability of our big mainsail was likely to reduce our speed as we headed north out of the Roaring Forties and possibly into lighter winds. To compensate we set the brightly coloured Mizzen Staysail, a powerful sail when the wind was on the beam. We hadn't used it before but now it became part of our standard sail wardrobe. Excitedly setting it the first time my head hit one of the hard aluminium steps on the Mizzen

mast. Suddenly there was blood everywhere. "Don't get blood on the sail!" I heard John shout, as I stood bowed over, dazed, eyes clenched shut at the pain, on the roof of the Doghouse hanging onto



Figure 33. Setting the mizzen staysail I hit my head on one of the mizzen mast steps. DSCN1355.jpg



Figure 34. Sailing with mizzen staysail in the Roaring Forties. DSCN1348.jpg

the base of the Mizzen mast. Thankfully it turned out to be only a small cut. One of my few injuries on the voyage.

Over breakfast on the 1st December I finally discussed with John and Marie Christine Tomoko's father's situation and request that I keep going, and Tomoko's request re not sailing across the Tasman to New Zealand. John and Marie Christine were very keen I continue to sail with them. We considered various alternatives. Their experience of coping with many family crises whilst away on expeditions was helpful and re-assuring. I resolved to email Tomoko with alternative suggestions.

That night I heard from Tomoko that the parcels had arrived from Scanmar (the replacement self steering oar we hoped and spare sacrificial tubes), that a dentist had been booked for John and meetings for me with a podiatrist ^{xvi} and our Financial Planner. She'd also confirmed our marina berth booking with Sandringham Yacht Club and was planning to ring Nev Roberts re plans for servicing the Panda, the cooker and other equipment on board. With the worry of her father on her mind I thought she was doing well.

The reduced drain on the battery was working and the charge was being held for much longer. We settled into a routine of running the main engine for 2 hours a day to keep it charged.

I received an email from Nan Allen saying that RMIT University's publicity department had agreed to take on local PR. This seemed like good news to us all on board. We looked forward to their press release.

The big Mizzen Staysail continued to drive us NE towards Australia at good speed, but then on 4th December John noticed pinpricks of light shining through small holes way up high near the top of the leading edge (luff). We realised the occasional collapse and fill of the sail was causing it to rub on the backstay bridle, the point on the Mainmast backstay where the single wire split into two to pass either side of the mizzenmast. The bridle seemed to have four bolts through it whose ends were obviously sharp and periodically catching on the mizzen staysail. The sail needed to be lowered and repaired and the bridle wrapped in some protective cover.

^{xvi} My toes had been numb with cold for some weeks now and I was worried about having no feeling in them.

It was easy to lower the sail and Marie Christine, well practiced, set to with adhesive spinnaker repair tape, needle and sail thread. A protective cover over the bridle was harder, as it was located about 20ft above the centre cockpit and about 6ft forward of the Mizzenmast. Eventually I went up the forward face of the Mizzen, then with a strap to my harness firmly around the mizzen mast, I leant out forward, further and further, to just reach the mainmast backstay and then finally the bridle. Feeling qualified to work in a circus I secured myself so that I could use both hands,

suspended out over the centre cockpit. I wrapped cheesecloth around the bridle and then black adhesive tape to hold it in place. Then thankfully safely got back to the mizzen mast and down to the deck.

Any ascent of either mast at sea was a bit nerve-racking. John acknowledged this in the opening sentence of his Log Notes for the day, "Another big day for Nick, the human crane." In some respects it would have made more sense for keen rock climber Quentin Hanich, 20 years my junior, to have gone up the mast. I'm sure Quentin thought so. But for John the story of the voyage seemed foremost in his mind. I think he wanted the story to be essentially one of himself, Marie Christine and I, with Igor joining us for the filming. Additional crewmembers joining us for a Leg, but not individually central to the story. He argued too that Quentin wouldn't be able to reach nearly as far as I. Also I think he wanted me to do it, knowing that I knew how far we had yet to go, whilst Quentin would be leaving the boat in a matter of days. Whatever, John thanked Quentin for his offer, but asked me to do it.

Charging for emails?

Nearing Australia I was back at the PC struggling with how to calculate the cost of each person's emails sent and received during the Leg. John wished to charge each user. Quentin particularly had



Figure 35. Up the mizen again. IMG_0751.jpg.

Photo by Marie Christine Ridgway

sent frequent emails. I'd developed a spreadsheet to log every data call and email sent via the Iridium phone. Now I created additional pages so I could sort a copy of all the data and then create subtotals for each sender. It worked and became a useful analysis, reporting and invoicing tool.

By December 5th we were south of Western Australia, but still more than 1,000 miles west'sou'west of Melbourne, and the wind was failing. Just after 2am the mizzen staysail halyard came loose, sending the sail floating down to the deck. I was relieved it hadn't happened when I was hanging off it the day before. Even with the two safety lines I had on, it would have been unnerving.

Becalmed in the Australian Bight

The wind continued to fall and by the 6th December we were becalmed. Most of us were fairly relaxed about our slow progress. But for Quentin, receiving email from the office every day, it was not so easy. His colleagues clearly still had expectations of him that we couldn't feel. Because they could reach him on email, it seemed as if he was in the office, and could be expected to commit to attend meetings, deliver work, attend phone conferences, in fact to be part of all the normal day-to-day interactions of a corporate office. The reality was very different for him. I could see him suffering.

7th December. The date we had originally planned to be leaving Melbourne. Then it was our revised arrival date. But here it was and we were actually totally becalmed and still 953 miles out to the west.

At least we were able to receive clear weather fax charts from Wiluna, which showed the High we were in, but a Low following.



Figure 36. Becalmed 1000 miles WSW of Melbourne. DSCN1381.jpg

Trevor sent a synopsis of a story to The Daily Telegraph by email.

I received an email from Tomoko full of complaints about Erica (elder daughter, now 19) who had just returned home after a 6 months GAP break between school and University in England. Erica staying out late and her Mother worrying. I was sorry for Tomoko and was quickly involved in trying to give answers and solutions. All quite impractical in hindsight.

An email from Carol Knutson^{xvii} on the 8th December asked John to consider taking Peter Lewis, a New Zealander, 22, from Melbourne to Wellington. He seemed like an experienced yachtsman and John agreed, with the hope that if he worked out he might continue on back to the UK with us.

Approaching Cape Otway

As we neared Melbourne my Journal notes become dominated by off the boat issues and emails. An ongoing interview with reporter David Bonnici of Melbourne Bayside Weekly, emails to and from Tomoko, Nev Roberts, Nan Allen, Susan Cowan and RMIT.

500 miles out from Cape Otway in a developing gale the Mizzen Staysail halyard block at the top of the Mizzen collapsed with a bang about 6.45pm. Down below eating dinner at the end of my Watch, I rushed back on deck to gather in the sail and re-configure the rig. As often seemed to happen at this time of day John (on Watch) seemed critical of all and everything, I was tired and irritable too. I soon went below again before my good will was totally used up. Later we had a big debate about the cause of the block failure, which I finally solved by angrily climbing to the top of the Mizzenmast and taking a look. Meanwhile the wind freshened and by midnight we had a full gale as a Low passed right over the top of us.

The evening emails contained a draft press release from RMIT. This greatly upset John. It was bland and didn't have the angle he wanted. But possibly worse, it started off talking about my PhD

research. As I was an RMIT PhD student, this

was understandable from the University's point of view. Marie Christine thought it was good. But John



Figure 37. Airing of bedding cut short by one last gale before Melbourne. IMG_0748.jpg

^{xvii} Carol Knutson, staff member of Royal Forest and Bird Society of New Zealand, the creator of the online Petition, and scheduled to sail with us from Melbourne to Wellington, New Zealand.

was very quiet and I got the clear message that he didn't like it at all. I wrote in my Journal that "There only seems to be room for one identity."¹² I had further concerns about his lack of profile in Australia; "I hope he doesn't get it into his head that he doesn't like AU (ie people aren't terribly interested in him) 'cos then he'll want to leave asap and will constantly knock it from there on."¹³ Unfortunately this was all too true a prediction. For some reason John appeared to have a long standing negative view of Australia, which he had never visited "It's all desert and lager louts isn't it?"¹⁴ He later claimed the Australian stop over was the low point of the whole voyage.

Meanwhile Trevor re-wrote the RMIT press release, re-focusing it on John. In my Journal I acknowledged what I thought was going on;

It's unspoken, but I think Trevor understood both JR's personal need, and of course the bigger story. This re-crafted release was much more appropriate and interesting I must say. ...I wrote a covering note to Susan Cowan endorsing it.

Three days out from Melbourne, our email, sent via Iridium, comprised the revised press release to RMIT, email to and from Trevor's wife re his travel arrangements back to the UK, servicing advice for our Ampair generators from the UK manufacturer, arrangements to borrow a mobile phone when we arrived, our daily Log, and to Carol Knutson about her travel arrangements.

Two days out from Melbourne, 50 days from Cape Town and 140 days from Scotland. Email regarding our imminent arrival in Melbourne was now taking me 3 hours to process each morning.

Trevor completed his onboard reporting work by recording in the Doghouse a series of presentations he'd written about the voyage. I found his account fascinating.

Not content to release us easily, a final blow as we left the Roaring Forties fractured one of the 70ft long aluminium foils that lined the leading edge of our large No 2 Yankee headsail. I didn't realise the problem in the night, only that I couldn't get the sail to set properly half furled. It seemed to continually pulse in the gale. As it got light I investigated and found the heavy aluminium extrusion that carried the luff of the sail, was broken clean through about a metre up from the furling drum. To prevent further damage, such as cutting through the precious sail, we furled it completely, relieved that Melbourne was less than 200 miles ahead.

In her latest email, Tomoko told of her father's cancer growing more quickly than hoped. Now he was expected to live no more than 2-3 months. After six months away we had both expected the

Melbourne arrival of the yacht to be so exciting. Now Tomoko wrote, "I'm sorry but I'm not in the celebration mood. I feel I should be with my Father in Japan." I felt so sad.

As we drew closer to Melbourne I worried too about my involvement in the Tasman Leg. Still unresolved with Tomoko. I wanted to sail it and felt John and Marie Christine were very keen I sail with them. But I wanted to support Tomoko and my daughters too. The closer to Melbourne we got, so the worries of life ashore grew.

Meanwhile RMIT continued to revise Trevor Fishlock's elegantly crafted press release, irritating all of us aboard. Their latest additions seemed to comprise nothing but errors and inaccuracies. I thought of Trevor's forty-year international career as a journalist with British newspapers and the irony of how his work was now being corrected and revised. He took it with grace and a wry smile.

Saturday 13th December. With less than 100 miles to go to Cape Otway, the wind fell away and we started the engine, ready to motor if necessary the final 190 miles past the Cape, through Port Phillip Heads and up the Bay to Sandringham YC. We had enough diesel. We checked the tides in the Heads. All being well we'd pass through in the mid morning on a flooding tide, and be off Sandringham late on Sunday afternoon.



I sent emails advising everyone and found the email with our final revised press release to RMIT had

bounced. The version they would have sent out we knew to be full of errors. In another email Tomoko said her friend Yoko Davis was interested in doing a story for SBS.^{xviii} I hurriedly sent her the revised release. We also received an interesting email from Creasey saying that British film producer Robert

Figure 38. Coming up from 7 weeks in the Southern Ocean, the Melbourne skyline looked wonderful to me. DSCN1407.jpg

^{xviii} SBS, (Special Broadcasting Service) was established to give voice and exposure to multicultural Australia via radio and television.

Lamb^{xix} had asked Australian Film Maker Steve Couri to film our arrival. Steve's Sydney phone number was included. John however appeared to be having a feud with Lamb since a meeting in London in late January, and didn't call.

Arrival in Melbourne

Sunday 14 December. Motoring all night to Cape Otway, then along the coast in fine clear weather with the dawn. Past Apollo Bay and Lorne. Australia looked beautiful and I was so pleased and proud to be coming home. At dawn I went to the top of the mizzen mast again to replace the staysail block so we could sail up the Bay under our big brightly coloured mizzen staysail.

Safely through the Heads, we entered Port Phillip in bright warm sunshine with a steady SW'ly behind us. Blue calm water, a bright clear sky, the South Channel and the lovely houses of Portsea and Sorrento above the shore silenced even John. This was not the desert and lager-lout country he'd been expecting.

But then his mood changed. I was instructed to call Yoko Davis of SBS, RMIT and all my other contacts. "Where are the TV cameras? They should be here to film us." But it was early on a Sunday morning, and no one answered. "Try again." John's frustration rapidly grew and Australia's image plummeted. The only person answering was my wife Tomoko who was totally pre-occupied with worry about our elder daughter Erica who hadn't made it home the night before. "Try again." Now John was becoming sarcastic about Australians. My irritation with him and what I saw as his all consuming ego reached near boiling point. I moved to the foredeck, to be as far away from him as possible, finding Igor already there. Our eyes met and we shook our heads at each other about the performance in the aft cockpit. I wrote in my Journal;

I decided I would leave the voyage here - the combination of Tomoko and my girls needing me and JR being so much a pain in the butt – with food, moods and ego! Guess I'm the same – it's been 51 days.

Eventually we reached the Fawkner Beacon a mile or two off Sandringham where in a final flurry John instructed me to lower the mainsail when he turned the yacht into the wind. He was worried we

^{xix} Robert Lamb was involved in the proposal that video recorded during the voyage be used in a documentary about the Albatross he had been commissioned to make for TVE, (Television Trust for the Environment). TVE is an independent, non-profit organisation, which claims to promote global awareness of the environment, development, human rights and health issues through the platforms of broadcast television and other audio-visual media. It is a UK-registered charity.

wouldn't be able to lower it in the marina if not lying head to wind and thus be unable to get needed repairs completed. But by now the evening sea breeze was very fresh. Normally furled into the mast, we'd never lowered the mainsail at sea. First we'd need to completely unfurl it. As I started I could see it would shake wildly out of control and even more damage would probably be done. This was madness to me. I refurled it to John's protests.

Angrily he turned off the wind and we motored in to Sandringham Marina and a visitors berth. Customs and Immigration officials were waiting together with Tomoko, my daughters Erica and Mariko, Nev Roberts, Nan Allen and Susan Cowan with their husbands, Yoko Davis and her husband Clive. All with big smiles and clutching bags of fresh bread, fresh fruit, sparkling wine and cold beer. It was a beautiful sunny Melbourne afternoon. Suddenly we were a happy bunch.

Afterword

With no local publicity agent, (Birds Australia disappointingly taking no role whatsoever), Saddam Hussein's capture dominating world news, and Christmas just days away, John and Marie Christine were in the secluded confines of Sandringham YC Marina. In media terms John and the Save the Albatross Campaign were invisible which was most disappointing. In reality Australia had already signed and ratified the ACAP agreement, but nevertheless the lack of profile did not sit easy with John.

Whilst he bemoaned the lack of recognition, I found myself extremely busy trying to meet his needs and those of the yacht, my family and my business partners. The most stressful stopover imaginable.

Immediately after Christmas I moved back aboard the yacht to sail on to New Zealand. Tomoko and I had agreed I would return from NZ for 10 days before re-joining the yacht for the remainder of the passage back to

Scotland. My account of the voyage can be found in the Durable Record together with information



Figure 39. Safe and secure in Sandringham Marina. DSCN1423.jpg

about the yacht, other participants, many more photos, short videos, interviews, and other supporting information.

"It is only through stories that one can fully enter another's life."

Cole R. (as cited by Witherell, Noddings et al. 1991, p. 4)

Chapter 7

ANALYSIS

Introduction

How does the Internet effect expedition communication? In this Chapter I explain how I analysed my experience on the Albatross Voyage, particularly that relating to running the communications from the vessel, and drew learning from it.

Whilst I started off thinking I would be examining just the voyage experience, with further reflection I realised there was learning to be drawn from the pre-voyage preparatory period as well as the post voyage period. I therefore examine each of these periods in turn. Reflection played a most important role and I discuss this form of learning with particular reference to this expedition.

Three forms of thematic analysis of phenomenological texts are advocated by van Manen within the field of hermeneutic phenomenology (van Manen 1990, Chpt. 4), however none seemed likely to give the breadth of understanding about this whole project experience that I wanted to try and convey. With no studies of expeditioners going before, I wanted to establish a basic foundation from the lived experience, and to draw learning from this. Texts on phenomenology seemed to demonstrate ambivalence regarding research methods (Sharkey 2001, p. 21). However, far from undermining the methodology I have used, this ambivalence seems to encourage a blending of theoretical resources, enabling the better communication of the lived experience.

I moved into an essentially pedagogic process, where I examined each of the time-based periods of the project in turn and considered how learning took place, as the basis for discussing what I learnt within a framework of six broad questions in Chapter 8: Learning.

In examining each of the phases of the Project, (by which I mean the Preparation, the Voyage, and the subsequent collation and analysis of records), I drew on my accounts of the Preparation and whole Voyage, however as already stated limitations on this Paper have only allowed me to include one short excerpt of the voyage story. This inevitably means the learning I present, based on the whole experience, is my own personal construct. van Manen proposes Hermeneutics or interpretation implies the acknowledgement of a distortion (van Manen 1990, p. 26). Of course my story of the voyage is itself an interpretation of the account I wrote at the time in my Journal, and therefore my construct, my interpretation. In doing so I accepted the risk of such distortion. To proceed now to draw learning from this account is to further impose my own construct. It is for this reason that I have firstly included my account of one of the Legs in the main text (Chapter 6), and accounts of all the Legs, the stopovers and the preparation in the Durable Record, together with many other supporting documents. The researcher may go to these and use them to construct their own learning.¹

The Phases of Learning

Phase 1 – Learning during Preparation

During this phase I lived in Melbourne, communicating with the Ridgways in Scotland by email and phone. Together we planned the voyage including the purpose, route, online communications strategy, the technology selection, design and set up, crew selection, sponsorship strategy, and I built a suite of pages about the project on the h2g2 website.²

I also communicated by email with Mr. Tony Tizzard of IBM in Greenock, Scotland on the design, specification and set up of the laptop and peripheral devices for the laptop, and my friend Mr. Neville Roberts, based near Bendigo, who designed and built waterproof enclosures to hold the computer plus peripheral devices and the separate flat screen, on the yacht. As Neville did not have an email connection, and needing to exchange diagrams, we exchanged information by fax.³

My records of this period comprise the emails and faxes sent and received together with my Journal containing a mind map plan for each day.

During this time my learning process followed a repeating cycle. I started with a potpourri comprising a communication need, theoretically or practically known technical opportunities, known or assumed organisational resources, and known or guessed people, power, time, money, space, and geographical limitations, my own previous experience, and a learned sense of the sort of organisation needed to plan and deliver communications to and from the yacht, to support the sort of worldwide media campaign I had imagined in my mind.

All this together with input from John and Marie Christine Ridgway in Scotland, Richard Creasey at BBC h2g2 in London and David Eade from Telstra in Melbourne⁴ led to developing lots of ideas, which I loosely formed into a Communications Plan.⁵ It was ambitious. I thought it had the potential to be groundbreaking, showing the potential of the Internet to host a worldwide environmental campaign, driven from a yacht deep in the Southern Ocean.

I took the proposals to London and Scotland in January 2003 to test them face to face with Creasey, the Ridgways and other supporters and potential suppliers. Most were supported but the uncertainty of financial help from the media for a high-speed link cast uncertainty on our ability to realise it.

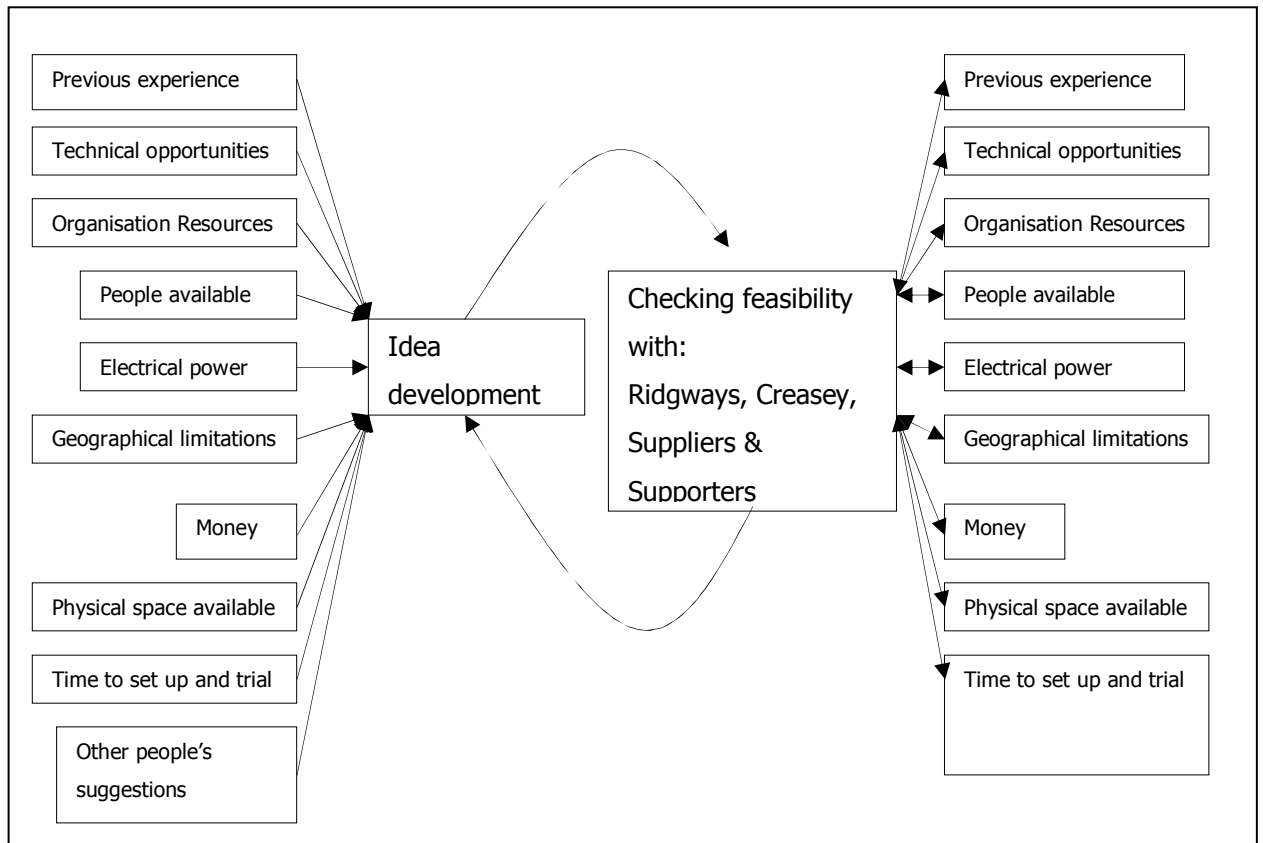


Figure 40. The process used in developing communication ideas for the voyage.

Back in Australia, with new understanding of this limitation, I re-thought the plan. Gone was the possibility of a multi-media online campaign based on the yacht. A new plan evolved based on much more help from a shore-based supporter (Richard Creasey) and relied on us making the most of high-speed connections at stopover ports. A low speed connection with the yacht would only allow limited email exchanges at sea.

More input, some with sharply conflicting ideas was received, such as that from Peter Brand in Canada,ⁱ which led to debate and reflection on our approach, but little change.

The repeating cycle was one of idea development and then debate with others, made more complex due to the distance apart of everyone. See Figure 40.

Throughout this time I was working on the h2g2 website, building pages, but had no opportunity to actually try sending data over a satellite phone, or any other system. My learning was entirely theoretical. I was concerned about this at the time and subsequent reflection confirmed my view that this greatly limited my learning at this time.

I learnt about the theory of the technology (working with the Internet from very remote locations), from research on the Internet, from suppliers of equipment and channels, from discussion with Telstra Engineer David Eade, who had set up systems on another ocean going yacht in Melbourne, and from an email discussion with a geologist regularly accessing the Internet via a satellite phone from remote locations in Africa.

I first came face to face with the communications equipment in the week before our departure from Scotland. A week completely filled with installing the equipment aboard and basic testing. Sailing out from Ardmore I felt very ignorant about it all, my only consolation being that I knew I had the hardcopy Manuals for everything, and was confident about my ability to learn and apply the knowledge in them.

My emails during this preparatory period reveal growing pressure and stress as I tried to manage the preparation for the voyage, preparations for being away from home for 12 months, paid work (I was teaching two graduate courses at RMIT), liaison with Tizzard and Roberts over the design and building of the laptop set up and protective casings, and preparation of my Research Proposal.

ⁱ Peter Brand had sailed with the Ridgway's aboard English Rose VI on the 1978 Whitbread Race circumnavigation. Brand had lived in Canada for many years but retained contact with the Ridgways. Brand firmly believed the Save the Albatross Voyage should be a high profile sponsored project and could not understand Ridgway's insistence that it be independent. Brand was also very critical of the plan to use a suite of pages within the BBC h2g2 website rather than an independent stand alone website. For a fuller account of Brand's views and our counter arguments see the account of the Preparation in the Durable Record. Durable Record Home>Voyage Story>Preparation>The Sponsorship Argument (again).

The cyclic email exchange with the Ridgways continued with increasing pace. The emails reflect shallow thinking focused on the immediate future. I did not consciously regard this time as one of important learning for this research. I took no time for considered reflection, nor did I keep a Journal. As a result important learning was missed at the time (Boud, Cohen et al. 1993, p75). I became aware of this during subsequent reflection in Phase 3 after my return.

In particular I failed to re-appraise our hardware needs following the scaling down of our planned communications from the yacht. Had I done so our power requirements may have diminished. But I also failed to think through the implications of having more than one email address or to explore the implications of the "one voice" policy or to pursue the development of a more structured publicity campaign, particularly in Melbourne. Boud et al emphasises the importance of including opportunities for reflection whilst still engaged in the experience, and my lack of learning in this Phase One supports his view (ibid., p. 75).

Phase 2 – Learning processes on the Voyage

Off on the voyage I was keen to make the most of it as a learning experience about expedition communications. I conscientiously wrote a daily Journal, recorded interviews, took photographs and kept records of everything from emails to weather forecasts and to-do lists. At the centre of this was my Journal.

Personal Journal

Prior to departure I thought of the journal keeping process as simply one of keeping a record of the experience, particularly the communication aspects. However a review of my Journal over the course of the voyage shows how I progressively used it for much more and the most valuable role it played in my learning on this Leg.



Figure 41. Example page of my daily journal.

Writing my Journal each day, sometimes more than once a day, quickly came to be a time for reflection as I tried to describe a place, event or feeling in a succinct, evocative or possibly dramatic way, particularly during the second half of the voyage when I was reading a lot more fiction and inspired to write more interestingly. It became an outlet too for my periodic spells of negative and critical thinking. A private place I could vent my anger, frustration or disappointment at no cost to

anyone. The value of using a Journal in this way is supported by Cooper, who regards the writing process as a way of caring for oneself, "A place to dump anger, guilt, or fear instead of dumping it on those we love" (Cooper 1991, p. 105). Cooper was writing about the use of journals by women, but I found it no different.

Cooper proposes the central question for any diarist is "Who am I?" (Ibid., p. 97). Certainly I often introspectively explored my feelings with some wonderment, not really realising or perhaps acknowledging them until I wrote them down (Ibid., p. 105).

And so it was in this way, day by day, I constructed my story. I tell of coping with the everyday routine on the yacht, the changes in weather which dominated our life, my growing familiarity with handling the yacht, the pressure to learn about the hardware and software and make it work to send and receive email every day. I write about my feelings of excitement, guilt, frustration, irritation, pleasure, and sense of achievement at coping with the return to a life at sea I hadn't known for fifteen years.

Over the course of the year my style of writing evolved from near bullet point briefness to longer passages describing significant events, trying to capture the mood of the moment. Their creation gave me much satisfaction at the time. Now, many months after the voyage, for me, my story is the story and I understand Kim Stafford's words,

A story saves life a little at a time by making us see and hear and taste our lives and dreams more deeply. A story does not rescue life at the end, heroically, but all along the road, continually. I do not make the story; the story makes me" (Stafford 1991, p. 28).

For instance at the beginning of the voyage, on Day 2, 28 July, 2003, I wrote:

1430:

Left Marvig about 10:15 after fully sheltered and quiet night on mooring.

Emailed Andy via Bec and Sailmail re how to get Ampair windmill going

Then rang him

But Bec had received the email and got an answer from Andy and replied! (Switches were mounted on side!)

Everyone a bit amazed Sailmail had worked!

Monday am 10-2 motoring down east coast of Lewis

Beautiful scenery, so remote etc – down past Shiant Islands

Plotting course with GPS down coast...

Engine cooling water not turned on ! oooops! Could be major problem later on!

Now 3pm, received emails from Tony Tizzard + Nan via Iridium – must redirect them to Sailmail.

Feelings – Use of Internet is an extra thing to do in already v.busy situation!... I feel sleepy tired off watch & must now reply etc!!⁶

Ten months later, on the 29th May 2004, as we sailed from the Azores towards France, I found myself thinking ahead to the end of the voyage, with some sadness, writing in my Journal;

3pm. Languidly ERVI rolls slowly downwind. The Yankee collapses and then fills again with a gentle thud. Sailing gently NE, as if purposeless, delaying all she can. Does she know these are the last few days she'll heel to the wind of the open ocean? Be 500 miles offshore? That she's nearing the end of her last great voyage? That she'll never see Australia again, or the Southern Ocean? Never again be a home to a crew for so long, all her systems carefully nurtured, her brasses polished and floors swept daily? That Tower Bridge is not only lifting its arms in salute to this fine old vessel but also in farewell? Never again will the lockers be so stuffed with food, all carefully listed, the cooker so lovingly maintained, the sheets end for ended, the winches polished, the bilges pumped every four hours, the battery monitored so carefully, the bunks carefully aired, the centre cockpit stowed, the radio tuned, the towing generator hum, the GPS flicker and show the next waypoint 6,293nm away....

In about 6 weeks time, all being well, we'll pick up the mooring under the wood at Ardmore, and bit by bit switch her off. Wind her down. Then she'll sit, silent and empty. Save for visits to pump the bilges. Will John or MC pause a while sometimes, to see if they can hear the rush of the waves, the howl in the rigging, the laughter of lunchtime, the singing of Sailmail, the pumping of a Head, the creak of a block, the hiss of the cooker, the slat of the sails, the roar of the breaker, or maybe, if they listen really hard, they'll hear the distant voice of Andrea Bocelli, and remember heading out, to sail around the world that one last time...⁷

It was a big change and a reflection of the growth of my desire to tell my version of the story. Ultimately it led to the change in the methodology of the research as I have already outlined and discuss more, later in this Chapter.

All the interviewees were very willing to talk and perhaps because we were so far from land and the pressures of busy lives, they seemed to take time to reflect and speak thoughtfully. From the gentle swish of the water passing the hull and irregular clunk of a block on the deck, or the sigh of the wind in the rigging, one gets a great sense of place and generally ease and comfortableness with the environment.

I did not attempt any analysis of the interviews whilst at sea. I did try to improve my technique, re-reading the Minidisk recorder manual many times and becoming more aware of background noises and its avoidance, and also giving more thought to the planning of questions so that I could gently lead the interview into areas I believed would be most interesting.

After the voyage analysis of the interviews did not prove easy. Partly because of their rambling nature and the resulting breadth of topics covered, and partly from their emotional loading of nostalgia, amplified by the almost overwhelming sense of place and time their background evokes. I abandoned thoughts of transcription and settled instead for listening to them and creating mind maps of each (See Figure 40) and then viewing these when writing the Leg summaries. It's been hard to do them justice. They remain a powerful contributor to an understanding of what it was like to be on this voyage, and stored in the Durable Record they are easily accessible to interested persons.

The Onboard Learning Environment

In terms of Knowles principles of Andragogy, the time and my life onboard was a particularly good learning environment for me in that I understood the relevance of what the environment was teaching me, the learning activities were directly related to common tasks I needed to perform, the process drew heavily on my previous virtual communication and sea going experience, and I wanted to learn (Jarvis P 2003, p. 59).

Phase 3 – Learning processes following the Voyage

Data Assembly and the Analysis Process

On my return from the voyage in late July 2004, I set out to make sense of the wealth of data I had returned with.

Still thinking of thematic analysis, I embarked on a process of gathering each day's data together, planning to use this to identify key points from each leg, and from this select a small number for further investigation.

I created a plastic sleeve file for every day of the voyage, each containing the Log posted to h2g2, my personal journal, (transcribed from my hand written journal to an MS Word file), details of all emails sent and received, thumbnails of all photographs taken, records of any video and sound recordings made.ⁱⁱ I assembled this together with printouts of the emails sent and received. The assembled plastic sleeves filled fifteen Eastlight folders. See Figure 43.



Figure 43. Assembling all the data into a plastic folder for each day filled 15 Eastlight folders. DSCN5314.jpg

Then with these comprehensive records of each day at hand I re-immersed myself in the voyage, a Leg or Stopover at a time, reviewing all the materials, creating a mind-map of key events, trends and issues (Boud, Keogh et al. 1985, p. 111), (Buzan and Buzan 1993) then started to write a summary account of each Leg. See Figure 44.

I quickly found I was unable to contain myself to bullet points of seemingly important issues. Behind every issue there was a story. All were inter-related. There were few facts, but many subjective feelings. To enable a reader to construct a view of how the Internet communications had affected the voyage I decided I needed to tell these stories. The bullet points became longer. They started to join up. I became engrossed in telling a web of stories about the voyage, the people, the events and my feelings. It wasn't long before I decided this was the true nature of the project. It was an engrossing experience. My mood started to reflect that of the voyage moment I was writing about. This was surely the way to help others discover for themselves what it was like to be on an expedition and using the Internet. Thus the move to phenomenology. An account of the lived experience.

ⁱⁱ For an example of the file I created for each day see Appendix 7-1

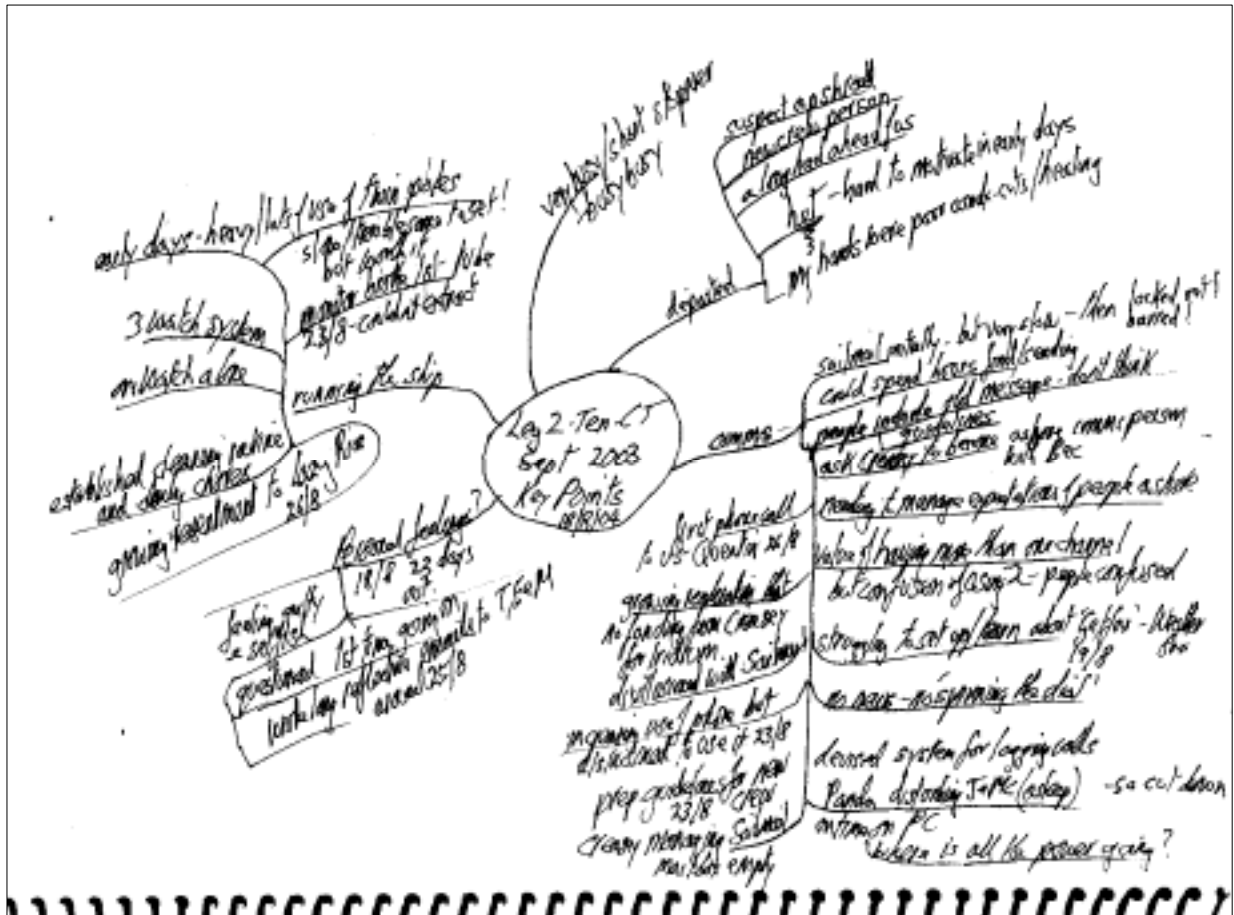


Figure 44. Example of mindmap used to draw out key points about a Leg.

But trying to get the story right, (in my mind at least) I experienced a number of unexpected difficulties such as pinning down the day when a certain email was received due the onboard computer being kept on UTC time not local ship time. It would have been easier to work with the records if the computer had been kept on the ship's local time. This and many other practical points I recorded in the paper I prepared for the Royal Geographic Society about using the Internet on Expeditions.¹¹

This whole process took much longer than expected, more than twelve months in all. I found it to be an excellent way of assembling meaning from my rich but sometimes mixed up memories and records of the voyage, in the same way my Journal had been during the voyage itself (Cooper 1991, p. 97).

After completing summary narratives of each part of the voyage I decided to go back and write about the Preparatory phase as I realised through reflection there was probably much to learn from this part of the experience as well. Unfortunately I had not kept a Journal during this time but I had copious

emails to work with. I was inspired by Usher who, although speaking metaphorically, emphasised the value of the writing;

Without a written text there is no discourse, and without a discourse experiential learning dissolves into the flux of everyday experience. Learning from experience is an aspect of this flux; experiential learning, in so far as it seeks to systematically know it, is not (Usher 1993, p. 174).

So it was for me. It seems the very writing of it forced reflection, a gathering and organising of thoughts. The result has been the creation of something that can be considered by others in their own time, discussed, and in turn further reflected upon.

I was encouraged in this approach by the support given to the use of narrative in teaching (Witherell, Noddings et al. 1991). Most importantly, I now wanted to create a narrative that would have stand-alone value as a form of phenomenological text, one that communicated the essence of this lived experience (van Manen 1990). Of course it was just my interpretation and deeply subjective, a position acknowledged and accepted by van Manen (Ibid., p. 31).

As already described in Chapter 5: Methodology, the resultant narrative, although I called it a summary, still comprised more than 140,000 words, much too large to be included in its entirety in this document. As previously explained I decided to include the summary of just one Leg in the Exegesis, but go on to draw out my own learning from the accounts of the whole voyage.

Initially, I was most conscious of having gained a lot of knowledge about the practical aspects of using the Internet on an expedition. In order to clear my head of this I wrote the previously mentioned guide for expeditioners on using the Internet and submitted it to the Expedition Advisory Council of the Royal Geographic Society, as a much-needed Chapter for the next edition of their Expedition Handbook¹² (Winsler, Winsler et al. 2004). With this and the voyage narratives behind me, I started to think about my learning in terms of 6 topics relating to the use of the Internet on Expeditions, eventually writing short discussions on each one. These are contained in Chapter 8: Learning.

Validity of Learning Claim

But before starting on this, considering my subjectivity and level of interpretation, I wondered how valid it was to claim any learning from this experience. In the terms of Jarvis, it surely counted as a substantial learning "episode" (Jarvis P 2003, p. 54) being a direct encounter with the situation

followed by mediated reflection where the encounter was qualified and modified by my previous knowledge. I felt encouraged to go on.

Now consciously reflecting on the project so far, with mediation help from my Supervisor, patient family and friends, I became aware that my learning was coming from the integration of experience gained during my involvement in all three phases of the Project (primary experience) with other pre-existing (secondary) experience, particularly that of how to get on with people, my experience at sea and my virtual communication experience at RMIT (Jarvis P 2003, p. 56). I think this integration led to my own unique construction of the experience, influenced by my own unique past, and the social and cultural context in which it occurred (Boud, Cohen et al. 1993, p. 8-16).

I want to explore this more deeply as the voyage experience was one in which emotions were often high, and in which I now believe my personal history and previous relationships significantly influenced how I constructed the experience, interpreted what occurred and what I believe I learnt.

This view is supported by the claim that affective learning is based on having a conceptual understanding of a topic, being able to extend the knowledge to imagining new situations, and in effect becoming wholly immersed in the topic at an emotional level. Further, that at an emotional level an individual's learning may become distorted through the interaction of their past history and the present experience (Postle 1993, p. 36).

Reflecting on this I re-examined my construction of some parts of the voyage experience. John Ridgway often described the environment on the yacht at sea on a long ocean passage as a "pressure cooker." The combination of tiredness, relentless pressure to keep the vessel in a safe situation, cold or hot, the sense of nowhere else to go, loss of personal control over the majority of one's life, fear and seasickness, for continuous periods of up to 10 weeks, regularly repeated over 11 months, all contributed to bringing emotions to the surface, to exaggerating them and their influence.

Now looking back I wondered why I seemed to be so irritated by some particular aspects of John Ridgway's behaviour. During the voyage I had wondered why this was and postulated my own reasons at the time. For instance I often felt that I was particularly sensitive to John's attention seeking activities because these were characteristics of my own personality that I didn't like. Postles writes about this form of projection;

When we find in another person, an institution or an object some echo of a part of ourselves that we lack, hate or refuse to accept, we escape the inner discomfort by attaching our disowned faults or qualities to them. We can then convince ourselves that they don't belong to

us. If we feel bad we may believe that other people are bad. If we lack good feelings, we may think others are wonderful (Postle 1993, p. 40).

I had increasingly noticed my practice of doing this, to the extent that when I found myself feeling critical of another person on the voyage, my first reaction was to look more closely at myself to try and understand why I felt the way I did. Often it seemed that within myself I was the bigger offender at least in my desire, if not in action.

I had observed similar behaviour in John, such as him loudly proclaiming the need for specific behaviours, (such as "thinking positively"), that he himself seemed poor at. A curious irony I thought at the time and a good example of a gap between espoused theory and theory in action (Senge 1990, p. 175). As a parent I could accept this dichotomy, I supported the values and behaviours he was advocating. That he was not always able to live up to them himself, I regarded as just a feature of being human.

Postle goes on to propose that influences on how we interpret experience may include omitted learning (learning which should have taken place in childhood but didn't); distorted learning (such as the repeated message that one is "hopeless" or "talented"); and distressed learning (learning reinforced by distress eg hurt in some way) (Postle 1993, p. 38). For an individual to understand any such influences may require considerable working through childhood memories. This led me to reflect on the possibility of un-worked through issues from my own personal history, perhaps in John's own life, and possibly from our previous relationship when I worked for John and Marie Christine Ridgway in the early seventies.ⁱⁱⁱ

My reflection followed an interesting course over many months as I periodically returned to think about our behaviours on the boat and our use of the communication opportunity offered by the Internet. Considering John's attempts to gain publicity for himself and thus the voyage as we approached each port, I wondered why once there neither he nor I gave priority to building our global audience on the Internet by strongly supporting online discussion on the website? During planning, I had seen and promoted it as a major benefit of h2g2. In port there had been access speed difficulties, and yacht maintenance demands on our time, but underlying all that it just didn't seem

ⁱⁱⁱ In 1971-2, aged 21/22, I worked for John and Marie Christine as an Outdoor Pursuits Instructor at their recently started 'John Ridgway School of Adventure' in NW Scotland. At the time I found the experience inspirational.

very important to us. I explore this issue further in Chapter 8: Learning, the purpose of communication on the voyage.

Looking at the narrative as a whole there seemed to be two subjects that featured less than I expected, these being the Albatross and Marie Christine.

Regarding the Albatross, I think this was a reflection of my reality, that natural history and the environment have not really been my passions. That said, I have come to feel deeply concerned about environmental issues, as exemplified by the decline of the albatross, and if there is something I can do with my knowledge and skills that might just help, then I'm a willing donor. But I left John to largely drive this on the yacht.

In terms of the infrequent mentions of Marie Christine Ridgway, I find this interesting because both during and since the voyage I thought she was a vital contributor to the safe completion and "success" of the voyage. But she went about her work efficiently and without making a fuss, and in this way was less newsworthy perhaps. But no less important for it. An interesting parallel can be drawn with my own experience during the voyage from New Zealand to the Falkland Islands via Cape Horn. In my Journal on the Leg I wrote with increasing petulance that John seemed to frequently write about Igor and Francois (two of our crew) in his Notes published to h2g2, whilst I rarely got a mention. I felt invisible to the world and found it upsetting. The reality I realised much later was that their activities were simply more newsworthy. The Latino Watch made for a better story.

Unquestionably I came to realise the validity of Postle's view that my personal history and personality influenced my construction of events aboard the yacht and in particular my attitude towards John and his use of the communication channels.

Reflective Learning and Expeditions

The role of reflection in learning has already been mentioned (Jarvis P 2003) (Boud, Keogh et al. 1985) (Schon 1983) but the majority of studies seem to be of the role of reflection in formal educational, professional or industrial settings. I wondered how important and relevant reflection was in the informal process of learning on an expedition? Or should that be "after" an expedition?

"Reflection in action" and "Reflection on action," have been distinguished (Schon 1983,) the former likened to thinking on your feet, and which may lead to revision of an individual's theory in use (as opposed to espoused theory). In the case of the Albatross voyage this type of reflection occurred during the voyage itself and accounted for the solution to many problems such as how to effect

complex sail changes single-handed, identifying the best set up and conditions for SailMail transmissions, repairing storm damage to the boat in the Southern Ocean and minimising the risk of future damage. In many cases these were not consciously thought through but solutions arrived at whilst doing it, drawing unconsciously on experience.

Reflection on action took place after the event, in this case in the year and a half after the voyage during which I gathered together and reviewed the Notes written by Ridgway for h2g2, emails sent and received, my personal journal, and all the pictures taken during the voyage. In part of this reflection on action, Schon proposes, the researcher explores why he/she acted as they did, suggesting that everyone has a "repertoire" and tries to make sense of a unique situation using it. I certainly tried to make sense of my behaviour, and that of Ridgway in some cases, realising that for both of us these behaviours were habits, part of our individual repertoires (Schon 1983, p. 265). For me this was insightful and chastening.^{iv}

Boud takes this further and in his model of reflection processes (Boud and Walker 1993, p. 77) proposes three components: Return to the Experience, Attending to Feelings and Re-evaluating the Experience.

Returning to the experience

Firstly in "Returning to the Experience," Boud describes how he met face to face with others who had shared a particular experience, to discuss and consider what had been learnt. Such a discussion with other primary participants is very different to my own experience. In my case the only primary participants (who had shared the whole experience) were on the other side of the world. There were to be no cosy chats around a whiteboard for us. I intuitively recognised the value of talking about the experience but was limited to people I will call secondary and tertiary participants.

By secondary participants I am referring to people who were involved in the Voyage but did not sail aboard the yacht itself, such as my wife who had visited London to meet us, my friend Neville Roberts who had travelled to Scotland for our departure and return, and my academic Supervisor Professor

^{iv} Schon's view that institutions are characterised by dynamic conservatism, a tendency to fight to remain the same, is an interesting idea to apply to expeditions. I wondered for instance if our lack of motivation to utilise the discussion facility of h2g2 resulted from an inner desire to retain the traditionally more distant persona of an expeditioner, sending no more than the occasional one way message that all was well.

Gregory Heath, who had been closely involved in helping me think about the whole project since early 2003.

By tertiary participants I am referring to people around me who knew that I was involved in the Voyage and who may or may not have been involved in the Australian stop-over, but were not really close to the whole experience and had middling to little or no interest in it. People in this group include my daughters, fellow RMIT students and colleagues Nan Allen and Susan Cowan, neighbours, past work colleagues and members of sailing clubs I belonged to.

Reflective discussion with the secondary participants in the months following my return was in general productive and supportive, but limited by their viewpoint and experience. I think it was sometimes distorted by my view. I had met and talked with these people at length during the Australian stop over as well as in the UK, i.e. mid Project, when I was consciously tired from the previous long voyage at sea, stressed with trying to manage stopover maintenance work and the expectations of my family, and irritated by what I saw as John's negative attitude and displayed sense of helplessness which seemed to be resulting from the disinterest of the Melbourne media in him.^v

I was conscious the view I was presenting was distorted by my feelings and not really how I felt about the Project as a whole, but nevertheless found it hard to stand back and give a more objective view. These listeners must have really wondered why I was carrying on.

In discussion after the voyage I felt these listeners remembered well my complaints, felt they had experienced it themselves to some degree during the Australian stopover, sufficient to feel they understood what I was saying. But I felt they had never seen the other side, the many wonderful days and nights of the voyage and the close team the Ridgway's and I became at sea. "All in all it was really worthwhile," I heard myself saying defensively, "Nobody's perfect, least of all me, I really enjoy and respect John and Marie Christine." But it wasn't a good basis for balanced insightful reflective discussion.

^v Arriving in Melbourne on the same day that Saddam Hussein was caught, just a few days before Christmas, with the staff of our primary contact Birds Australia all at a Conference was most unfortunate timing. Nevertheless, writing in my Journal about John's petulance in Melbourne at being ignored by the media I suggested he may have got off lightly, Australians (including the media) in general not being impressed by late middle aged, somewhat eccentric Englishmen, who take themselves seriously.

Discussions with individual secondary participants were clouded by other factors too. For instance I felt Tomoko didn't want to be reminded of the year and her father's death. I thought in her mind Ridgway was responsible for luring me away.

For Neville Roberts it was a reminder of a great adventure. He was happy to talk and remember our times at Ardmore and London. But the time at sea was a complete unknown to him and fruitless to discuss.

My academic Supervisor Professor Greg Heath, who had solid offshore yachting experience with a variety of skippers, was the most knowledgeable and empathetic person I could talk with and reflective discussion with him was very helpful to me in better understanding why I felt the way I did, and to draw learning from the experience

But none of these secondary participants had actually been there on the boat and I missed talking with John and Marie Christine about how, with hindsight, they thought the communications had really gone.

Instead I noticed that reflective discussion with secondary participants often turned to debate about inter-personal issues amongst the crew. About Igor and John in particular.

Attempts at reflective discussion with tertiary participants were even less successful. I found ex-work colleagues (with whom I was now working again on a part time contract) to be mostly totally uninterested, even critical, saying they thought such a long ocean voyage would be boring and a waste of time. Other friends and neighbours were more polite but clearly the project was so far outside their experience it was difficult to go beyond small talk about it. Members of sailing clubs I belonged to or presented to about the voyage seemed similarly affected and it was difficult to move beyond debate about how high the waves were or the amazing flying feats of albatrosses.

Whilst I thought I missed the opportunity for reflective discussion with John and Marie Christine, I found I had little interest on my return in trying to contact Quentin Hanich, a crewmember from Cape Town to Melbourne and now living in Sydney nor did I have much motivation to update and improve the h2g2 website. Hanich had demonstrated a strong strategic approach to communications and doubtless would have had something to say. Similarly if I had taken a proactive approach to h2g2 and posted photos from the second half of the voyage to the site and re-organised the daily logs to be more accessible shortly after my return, I probably could have re-energised our online supporters and hosted a reflective online discussion about the communications that might have yielded insights.

But immediately after the voyage I did neither. I felt emotionally exhausted and had no desire to re-open debate about it all.^{vi}

As a result of this much of my reflection on the communications was done alone, commonly after reading my journals and whilst trying to write the summary or overview of a leg or stopover.

Boud et al also experienced this emotional draining and disinclination to return to the experience (Boud, Keogh et al. 1985, p. 76). For expeditioners it may also be exacerbated by physical tiredness and many family and household demands following return after a possibly a lengthy absence.

However I did find my mind still tuned to the social issues of communication from yachts at sea and found myself interested to read and was probably influenced now in my reflection by the experience of others. For instance Sheila Chichester's story, the wife of 60's yachtsman Francis Chichester (Chichester 1969). Sheila was a vital supporter of her husband and strongly influenced him to take a powerful radio transmitter on his Atlantic and then around the world voyages, to communicate with newspapers.

"The next morning I was horrified to open a daily paper and see printed verbatim my conversation" (Chichester 1969, p. 118). Sheila Chichester shocked to find her radio exchange with husband Francis, approaching Sydney, had been monitored, recorded and sold to the media by a radio Ham.

She and Francis were perhaps among the first to grapple with the issues of sending regular directly stories from a single-handed yacht mid-ocean to newspapers to be published the next day. It was fraught with difficulties, ranging from technical to social to emotional. My admiration for the two of them grew.

I also re-read Jesse Martin's account of his non-stop single-handed voyage around the world in 1999 (Martin 2001). He set out to become the youngest person to achieve this unassisted, and is credited with doing so.

^{vi} Subsequently I have revised the h2g2 pages considerably, making it much easier to access the daily logs and invited discussion but little has eventuated.

Without question his voyage was a great achievement, but I found myself questioning the unassisted claim as I read how he had sent and received multiple emails nearly every day of the voyage using an Inmarsat C satellite system link. Via email he received expert advice on handling each of the many inevitable problems that arose on the boat. Without this assistance the outcome might have been very different.

This didn't really seem to compare with the voyage of the likes of Robin Knox Johnston, who back in 1968 had no such communications support and had to solve every such problem totally alone (Knox-Johnston 1969). With the advent of Internet access from a yacht I wondered if the rulebook definition of "assistance" on short-handed voyages needed to be re-written.

"I found myself on the phone a lot" (Martin 2001, p. 96). Jesse Martin explaining away his more than \$2,500 per month satellite phone bill during his single-handed non stop circumnavigation in 1999. It challenged definitions of "unassisted."

I was also interested to read Martin's second book, his account of the voyage of Kijana. (Martin 2005) Prior to heading off with the Ridgway's I had met with the David Eade, the Telstra Engineer who had set up cameras and satellite communications equipment aboard the yacht Kijana as part of Telstra's sponsorship agreement. I'd learnt a lot about the communication possibilities from him. Now I read the detail of how Kijana, with Martin leading a small crew of young people, had headed off on a three-year tropical circumnavigation in March 2002. But at sea Martin had found it hard to impose the firm discipline he knew was needed, whilst in port he found it equally difficult to gain crew cooperation to shoot the regular film footage expected by sponsors. The expectations of the young crew were very different and the voyage was eventually abandoned in Thailand after a very difficult ten months.

Reading the sad story of Kijana gave me a new perspective as I reflected on our experience aboard English Rose VI. John, Marie Christine and I had all completed long passages in yachts before and there was no arguing amongst us about the strict regimes needed to run the ship safely nor about the work required to develop a media profile. But the difficulty experienced aboard Kijana pointed out to me that it might not have been this way.

It is now clear to me that my learning through reflection at this time was enhanced by this outside reading. I believe it helped me consider the experience from a different viewpoint and see things I might not have otherwise noticed.

Attending to Feelings

A second component of the Reflective Learning Process proposed by Boud is that of "Attending to feelings." He talks of the importance of understanding one's feelings about returning to the experience as this may influence one's reflection on it (Boud, Cohen et al. 1993, p. 75).

I've already mentioned feeling emotionally drained, which I think contributed to my not pursuing reflective discussion with Quentin Hanich or stimulating reflective discussion on h2g2. But at the same time, like Boud, I felt a great sense of excitement and personal achievement at having achieved something, in my case the circumnavigation under sail. The Cape of Good Hope, the Southern Ocean and Cape Horn were no longer just the preserve of square-riggers and maxi yachts racing around the world. They were now real places in my memory, with an atmosphere of wind, waves, and special light that I hope I will always remember.

Re-evaluating the experience and barriers to reflection

Regarding the Albatross I was not so sure how worthwhile it had been. The more I had learnt the more pessimistic I became about not just it's chances of survival, but about the survival of pelagic ocean life in general. I felt we may have raised awareness somewhat but in the longer term I couldn't see that anything would change the exploitation of ocean resources, to extinction. The thought left me feeling bleak and questioning the value of my involvement in the whole project. However during this study I was heartened to learn that the well-known British yachtswomen Ellen MacArthur had met with John and Marie Christine Ridgway and taken on the role of patron of the Save the Albatross Campaign.

Boud et al refer to this part of reflective learning process as "Re-evaluation of the Experience" (1985, p. 78-90). Apart from my rather mixed feelings about the benefit for the albatross, I found myself re-evaluating:

- The communications, for which I had taken major responsibility, and was the focus of my study;
- My relationships with others in the crew, particularly John and Marie Christine, and what this was telling me about myself;
- The benefit of the whole project to the Albatross cause;
- The effect on my family of my being away for 12 months;
- The effect on myself,
- The effectiveness of the whole process as a learning experience.

This re-evaluation process took place mainly in the 18 months after the voyage as I collated the Notes sent to h2g2, my daily journal, photos taken each day and the emails sent and received each day. It was not always easy and in hindsight I realised that like Boud et al (1993, p. 79), I had experienced a number of barriers to effective reflection. For me the principal ones being:

- A sense that I had no-one to talk to who really knew what I was talking about. This was a loss as I know that vocalising ideas and discussing them with a knowledgeable person is an effective way to gain new insights.
- A feeling of overload, I just had so much material from the 12 months away (Logs, journal and photos) that I just wondered how to make sense of it all. Even where to start.
- A desire to move on to the 'next thing', all this being just history.
- A feeling of uncomfortableness with some of the memories that were raised. For instance negative feelings during the voyage that were re-kindled plus negative feelings about my responses at the time and what these said about me.
- A desire to avoid the re-awakening of a sense of guilt at being away on the expedition whilst family members struggled with problems that normally I would have given them support with.
- A sense of lack of knowledge about how to tackle the whole reflective learning process.

Conclusion

The Analysis process started out as one of collating data and seeking to identify themes in an almost positivist approach. With a large number of records from the 11-month voyage, there was a lot of material to work with. During this early part of the analysis I decided more learning might be gained by others from my experience if instead of assembling a series of bullet point issues, I wrote a narrative describing my lived experience of being on the voyage and responsible for online communications. In adopting this approach I was drawing on Max van Manen's ideas about phenomenological inquiry (1990, p. 30).

I continued to take a constructionist view of how meaning was made (Crotty 1998, p. 42-65), (Berger and Luckmann 1966, p. 13-30), feeling this endorsed the approach of using a phenomenological method of inquiry.

Having written narratives about each part of the voyage I continued on to write an account of the 9 month preparatory period as many of the experiences on the Voyage resulted from decisions taken long before we left shore.

With the resultant voyage account being much too long to include in its entirety I decided to include just one Leg, but draw learning from the entire voyage, into a separate Chapter. This led to study about learning theory to validate and put in context the knowledge I claimed to be drawing out.

This analysis is an example of action research. The subject was approached with an apparently valid methodology, but through the writing process, discourse, reflection and research on other methods of inquiry, the methodology evolved to a phenomenological approach. This was chosen for its ability to support the underlying constructionist epistemology, enabling readers to build their own understanding of the lived experience. However the length limitations of the research paper prevented the full narrative being included. Reflective learning was therefore used to draw on the entire experience and suggest learning to the reader.

Appendix 7.1

Introduction

Following my return to Australia I collated the data for each day of the voyage, creating a file, comprising;

The Information sent to and published on h2g2 (Information about our progress, sightings and a commentary written by John Ridgway).

My personal journal for the day.

Details of any photos taken that day.

A table showing details of emails sent or received that day.

I filed this in a plastic sleeve for the day together with:

Thumbnail prints of pictures taken that day.

Hard copies of emails sent and received that day.

An extract from the video shot list with details of any video shot that day

This information provided a detailed record of each day that I drew on heavily when writing the accounts of each Leg and Stopover.

Following are examples of these composite files for the first 4 days of Leg 3, from Cape Town to Melbourne;

Voyage Day: 91, 25 October 2003**Log published on H2G2:**

Date: 25 October 2003

Day: 92 [actually 91] (Day 21 in Cape Town)

Local time: 1200 GMT+2

Leg Number and name: Leg 3, "The Wandering"

Focus of leg: CCAMLAR - the role of a regulated fishery. The impact of IUU fishing. ..

Position - Latitude, Longitude: 33.54'S, 18.19'E

Position relative to nearest land: A few miles due west of Cape Town, heading out...

Course: 268 T

Speed: 1.2 knots

Distance travelled in last 24hrs: tbc

Distance travelled since last port: tbc

Total distance from Ardmore: 8,000 nm

Headed to: Melbourne, Australia

Distance to next port: Approx 6,000 nautical miles (nm) ...

Barometric pressure: 1024

Wind direction: NW

Wind Speed: Force 7-8 (28-40 knots)

Cloud cover: 100%

Air temperature: n/a

Surface sea temperature: 17.0C

Sea conditions: Rough. Motoring west into steep swell to 20ft and strong wind to 40 knots from the WNW to gain sufficient sea room to clear Cape Point on a starboard tack.

Bird sightings:

Notes: Up at 0530 for the last hot shower. We sailed on the dot of 0900. A strong NW wind made it a bit of a test. Flashing daggers slashed ropes as we sprang backwards into the huge dock lined with tankers and fishing boats. Hope nobody was watching.

A radio message came from the Yacht Club anxiously asking if we were returning. We were motoring into a big swell and forty knots of breeze. "No!" I said. It was 25 years to the day since we'd sailed out of here on the 1977/8 Whitbread Round the World Race.

Anyway it was a dreadful day, all six of us were horrifically sick. I must go and lie down.

Into the mist...

John Ridgway

Personal Notes

Sailed – a cold very blustery day, wind straight out of the west, making departure from the dock awkward and difficult as we were forced to back out into maybe 20kts, steerage poor, on land I ran around judiciously casting off – with the boat fast leaving the dock I suddenly realized I could be left behind! “See you in Melbourne” I could hear JR almost saying “I took a leap at the guard rail fast receding and got a foot on the gunwale, aboard, but then realized there was still one line, umbilically holding us to the shore, it strained and creaked, on shore the well wishers rushed to cast it off, but I knew it would be impossible, it would break any moment, the whiplash could injure someone – “Stand away, get back!” I yelled. “The knife, beside you” shouted Igor to me, I grabbed the knife and touched it to the line with which cut with a bang! We were off!. Well almost, edging astern, the windage on the hull making turning near impossible – until the space of the wider harbour! Outside the plan was to motor west into the wind to a point 6 miles out from where we could alter course, then [steer] SE to clear Cape Point – but outside it was 30-40 knots right on the nose, with matching seas. We struggled to do a knot as we crept out and so slowly headed parallel to the city, south. The motion was violent and we all rapidly became seasick! Including me! My stomach just tensed up and soon I was over the side with the best of them. First the remains of breakfast then nothing ... all afternoon and night almost first time so bad for me!

But went to bed at 6am feeling a little better – tried sipping water in bed, very quickly to sleep – woke at 9.30 and got up at 10 to have a shave etc and then decided to go back to bed! First time and had a very lazy morning reading ‘Disgrace’ in bed. Much the most comfortable place I found. The weather was easing too. Got up at 1pm, had soup and roll for lunch feeling much better, then on Watch 2-6pm – light and changeable – sunny/cloudy variable wind and attempted to send log – but was unable to login to the mail server! Very frustrating. No idea why. Password hasn’t changed to my knowledge, but ‘login failure’ very frustrating and expensive trying 3 times. My personal conclusion is that there is some problem with the mail server and not on my end at all. Mmmm good to try? Sailmail, but I need to load new software for Pactor 3 – tomorrow morning?

Having 3 new crew members raises comms issues – Quentin needs power for his phone (alarm clock) and PC – he asked if people could use my digital camera anytime to photo whales etc and I refused (it would soon stop working and die – no one responsible...

Streamed the towing log [generator] this afternoon, with the coarse pitched prop on a much longer line, but as we’re only doing 4 knots it’s hardly giving a charge...

At least the seasickness has diminished with the weather improving and time (getting used to the motion) but we haven't posted the log for a couple of days now and maybe unable to tonight! Thinking of ringing Bec and asking her to send out an email saying all OK.

9pm latest problem is that I can't access the mailbox via Iridium! Tried probably 5 times and keep getting bad login message – but I haven't changed anything to my knowledge! What can it be? I'm at a loss. Checked password and haven't changed, user name is unchanged! Also says can't send email because can't find IP address corresponding to email address etc. Is the mail server down? It's my only conclusion! Iridium itself seems OK Connection is OK... but then can't access mail server... Problems may not be on the boat at all...

Photos taken by Researcher: nil

Video taken this day: see video shot list

Emails sent and received this day:

ID	From	To	Subject	Channel

Interviews conducted this day:

Other data received this day eg Weatherfax:

Notes:

Voyage Day: 92, 26 October 2003**Log published on H2G2:**

Date: 26 October 2003

Day: 93 (actually 92)

Local time: 1200 GMT+2

Leg Number and name: Leg 3, "The Wandering"

Focus of leg: CCAMLAR - the role of a regulated fishery. The impact of IUU fishing.

Position - Latitude, Longitude: 35.31 S, 18.12 E

Position relative to nearest land: 80 miles SSE of the Cape of Good Hope

Course: 136 T

Speed: 5.6 knots

Distance travelled in last 24hrs: 120

Distance travelled since last port: 120

Total distance from Ardmore: 8,120 nm

Headed to: Melbourne, Australia

Distance to next port: Approx 6,000 nautical miles (nm) ...

Barometric pressure: 1032

Wind direction: SW

Wind Speed: Force 5 (17-21 knots)

Cloud cover: 20%

Air temperature: n/a

Surface sea temperature: 17.0C

Sea conditions: Beating into light sea

Bird sightings:

Notes: Rather too close to the west flank of the notorious Agulhas Bank. We must head due south until we reach 38 South. Then we can turn S.E. for Marion Island, some 1,100 miles away. The first of the Patagonian Toothfish fishing grounds.

The wind eased and the sea calmed down a little. Grand to see the great Albatross again! Grey Heads, Black Brows and Yellow Noses were about as if to encourage us on toward their home on the Southern Ocean, still 300 miles to our south.

Everyone managed to keep some food down and a bit of laughter returned to the old ship. We'll be alright soon

Into the mist...

John Ridgway

Personal Notes

All of above [for Saturday 25th) was written Sunday, a day of light winds and seas, in which we all felt much better – I streamed the new extra long log [generator] line and got it in a hell of a tangle/knot and actually ruptured itself – luffed up to get it in, still really heavy and only giving an amp or so. Not the answer.

Photos taken by Researcher: nil

Video taken this day: see attached sheet

Emails sent and received this day:

ID	From	To	Subject	Channel
-	N Grainger	S Cowan	CI031025	Sailmail

Interviews conducted this day:

Other data received this day eg Weatherfax:

Notes:

Voyage Day: 93, 27 October 2003**Log published on H2G2:**

Date: 27 October 2003

Day: 94 [actually 93]

Local time: 1200 GMT+2

Leg Number and name: Leg 3, "The Wandering"

Focus of leg: CCAMLAR - the role of a regulated fishery. The impact of IUU fishing...

Position - Latitude, Longitude: 37.01 S, 19.05 E

Position relative to nearest land: 140 nautical miles SSW of Cape Agulhas, South Africa.

Course: 174 T

Speed: 7.8 knots

Distance travelled in last 24hrs: 100 nm

Distance travelled since last port: 220 nm

Total distance from Ardmore: 8,220 nm

Headed to: Melbourne, Australia

Distance to next port: Approx 5,263 nautical miles (nm) (Direct Great Circle route, we will not go so far South and will therefore have to sail further). ..

Barometric pressure: 1034

Wind direction: SE

Wind Speed: Force 5-6 (17-27 knots)

Cloud cover: 20%

Air temperature: n/a

Surface sea temperature: 16.8C

Sea conditions: Tight reach (wind on the side), sailing south across moderate sea, whitecaps.

Bird sightings: Black browed, Grey Headed and occasional Wandering Albatross, Cape pigeons, Petrels.

Notes: Bumpy again today. So the repairs to our health, achieved yesterday, rather failing today. 'B' Watch (Trevor and Quentin) was rather quiet. Trevor (62) the seasoned Foreign Correspondent who has sailed a lot with us, smiles wanly, when Marie Christine calls him "Treasure". Quentin (33), tells us he is more Politician than Birder. Small, dark and wiry, he spits out words like machine gun bullets. A Greenpeace Team-Leader in the South Pacific, Quentin has contributed greatly to getting the Petition going. In the couple of weeks before we sailed from Cape Town, he had travelled from Fiji to his home in Australia and swiftly on, to multi-meetings in Europe. Arriving in Cape Town only a day or

two before we sailed, he immediately set up key meetings for us, including the filming of the pirate ship. Now he's finding it difficult to settle down into the 24-hour rhythm of a year-long voyage. We must help him 'Down-stress'

Into the mist...

John Ridgway

Personal Notes

The wind freshened from the SE then NE over night and we progressively reduced sail – by this morning we had about 30 knots on the beam from the E as we head south to clear the Aghulas Bank, en-route to Marion Island. Very bumpy again and shipping lots of water over the bow. Very difficult to wash and shave. Everyone going down again. I had the remains of the spaghetti for breakfast and feel OK now but hope I can keep it down.

Today:

Put eyes in old towing generator line and stream asap

Get weather fax from CT at noon and 1300 (no it didn't work)

Load Pactor 3 software, new licence no – done

Evening – try Sailmail – worked

Try iridium email again – failed

Do log from Logbook

Cut nails

Find penknife

Watch 2-6

Survive?

All in all a productive day! Fresh wind for most, heading due south – hand steering in our Watch.

Still no access to our mailbox via Iridium – I couldn't figure out why and do think something has changed off the boat – then tried to work out how to upgrade to Sailmail 3.3 – wished I'd done it whilst still ashore – too late – in the middle of experimenting with Iridium, got locked out of that as well (password=password) but slowly figured out how to upgrade Sailmail to 3.3 and Pactor 3. Then switched off the autopilot, switched the aerial over and tried calling Mauputo – And got through! Amazing! Quickly cut and pasted daily logs from Friday, Saturday, Sunday into Sailmail and tried again – it went thru at >800 cpm really easily! Everyone was thrilled. Very encouraging – tomorrow I'll ask Sam S to try and access the Iridium mailbox (from land) to see if there is actually a problem with the access – seems like I can't have both Sailmail and Iridium going at the same time!

Because of the Iridium failure, daily logs haven't been sent for 3 days. Were people worried?

JR interviewed live for the UK Today programme and also rang Christina this evening to thank and Rob Duncan. But neither call worked – both were out.

Photos taken by Researcher: nil

Video taken this day: see attached sheet

Emails sent and received this day:

ID	From	To	Subject	Channel
1137	N Grainger	S Cowan	CI031025	Sailmail
1138	N Grainger	S Cowan	CI031026	Sailmail

Interviews conducted this day:

Other data received this day eg Weatherfax:

Notes:

Voyage Day: 94, 28 October 2003**Log published on H2G2:**

Date: 28 October 2003

Day: 95 [actually 94]

Local time: 1200 GMT+2

Leg Number and name: Leg 3, "The Wandering"

Focus of leg: CCAMLAR - the role of a regulated fishery. The impact of IUU fishing.

Position - Latitude, Longitude: 39.47 S, 18.59 E

Position relative to nearest land: 345 nm south of Cape Town, South Africa.

Course: 176 T

Speed: 7.3 knots

Distance travelled in last 24hrs: 160 nm

Distance travelled since last port: 380 nm

Total distance from Ardmore: 8,380 nm

Headed to: Melbourne, Australia

Distance to next port: Approx 5,143 nautical miles (nm) (Direct Great Circle route, we will not go so far South and will therefore have to sail further).

Barometric pressure: 1036

Wind direction: E

Wind Speed: Force 5 (17-21 knots)

Cloud cover: 75%

Air temperature: n/a

Surface sea temperature: 19.3C

Sea conditions: Reaching across light sea, heading South. Some whitecaps.

Bird sightings: Black browed, Grey Headed and occasional Wandering Albatross, Cape pigeons, Petrels.

Notes: The glass remains high and the wind holds good from the South-East. We continue to tip-toe down the longitude fence into the fearful Southern Ocean while the giant slumbers. Should I tell the others how awful it's going to be? The skinning cold and the lurking fear: "If it gets much worse, we're going over". But this is just the defeatist talk of an old man. Six of us, with all the modern gear - Furling sails, Doghouse, Auto-Pilot; surely we'll find it easier than Andy Briggs and me on our 203-day non-stop trip round the world 20 years ago with those three shivering months in the Southern Ocean. I thought you were supposed to forget the nasty things in life. Then, I was 12 years older than

Quentin is now. He has a good power to weight ratio, for a Powder Monkey.

Maybe the surest form of education is the nose in the way of the slamming door. I love a bit of spark.

Only dead fish swim with the stream.

During daylight hours we tried hand steering, in place of the Monitor wind-vane. This allowed us to press on a bit and the noon-to-noon run showed a respectable 160 miles.

A Wandering Albatross landed nearby. Folded its huge wings and looked on approvingly as we passed by.

Into the mist...

John Ridgway

Personal Notes

Day 96/5 (JR and baseball – The Natural) Tues L3, D4.

11am. Up at 9am – good invigorating wash, clean up of Heads, sweep through the forward cabin and saloon.

Quentin taking his own Satphone up on deck/watch – how does JR feel about that? (An independent voice aboard?)

Today I must try and get Weather fax and send Log - email to Sam/Richard re the email accessed by Iridium, ask them to try and access it from shore.

Still heading south with light – moderate easterly wind – now changed to hand steering during the day....

Maybe I'll do the log now, in the morning (yesterday's...) is this a better routine than in the afternoon?

9.15pm Successfully sent log and 2 emails by Sailmail today – with Pactor 3 and the Autopilot completely off (+all instrument) I got almost straight through to Mauputo and then the data went out at about 4.5kpm – very fast relatively! But I was feeling very stressed and before that the PC had just suddenly shut down by itself and I think I was pretty abrupt with people around me.

I'd been on watch and steered much of the afternoon (it seemed, actually only a couple of hours) and re-done the Monitor lines and spent all morning trying to receive Weather fax and then found it was my turn to wash up, and that meant I missed sunset and optimum time for Sailmail transmission ... I felt I was running around doing everything – then Igor found our cabin sopping wet because Quentin had opened the hatch and then closed it on a rope so it didn't seal, whilst foredeck was constantly awash! Luckily the plastic sheet saved my bunk! But I was so irritable. Must just get over that stuff – smile and ignore!

Now down to 40S, cool heavy wind – only 25-35 knots but strong. Water is suddenly warm, coming down from the Indian Ocean. But wind must be down 'cos power generator meters are showing lower charge ... Igor and I may have to increase sail. Must be more positive!

Photos taken by Researcher: nil

Video taken this day: nil

Emails sent and received this day:

ID	From	To	Subject	Channel
1140	N Grainger	S Cowan	CI031027	Sailmail
1139	J Ridgway	S Semple	Email to Robert Lamb	Sailmail
1141	N Grainger	S Semple	Help – can't access mailbox	Sailmail
1142	N Grainger	J Corenman	Sailmail going...	Sailmail

Interviews conducted this day:

Other data received this day eg Weatherfax:

"Experience is the foundation of, and stimulus for learning."
(Jarvis P 2003, p. 56)

Chapter 8

LEARNING

Introduction

How does the Internet effect expedition communication? In this chapter, after further validating the drawing of learning from the experience, I explore this question from six perspectives. Each exploration is a summation of the lived experience told and reflected on in this study.

The ambivalence of thinking about the phenomenological method has already been mentioned. This also extends into the drawing of learning from accounts of lived experience. Should the reader be left alone to draw their own learning? Should the reader be assisted with some sort of thematic analysis? (van Manen 1990, p. 90) Is it appropriate as both one of the subjects and the teller of the story to draw any learning at all?

Educationist Peter Jarvis might say yes. In accordance with the underlying epistemology of this study and the interpretivist theoretical perspective, Jarvis supports the constructionist view of life long learning, however he acknowledges there are individual episodes when we are particularly aware of the external world. He proposes there are two important components of these episodes, firstly the encounter with the experience itself, and secondly a form of mediated reflective learning later which helps us make a personal construct of the experience, drawing on our previous knowledge and existing social constructions (Jarvis P 2003, p. 54-5).

It is on this basis that I outline in this Chapter my learning from the Save the Albatross Voyage. But it is purely my learning, my construct from the experience. I would like to encourage the reader to look more carefully at the summaries of all the Legs and Stopovers in the Durable Record, and at the many other records there, to construct their own view of the influence of the Internet on the Voyage.

But failing that or perhaps in addition, I have in the rest of this Chapter outlined my learning by discussing six topics.

Firstly, what was the purpose of Internet communication on the voyage? Here I remind the reader of the original thinking to show how intrinsic the Internet was to the design of the voyage, but then show how our ambitious communications plan was worn down by harsh realities, and then look at the actual use we made of what was left. From this I draw conclusions about our purposes of communication and go on to briefly consider the purposes of communication on various types of expedition.

For the second topic I consider how Internet communication shaped the voyage. Here I look at how we used the Internet both during planning and the voyage itself. I propose the decision to use the BBC h2g2 website was particularly important as it enabled us to communicate worldwide without any form of media sponsor. This had a number of effects on the Voyage that are outlined. During the voyage itself the impact of sending and receiving messages every day is explored both at an individual and whole voyage level.

The third topic I explore is how the experience was communicated, the making of meaning. Drawing on constructionism I explore some of the difficulties we faced trying to make meaning of our experience to a wide variety of audiences and how this was resolved. I go on to consider what this may have said about our thinking and personalities.

The fourth topic I consider are ethical issues. The ethics of environment conservation, privacy, self promotion and confidentiality all became a concern to me during and following the Voyage and led to further study and reflection. In this section I outline the evolution of my thinking and my conclusions.

The fifth topic I explore is that of personal learning and growth over the voyage. Here I explore my motivation to participate and then go on to discuss some of the personal learning I gained from the experience. I write about the benefits of keeping a journal and the growth of my self-understanding as I reflected on what I had written, some time after the voyage.

Finally I review the learning I gained through the evolving methodology I used to give structure to this research project. With subsequent reflective learning I consider this process and note the range of topics I studied in order to make the most of the voyage experience. This led me into unexpected areas and to the research project having unexpected dimensions.

Not included in this summary of learning is a guide to using satellite phones or notes on how to send data over a high frequency radio. Nor the impact of having two email addresses, or how we coped with our ISP closing down our mailbox at sea and the many other technical communication issues that arose. Practical notes on all these topics, a year's worth of them, are contained in a paper I wrote for the Royal Geographic Society in mid-2005, which is in the Durable Record.

The Purpose of Communication on the Voyage

Has Narcissus joined Ulysses?

Introduction

In his book proposing there is an exploring instinct in man J.R.L. Anderson reminds the reader of the evolutionary process of general adaptation;

The ability of a species to acquire characteristics that assist survival over the whole range of conditions in which it lives, in man for instance the ability to communicate by speech (Anderson 1970, p. 15).

He goes on to argue the existence of an "exploring instinct" (it would be a gene today) he calls "The Ulysses factor," citing examples in history and the modern day, including coincidentally, John Ridgway, who with Chay Blyth had at the time recently come to public attention in Britain for rowing the Atlantic.

Whether an instinct, meta-physical drive, a gene, or simply just a desire to be remembered, travellers have created records of their experiences and sought to communicate with those at home. In the following I outline our ambitious communication plan and how it was whittled away, the use we made of what was left, and what this said to me about the purpose of our communication. Looking beyond our voyage, I propose a simple classification of expeditions and suggest how the purpose of communication on them may differ. I suggest websites provide expeditioners today with a globally visible platform upon which they can construct an image of themselves to their own liking without fear of intervention, comment or criticism. Such websites may give expeditions immediate global visibility, or at least a sense of global visibility, to an extent not seen before.

Communication on the Save the Albatross Voyage

On the Voyage the primary overt purpose of communication was to raise public awareness of the Albatross issue and thus stimulate activities that would prevent their needless killing.

This was to be achieved by stimulating worldwide debate on the Internet whilst following the flight path of the albatross around the world in the Southern Ocean.

Financial and consequent technical limitations reduced this grand ambition to publishing a daily log of the voyage to a website, which also offered background information on the Albatross, a link to a Petition visitors were invited to sign and the facility to contribute to online discussion.¹

Visitors were to be guided to the site we hoped by publicity campaigns by Birdlife International and its member organisations around the world, by radio interviews with John Ridgway and others and by articles in the media, and of course in response to enquires on Internet search engines.

It was hoped the daily Log would give meaning to the Albatross issue, would engage visitors sufficiently to promote repeat visits, to build their interest in the Albatross, encourage others to visit it, and to sign the Petition.

But the potential two-way communication of the Internet offered much more. In particular it was hoped the discussion facility on h2g2 would stimulate the sort of global conversation forecast by Levine et al in the *Cluetrain Manifesto* (Levine, Locke et al. 2000), building support for Birdlife International's worldwide Albatross Campaign.

As it turned out few interviews were broadcast, the website was promoted very little outside the Internet, financial and technical difficulties limited the connection bandwidth to the yacht which prevented participation in online discussion and limited email traffic to a small number of correspondents and short emails. Technical difficulties and financial limitations also restricted the use of the satellite phone.

Despite all the above, and having no idea of the number of visitors (if any) to the h2g2 web pages, we expended great effort every day to send an update to the website throughout the voyage.

In port we had the opportunity to engage in the h2g2 online discussion forums, to answer those few questions that had been posted, to encourage online engagement and participation. But neither John, Marie Christine nor I seemed greatly motivated to do so. I started out enthusiastically but many unexpected difficultiesⁱ and the daily maintenance needs of the yacht took our energy and seemed higher priority. Greetings and questions on the Discussion board went unanswered. In the end this

ⁱ Logging into and using h2g2 from Internet cafes, yacht club PCs and loaned PCs in foreign ports proved much more difficult than expected, with speed and security barriers proving excruciatingly frustrating in first Tenerife, Cape Town and then subsequent stopovers (apart from Melbourne where I had access to my home broadband connection).

avenue of possible engagement died from lack of response by us on the yacht. We just didn't seem sufficiently motivated to persist despite the difficulties.

Of course email was used, albeit limited by its cost and the technology, and there were exchanges seeking support at stopovers, help with failing equipment, to arrange crew and for exchanging news with family, but the focus remained on us, the expeditioners.

At sea for weeks at a time we seemed quite content to receive no news of the world's doings at all. But to post *our* news each day was all-important. In our subconscious I think *we saw ourselves as the news*, we wanted to speak, not listen and had little interest in using the potential the Internet offered for a dialogue.

Even a cursory review of both the Notes written for the website by Ridgway and in my own Journal show our self-absorption. We were proud to be out there. But did it go further? I noticed I eagerly read John's Notes for the website each day. I was interested to learn his view, his construction of what had happened, particularly if I was mentioned. I began to wonder if the website was merely a mirror for which we constructed an image and then admired ourselves in? Was Narcissusⁱⁱ alive and well and living on English Rose VI?

"I can gather all the news I need on the weather report," in *The Only Living Boy in New York*, written by Paul Simon and performed by Simon and Garfunkel on the music album *Bridge over Trouble Water*. Sony 1970

Perhaps not at a conscious level. But a number of important decisions and practices can be constructed in more ways than one. For instance the decision not to seek or accept sponsorship. Argued by Ridgway as "Selling your soul for the trade price on a jacket"² and supported by myself for the independence I believed it allowed us, may have cost us a vast audience. For instance in 1997/8 ocean voyager Jesse Martin demonstrated the powerful symbiotic relationship between an adventurer and a newspaper (Martin 2001, p. 79). But for Narcissus this loss would not have mattered. More importantly the media had not always treated Ridgway kindly and possibly he feared anyone other than himself having a hand in constructing the image he wished to see of himself or wished the world

ⁱⁱ In Greek Mythology Narcissus discovered his image in a pool and fell in love with himself. Being unable to find consolation, he died of sorrow by the same pool.

to see.ⁱⁱⁱ This would also explain his desire to have a single communication channel from and to the yacht. Looking at my own behaviour I wondered if it was narcissism too that led to my concern about how I was represented in his Notes posted to the website. An image that did not always coincide with how I wished to see myself.

Other Expeditions?

A search of the Internet will show similar one way, "Look at me" expedition websites.³ Perhaps this is a more common purpose of expedition communication than expeditioners might like to admit? A website supports the narcissistic streak expeditioners may have with an environment in which they can publish without risk of intervention, where they can construct any image they wish, on a global stage.⁴ Of course no-one may be watching, but maybe this doesn't matter. The most important audience may be the expeditioner him or herself.

From this perspective expeditioners have never had it so good.

Types of Expedition

Perhaps this judgement of expeditioners' communication purpose is too harsh and wide. There are many different forms of expedition and communication purposes may vary. For instance expeditions could be classified by their organisation and leadership:

"The Professional" Expeditions initiated by organisations with a professional leader appointed and paid participants. (eg Australian Antarctic Division⁵ expeditions and Greenpeace⁶). Such expeditions are often conducting research of some kind and are commonly not associated with particular individuals. The purpose of communication on these expeditions may be confined to administration, safety matters, repairs and maintenance, and family links,⁷ or in the likes of Greenpeace, advocacy on an environmental issue. The Internet provides reliable relatively secure written communication and the potential for the transmission and reception of audio-visual media.⁸

"The Unknown" Expeditions initiated by one or more relatively unknown individuals, self-funded, limited or no sponsorship, leadership may be shared. (eg Trevor Robertson, Antarctic Voyager⁹, Gerry Clark, a Cape Horn voyager¹⁰). Personal fulfilment, self-discovery, a natural history quest, and a love of wild places may all play a role in these expeditions. Communication with such expeditioners may be

ⁱⁱⁱ In the past the media had not always treated Ridgway kindly and his fear was understandable.

limited. Many may never tell their story, or tell it in the style of Bill Tilman (1957), Bernard Moitessier (1969) and Gerry Clarke (1989), unpretentious accounts of remarkable journeys. These expeditions may see little value in Internet communication beyond that of safety. They may even see the easy and frequent contact with the outside world as an intrusion, to be minimised.

“The Celebrity” Expeditions initiated and led by a “celebrity” adventurer, or adventurers aspiring to some level of personal fame. They may or may not be partially or wholly sponsored and seem to commonly have achievement as their focus, be it the first crossing of an icecap, an ascent or some other first. (eg Jesse Martin’s youngest person circumnavigation (Martin 2001) and Wave Vidmar’s solo treks to the North and South Poles). The purpose of communication on such expeditions may be related to the promotion of sponsors, the achievement of the goal, and the enhancement of the profile of the participants, perhaps to secure future sponsorship. In addition to their obvious egoistic nature, there may be a narcissistic element to this as participants construct the identity of their choosing on a public stage (website). The Internet may play an important role on these expeditions.

“The Inspirational” An Internet derivative of the celebrity type of expedition, one that seeks to combine the personal growth or fulfilment of its leader or key participants with the giving of inspiration to others. The website about quadriplegic Hilary Lister’s single-handed sail across the English Channel is an example of such an expedition website.¹¹ Communication via the Internet almost gives this type of expedition its meaning, both in the construction of the identity of the leader and key participants, and in the telling of a story, the interpretation of events.

In conclusion

Whilst the overt use of the Internet on the voyage was to promote the Save the Albatross cause, and to communicate with family and friends, analysis of our actual use of it led me to wonder if we were using it to support narcissistic and egoistic aspects of our personalities.

It became clear to me that the Internet gave us an environment in which we could publish without risk of intervention, construct any image of ourselves we wished and present it on a global stage. The potential for supporting discussion was there but little utilised by us. We seemed to prefer to speak rather than engage in dialogue.

Whilst concerned about generalising my views to all expeditioners I propose that expeditions may be categorised by a combination of their leadership and public profile, and suggest four categories, each of which may use the Internet for different purposes.

Purposes for which an expedition may use the Internet include corresponding with family, friends and supporters but most particularly to describe the expeditioner's interpretation of their experience and through this to construct an image of themselves either for themselves or (they hope) an audience that may include sponsors (or prospective sponsors). They may use it to promote an issue or cause through engaging an audience, and for expedition management purposes.

As a result of this, expedition websites may give a new dimension to learning about expeditioners and their ventures, and the potential to engage with expeditioners with an ease and level of reliability never achieved before.¹²

How Internet Communications Shaped the Voyage

Introduction

The voyage came first. But from at least 2001 Ridgway promoted the idea of himself on a voyage vessel being the heart of an online worldwide media campaign to promote the case of the Albatross. Ridgway seemed to intuitively believe that sailing around the world following the generic flight path of an Albatross and communicating with the world on the Internet, would have emotional appeal and help to bring knowledge and understanding about these birds and their predicament to people who lived far away and would probably never see one in their lives.

No technocrat, Ridgway was unsure about the technical side. Telling me of his ambition I imagined using voice, text, photographs and video posted directly to the Internet from the yacht at sea. Technically possible, it seemed to take the promotion of an environmental issue to a new level. Ridgway and I hoped this imaginative initiative would interest the media (such as the BBC and independent film companies), environmental organisations such as Birdlife International and their locally affiliated organisations such as the RSPB and Birds Australia, and the public of course.

In this way, from the very beginning, the availability of the Internet started to shape many aspects of the voyage.

Planning and preparation of the voyage

With the concept in place and now inextricably linked to the use of Internet communication, the purpose, leadership and initiating funding was defined by Ridgway, the course by logic and the albatross, and the yacht by the pre-existence of Ridgway's seaworthy 57' ketch English Rose VI.

Needing Internet knowledge and experience, in November 2002 Ridgway invited me to join the crew and offered to cover all my onboard costs. The opportunity to research the use of the Internet was a factor in my deciding to accept. Ridgway knew that with my acceptance he had not only gained the needed Internet knowledge but also the necessary sailing experience to provide back up to himself. If necessary the three of us, Marie Christine, himself and I, could take the yacht around the world. Firm planning could proceed.

Between November 2002 and July 2003, the planning period, the Ridgways were living in Scotland and I in Australia. By email daily we discussed every aspect of the voyage. But planning online communications dominated discussion.

The early decision to use the free BBC h2g2 website as the online home site for the voyage meant we had a channel to communicate with the world that bypassed traditional media. No sponsorship from a newspaper was required. Nor was any website (design or hosting) sponsorship required. With the seaworthy yacht already in place, Ridgway saw the opportunity to be independent of any sponsor. He imagined communicating directly with the world via the website, with no third party interpreting his message, no sponsor pressure or influence. He believed his message about the albatross would be all the more powerful for it.

We planned together and then I created an expanding suite of pages on the BBC h2g2 website. The apparent association with the BBC seemed to give the voyage more credibility.

It was fairly easy to add new pages, no third party programmer was required provided one had knowledge of HTML,^{iv} which I had. As a result we progressively created more pages as the voyage plans became clearer, outlining the purpose of the voyage, the planned course around the world, the problem the Albatross was facing, how the killing could be avoided, information about the yacht and the crew, and for volunteers joining the yacht for a Leg, and so on. I thought the near public organising of the voyage on the website would create public interest and the Discussion area on each page would be used to make suggestions, ask questions and discuss the voyage, contributing to the designing of the whole project. Defining the content of the pages helped the Project but there was much less discussion than expected and this helped little.^v

Whilst h2g2 gave us a global platform at no cost, sending information to it, that is accessing the Internet from remote locations, was clearly going to be much more difficult and more costly than for urban land based users. The choice, the purchase and set up of the technologies and the design and building of watertight enclosures took a lot of time during the planning months, and could not be installed and tested until the week before departure. Informally financial help was sought from the BBC for help with the cost of hardware and access time. With none forthcoming the communication plan was cut to that achievable with a basic satellite phone supplemented when conditions were good by a low budget slow link using a high frequency radio transceiver interacting with a system run on shore by volunteers.

^{iv} HTML Hypertext Markup Language.

^v I particularly encouraged the prospective Birdlife Volunteers to contribute their ideas for publicity raising activities through the Discussion Forums. None did. In conversation later one told me that unstated rivalry between environmental organisations precluded them from sharing strategy ideas in a public arena.

The slow, budget links with the Internet meant that there could be no direct link with h2g2. No longer could we send data directly to the website, monitor and directly participate in the online forums or send video or pictures in real time. Everything would have to go through an intermediary. Much of the planned for leadership of a global campaign from the yacht was going to be impossible.¹³

At the same time having no sponsors was liberating, John and Marie Christine were answerable to no-one. We had a great sense of freedom. We could change our plans at short notice and felt uncommitted by any timetable other than the seasons. At a time when most expeditions seem to be sponsored, many people were surprised we weren't and even more surprised to learn it was by choice. This gave the voyage an independent air that Ridgway believed added to its attraction in Britain.

It could be argued that having no large sponsor(s) detracted from the voyage's credibility, as if no one was willing to sponsor us. Such a view is based on the assumption that every expedition seeks sponsors, and the idea that no sponsors were being sought is incomprehensible. In this paradigm no sponsorship is indicative of the expedition being somehow not credible. This was probably the argument underlying Brand's advocacy for sponsorship detailed in the account of the Preparation.¹⁴ Despite this argument I was and continue to be supportive of Ridgway's no sponsorship approach, but I suspect it may have cost us some support.

With no high profile sponsor, the suite of pages in the h2g2 website pages, and by implication support from the BBC seemed important to us. Certainly these pages, coupled with Ridgway's celebrity status and email enabled us to involve some Birdlife International partners around the world and recruit crew for individual legs in a way difficult to imagine using any other medium outside the Internet.

On the voyage

Having access to the Internet, posting a daily log to the website and exchanging email as we traversed some of the most lonely areas of ocean in the world, shaped the voyage and the experience of participants in a number of ways. Unquestionably this ability contributed to the success of the voyage in terms of the save the albatross campaign but whether it added or detracted from the experience as far as the crew on board were concerned is an individual judgement related to the experience that was being sought, or perhaps expected and perhaps the benefits being hoped for as a result of participating.

Writing and sending the daily log and preparing, sending, receiving and responding to emails, even the relatively small number we handled, took a surprising amount of time and effort every day and

contributed to at least my own tiredness. In the usually difficult conditions on board, for some hours each day, John and I were obliged to reflect on what was going on and about why we were on the voyage. This gave me a firm purpose to every day.^{vi}

The content of the Notes John wrote for the website, whilst hopefully engaging readers ashore, sometimes lowered morale on the yacht. Initially he didn't share his Notes with anyone other than Marie Christine and I. Following other crew sometimes hearing about the content second-hand from their shore contacts on Leg 3, he would commonly read them anything he had written about them before sending. Like them I was sometimes upset by what he did or didn't write.¹⁵ He passionately defended his right to say what he liked and I came to accept this. However by the end of the voyage he had come to think it was safer not to mention anybody.¹⁶ It was obvious that the possible effects on expedition members of what is written in an online log must be thought through carefully. The pressure cooker environment of an expedition having the potential to exaggerate any demoralising effect.

A considerable amount of power was required to support this activity. Generators had to be run frequently and constant attention paid to the state of the batteries. The unreliability of our power generation systems meant they required constant maintenance and were source of worry and expense.

The progressively more reliable receipt of weather forecast information via the Internet as the voyage progressed not only reduced my worry about impending bad weather and but also led to a number of course changes which made our passage safer.^{vii}

vi The Daily Log and Notes, once prepared by John and I and added to the laptop as a text file, would be sent by Iridium satellite phone or Sailmail, as a single email copied to Richard Creasey, Sam Semple, Rebecca Ridgway, Susan Cowan, my wife Tomoko and daughters Erica and Mariko. Richard or Sam (by local agreement, but usually Richard) would then copy and format the Notes and Log and paste into the appropriate page on h2g2. As Richard was establishing a new media business he was travelling extensively and would often update h2g2 from his hotel in Russia or Alaska. When he was unable to do so Sam Semple (working for h2g2 during much of the voyage) in London would update it. Pressures of work and travel meant that even though an updated Log were received it, h2g2 was sometimes not updated for a few days. We had no way of knowing at the time. During the first half of the voyage Susan Cowan and partner Bruce Thompson would update the Mapping Website with the position of the yacht and John's Notes. Unfortunately they ceased to do this from mid January 2004 when we were mod-Tasman. The Mapping website can be viewed on the Durable Record, go to Durable Record Home>Mapping Website>Napping Website.

vii Weather based decisions included heaving to westward of Cook Strait whilst a violent cold front blew over us and proceeded up the Strait (we followed in the calmer conditions behind it); the abandonment of our attempt to cross our outward bound

The general availability of email enabled all of us on board to actively maintain relationships with selected family and friends. As written text, messages received and sent were loaded with emotional content. This interaction with happenings ashore undoubtedly affected the mood of participants aboard.^{viii} This was in stark contrast to my experience sailing across the Atlantic and Pacific in 1973/4 with no communications facility and no contact with the outside world for up to two months at a time. The effect of the email now was to diminish the sense of remoteness and aloneness.

In fact I believe the relative ease and inexpensiveness of emailing us from ashore led to the casualisation of communication. We were sent daily jokes, updates on the growth in people's gardens, news of minor family events, debate on the names of new horses and mules, out of office messages, returned mail and notices of changes of address, though thankfully we avoided absolute spam such as emails advertising drugs. All were sent by supporters meaning well, but who didn't comprehend the time required or the cost of airtime to download such messages. For some of the crew joining us for a Leg this meant receiving email from their workplace. Some members of the crew wanted this level of communication with home, others did not. This regular and relatively easy communication with shore shaped the voyage by reducing the sense of isolation and gave a perception of increased safety.^{ix}

Access to email and the pre-existence of the voyage pages on h2g2, supported the setting up of an online Petition by Carole Knutson^x of Forest and Bird New Zealand^{xi} after we were underway. Obtaining signatures on this became a focus of the voyage. By the time we reached Tower Bridge the

track in the Southern Ocean at the point we'd sighted our first Albatross (the weather map showed headwinds from the NE continuing into the future, we gave up and headed north instead up the Atlantic); and the decision to keep motoring at full speed north north west up the coast of England (rather than sail more slowly) to reach Ardmore before a gale approaching from the SW made rounding Cape Wrath near impossible for some days (we made it around with a few hours to spare at the most).

^{viii} My mood was significantly affected by email exchanges with family and friends ashore for instance an email debate with my very upset 17 year old daughter who decided to leave home (but changed her mind before doing so), and the news of my father in law being diagnosed with terminal cancer.

^{ix} This sense of increased safety may have contributed to some decisions such as to sail on from Tenerife knowing our mainmast was under threat from broken wires in the rigging.

^x Carole Knutson sailed on the Melbourne – Wellington leg and was the driving force behind the initial setting up of the online Petition and the final collation of signatures which were sent to the RSPB in London and ultimately presented to the UN in Rome in June 2004.

^{xi} The Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand, a partner of Birdlife International. More information is available here <http://www.forestandbird.org.nz/index.asp> accessed 16 December 2005

Petition contained 105,000 signatures from people in 131 countries. Without the Internet the creation and promotion of this worldwide Petition would probably have been impossible in this time frame.

Email communication may have facilitated faster stopovers through enabling clearer, more reliable communication before we arrived at a port and enabled crew joining us at a stopover to be arranged en-route. However in reality most arrangements were made after we arrived at a port.

Communication failures created a lot of stress for me as I struggled to send and receive email however most of the failure turned out not to be on the yacht at all. This led me to think it would be most valuable to have an expedition communication coordinator back on land/at base to resolve these unexpected problems. I expand on this in the paper prepared for the Royal Geographical Society.¹⁷

Conclusion

Communication via the Internet was a fundamental premise of the voyage concept. In the event, financial and technical factors limited Internet communication to email and the frequent updating of a website. However the near daily posting of a log to the website surely contributed to building the profile of the voyage and to the gaining of the 105,000 signatures on the online Petition. At the same time the posting to the Internet of Ridgway's personal Notes sometimes lowered morale on board and may sometimes have reduced the sense of teamwork. Email may have reduced the sense of isolation and given an increased sense of safety. Many unexpected difficulties with communicating via the Internet were experienced; the source of many of these problems was ashore. A shore-based communications coordinator focused on facilitating smooth communications would have made the online communications much easier and reduced my stress levels aboard the yacht.

Communicating the Experience – The Making of Meaning

As a direct consequence of the way in which humans have evolved, we depend on culture to direct our behaviour and organise our experience (Crotty 1998, p. 53).

Introduction

For as long as sailors have been crossing the sea, they've been telling stories about it.

But what is the story? They set off. The sea is blue or grey, as it always is. The boat goes along, as they do. The wind blows, sometimes strongly, as it does. The waves are big and small, as they always have been. A destination is reached, or not. Because unlike the land, which man has crafted in shape and appearance, the sea seems much the same now as it always has been (for man). And yet, stories of sea crossings fill new books, fill websites and newspaper stories. Surely every nuance of a sea voyage has been explored. How do writers take this simple story and craft something that leads to people buying the latest sea voyage book or returning to a website to read more?

Clearly some writers are able to do this. In some way they make the experience meaningful to individual readers. Enable the reader to experience an old story in a new way, and create a desire to read more.

In all the best travel stories there is a vivid intensity to the writing, as if in facing the edge of survival or seeing nature at its most elemental, the writer is stripped of the vestiges of his or her era and can write from a place starkly human and pure (Whybrow 2003, p. 17).

Whybrow writing about accounts by travel writers in the nineteenth century, believes such accounts appeal because they connect with human emotions.

Constructing Meaning

A Constructionist view is that in wishing to tell their story, whether it be to themselves, or to others, expeditioners in the past and today, like reporters, embedded in the social institutions of their upbringing and life, draw on the public and conventional sense these make to interpret events and construct meaning. Crotty (1998, p. 53), Fish (1990, p. 186) and Geertz (1973, p. 49) all emphasise the importance of culture in interpreting human behaviour. The meaning the expeditioner constructs emerges from this and their interaction with the environment and other members. It is both subjective and objective. Adorno calls this process of creating meaning "exact fantasy" (1977, p. 131) It seems

to involve both imagination and creativity, but is always in relation to something, is based on some experience of the writer (Crotty 1998, p. 48).

In this way, to tell the story in which the expeditioner features, the expeditioner constructs an identity for the world to see, and tries to make meaning of the world they are experiencing by interpreting it in terms meaningful to the reader.

"Meaningful to the reader" is all important as the reader themselves surely constructs their own meaning from a narrative, referring to their own life experience and the institutions and culture within which they live. Indeed Crotty proposes that culture is the source rather than the result of human thought (Ibid., p. 53), implying it's huge influence on how a narrative is going to be interpreted.

The above is perhaps no more than the simple dictum that travel writers, and probably all writers, need to know and write for a target audience, a point strongly made by Don George, Lonely Planet's travel book Editor in Chief (2005) and children's writer Hazel Edwards.¹⁸ Advice that expeditioners would do well to heed, but looked particularly challenging as we planned the Save the Albatross Voyage, where the intended target audience was worldwide, spanning many cultures, and languages.

Working with multiple audiences

Prior to the voyage the difficulty of engaging widely differing audiences was discussed by the Ridgways, Creasey, Brand,¹⁹ a number of others, and I. We unsuccessfully sought crew-member/reporters from Spain and Japan, two of the countries we particularly wanted to target. But this came to nothing. Ridgway's desire to control all outward communication may have limited the success of such strategies anyway, even if such people had been recruited, although from the beginning he invited friend and British freelance journalist and author Trevor Fishlock to join the crew. Fishlock did sail with us from Cape Town to Melbourne and subsequently articles he wrote were published in Britain. "An expedition has to have a quest," he said, and "People want to hear how bad things are."²⁰ Fishlock's success as a writer was evidence of his ability to assist his readers to construct meaning they found enthralling.²¹

We sought participation too from school-children but again this did not eventuate to any extent. Curricula were full and without institutional backing, prepared learning guides and other resources the schools I approached were uninterested. We had hoped to video a primary school class in Melbourne working with the Voyage website but the above difficulties plus a strong reaction against allowing any images of children to be placed on the Internet, for fear of their use by paedophiles, put an end to these hopes. The schools audience was one we failed to engage in the way yachtsman Jesse Martin

had so successfully with the help of the Herald Sun newspaper (Martin 2001, p. 79). A penalty of no sponsorship I believe.

Carol Knutson recognised the limitation of the Petition being in a single language and successfully arranged for volunteers to create a number of different language version.

But overall it seemed that much as our ambitious communication plan declined due to technology limitations, so our cultural capability to create meaning for multiple audiences declined too. Once underway and practices were established this became even clearer as John Ridgway took over sole control of authoring the daily story published to the website. The audience he seemed to be writing for was clearly one he knew well, and knew him well too, through his thirteen previously published adventure books.

Each day John spent time carefully crafting a piece for the website. Individualistic, opinionated and sometimes Anglo-centric, he constructed his identity, and to a limited extent others members of the crew, by often reminding readers of his previous adventurous achievements, his age, his long links with the albatross, of health difficulties and sometimes derring-do stories from the yacht. He drew on events of the day, conversations with others on the boat, entries by others to the hourly kept Log, and experiences on previous expeditions. In port, bereft of seagoing yarns, he wrote about the port, people he met, and even quoted his favourite poetry. John was surely helped in this by his practice of keeping a daily journal for the last 40 years or more.²²

This was John's first experience of effectively writing and publishing an expedition story during the expedition itself, with all the uncertainty of the future ahead. Not just about survival, about which there were no guarantees, but about the decisions made. Would they prove wise or costly? Previous tellers of expedition stories had all the benefits of hindsight to enable the construction of the image of the wise and noble leader. A facility not available to the online expedition reporter today. John didn't like it.²³

Nevertheless whilst we had no statistics on website readership there was certainly informal feedback from some readers about how much they enjoyed his daily piece. John seemed to understand this audience very well. As if he saw himself from an admiring reader's point of view. I wondered if this helped him write about his own adventures in a way that was interesting to other people. Was he really just writing for himself? He seemed to resent any comments from Marie Christine or I, and I soon learnt to keep my opinions to myself. Previously I thought he was writing something on behalf of us all, and for a wide audience. However he soon made it clear he was writing solely on his own

behalf, and for a culturally narrow audience. For instance he alienated at least some of his Australian audience with his critical comments following his disappointment at the Melbourne stopover, but possibly entertained his British audience.

John was in the main clearly delighted by his own story about himself, even to the extent of making fun of his own self-absorption. He could be disarmingly entertaining about it. But we knew it was true too. Maybe it equipped him to write in a way that constructed meaning for others that admired him in the same way he admired himself.

Now having found this online platform John was not going to give it up. Contributions from others in the crew, men, women, from Peru, New Zealand, Australia, the US, Zimbabwe and Britain, hailing from different countries and cultures might have engaged different audiences, but this was not to be and in reality might have diluted the message and resulted in less response.

John's message made meaning to an audience in Britain and I like to think that the resultant voyage profile, helped by an RSPB^{xii} campaign promoting the online Petition and the planning of a "Welcome Back" Reception at Tower Bridge, may have encouraged the Government to avoid embarrassment by finally getting around to ratifying the international Agreement on the Preservation of Albatrosses and Petrels, before we returned. Which they did.

Conclusion

In Constructionist terms, meaning is constructed not created. Both the expeditioner's (writer) and reader's construction are bound to the institutions and culture within which each lives. To communicate their construct of an experience an expeditioner must know and write for their audience. Because of the global reach of public pages on the Internet, expeditioners may aspire to reach very diverse audiences with their story however the need to target and write for a specific audience applies to websites as much as to traditional media, one size will not fit all.

When an expeditioner acknowledges the above and targets a specific audience, a website environment and the uncertainty of the expedition environment support the construction of a strong identity (of the expeditioner's choosing) and story which is meaningful and can engage the target audience.

^{xii} Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Learning about Ethical Issues

Introduction

During the planning stages of the study and voyage I anticipated a number of what seemed like fairly simple ethical issues to address. These have already been outlined in Chapter 5: Methodology. But during and after the voyage I started to reflect more deeply.

Ethics relating to the environment

The cause had seemed clear enough. As outlined in the introduction, seabirds were being killed by the careless fishing methods deployed by fisherman working in waters they were unlicensed to fish in.

The above view implies that it may sometimes be wrong to make the most of resources to better one's state. This moral judgement could be related back to Plato's dialogue Protagoras and the mythical account of the early history of the human race. Unable to really compete alone with wild animals, Zeus sent Hermes to give mankind *aidōs* (a moral sense) and *dikē* (law and justice) to enable them to live together in large groups and compete successfully (Mackie 1977, p. 108).

Today this translates into two ethical arguments about the environment. The first, a humanistic view, argues that without a natural world with a diversity of species, human life will be diminished, the second, a naturalistic one, argues that nature has intrinsic value and that as just one part of it, humans have no dominion over it, no unqualified right to harm or extinguish the lives of plants or animals or to destroy the ecosystems which support them (Grace and Cohen 1995, p. 155-156).

The Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) is a Hobbsian response, an attempt at an international agreement that has punishment (loss of international credibility for not doing what they have said they will do) and the expectation of benefit (resulting from all other signatories complying with it, leading to maintenance of the environment and international accord), for participants.

It could be argued that the annexing of vast areas of ocean by distant countries, such as French control of the fishing grounds around the Kerguelen Islands mid way between South Africa and Australia in the Southern Ocean or the British claim of control over the fishing grounds off the coast of Argentina in the South Atlantic, is questionable, but this is outside the scope of this study. For the purposes here it is accepted that the morality promoted by the voyage is that supported in many developed countries, but may not be supported worldwide.

Unfortunately "The tragedy of the commons" (ibid., p. 154) is now occurring in international waters, where no countries lay claim and virtually uncontrolled fishing is taking place despite the good intentions outlined above.

Common Values Aboard?

At our immediate level on the yacht I anticipated that the stated aim of the Voyage, to prevent the needless slaughter of the Albatross,²⁴ would mean that participants would share this common goal and with it a common concern for the environment. Along with this I think I expected crewmembers to share other values relating to mutual respect, to demonstrate a sense of responsibility to take on an equal share of work, to respect strategy decisions such as those relating to sponsorship and communicating with the media. To behave responsibly to each other and in turn to trust each other.

Privacy and Harmony

Applying this to this study and communication via the Internet I thought this came down to the need to respect the privacy of individuals' correspondence passing through the common email mailbox I would manage, and the respect of crew-members for John's desire that he be the sole voice with the media from the yacht. A view I supported. John had learnt from previous voyages, the 1978 Whitbread Race voyage in particular (Ridgway and Ridgway 1978), that the pressure cooker environment of the yacht at sea for long periods could lead to tensions and disharmony within the crew.²⁵ In the past the limited communication to shore had contained these difficulties largely to the yacht but John could see the potential for Internet communication to be used by individuals to share their upset with an interested media in near real-time, creating a reality TV like scenario which would totally distract attention from the Albatross issue and possibly reflect badly on Ridgway.

I had read of these past conflicts (Ibid.) and had worked for Ridgway myself. I knew he could be difficult to work with. But with our small elderly core crew (John 65, Marie Christine 59, myself 53), no pressure to go fast or break any records, and I thought many shared values, I believed we could work together to keep conflict and tension to a minimum. Crew joining us for individual legs might disrupt our harmony, but we thought the three of us would prevail.

In the event I think it was a remarkably harmonious voyage. Some conflict did arise over Igor's in port activities relating to liquor and his resulting inability to assist fully with in port maintenance on the yacht. At sea there was some generational conflict between our two much younger new crew and John, Marie Christine and I on the trans-Tasman Leg. Between John, Marie Christine and I there was certainly some stress at times, for instance when entering or leaving port. "Let's just have one Captain

shall we," was a comment of John's I remember. Probably well deserved. There were also some occasions when I was unhappy about what he had written for the Notes to go on the Internet.²⁶ We each handled it in our own way to avoid it becoming disruptive to the voyage. In my case I periodically aired my irritation, anger, frustration, or other ill feeling. I like to think I mainly did this in my Journal. Confined there it did no harm. Unfortunately it occasionally spilled, as John, Marie Christine and others will attest, but hopefully not too often.

Issues arising with telling the story

I then faced a dilemma when writing the summaries of the Legs and Stopovers. Just how much should I reveal of my sometimes negative and critical feelings? How much of it was really related to the use of the Internet and expedition communication, and therefore relevant? Prior to the voyage, when planning the Methodology, the way seemed clearer. In the Research Proposal I wrote;

The research will not be used in a negative way, such as to demean any participants or their contribution to the voyage. The focus of the research is on the effect of Internet communication on expeditions. I will not make judgments about individual personalities or behaviour. The focus of the research will be on the processes not on the participants.²⁷

Such a view was perhaps workable in the almost positivist approach I was proposing at that time. But after the voyage, as my views on the methodology evolved and I came to think of writing and presenting the story of the voyage, and the communication thereon, as a phenomenological study, so the characters, their personalities and the interaction between us all, grew in importance. For instance to understand the pressure I sometimes felt over the communications I thought it was now necessary to share how I was experiencing and interpreting John's behaviour at this time. But to share my criticism seemed dis-loyal and yet in context, to add richness to the study.

In hindsight and with reflection I found myself being equally critical of my own judgements and behaviour at various points during the voyage and therefore decided to include in the story of the voyage an insight into my then private feelings and then to review these in my later analysis. I feel I do this at some risk to my relationship with John and Marie Christine, but hope they will not look at my version of the voyage story in isolation, but will also look at my subsequent analysis of my account where I am often as critical of my own hasty judgements as I was of John at the time. I think this aspect of the story is very relevant as much of the tension I describe resulted from our external communication ability.

I was encouraged to take this open position by reflecting on and challenging some of my own judgements on "good" and "bad" motivations and behaviours. Discussing Aristotle's question "What is the good life for man," Mackie argues that;

Egoism and self referential altruism will together characterise, to a large extent, both his actions and motives...This would be obvious if it were not that moralists in both the Christian and humanist traditions have fostered an opposite view, that the good life for man is one of universal brotherly love and selfless pursuit of the general happiness which Is quite impracticaland has little plausibility even as an ideal (1977, p. 170-171).

With this in mind I came to think that my judgements were often unnecessarily harsh and on shaky ground when I looked deeper within myself. John may have been thinking similarly when he sometimes referred to me as "The Vicar."^{xiii}

A reader supporting my judgements in the story of the voyage or concerned that others might, may wish to reflect if they too are taking the moralising position described above.

Conclusion

Both during and after the Voyage I found myself reflecting on ethical issues related to the environment, privacy, managing relationships in the confines of the yacht for long periods, and the possible conflict of loyalty and research openness and honesty. Considering these questions led to a growing awareness of myself, my impact on others, ethical issues and how I construct my world.

The ability to tell an expedition's story almost as it happens, with little reflection, may lead, in the stress of the moment to stories being told that in hindsight might not have been told, or told in a different way. Expeditioners may thus find themselves confronting unexpected ethical issues as they seek to tell the story (as in their view of the story), whilst respecting the privacy of other members of the expedition, and engaging an audience. Always being mindful that with the Internet, *any* member of the expedition can tell their version of the story to a wide audience, quite possibly during and certainly after an expedition. A hard copy publisher is no longer required. This ability may lead to more balanced (and possibly less interesting) accounts of expeditions, the leader or assigned writer no longer having a near monopoly on writing a published account.

^{xiii} In his Notes on 27 April 2004 John referred to me as 'that pillar of virtue' following an admission that he had been particularly grumpy himself the previous day and thus suffered my patronising judgement. See Durable Record Home>BBC h2g2 website>Archive of Previous Leg Entries>27 April 2004

Learning: Personal Growth

“Learning is – not just an accumulation of new facts, but a revaluation of experiences from the past and a transformation of our perception in the present” (Boud, Cohen et al. 1993, p. 71).

Introduction

In this section I reflect more deeply on my motivation to go on the voyage, and the academic and personal learning that resulted. I discuss my learning about journal keeping and story telling and how I came to a fresh appreciation of my family and friends.



Figure 45. On deck, ice and biting wind. The coldest conditions I'd sailed in.
Photo by Brent Stephenson. DSCN1855.jpg

Understanding my motivation

In the excerpt from the Voyage Story in Chapter 6, I reflected on my motivation to join the Voyage.^{xiv}

On the 17th day out from Cape Town, heading for Melbourne, (107 days from Scotland) in perhaps the coldest sailing conditions I'd experienced, I found myself reflecting in my Journal on my motivation to be on the voyage.

Was it really 'To prevent the needless slaughter of the albatross'? Yes, but I saw the albatross as symbolic, I felt I was really protesting about greed.

During reflection after the voyage I came to believe my deepest motivation was a desire for knowledge. This had a number of dimensions.

^{xiv} See sub-section 'Why am I here?'

Firstly, in a sort of "Boy's Own Adventure" way I wanted to know what it was like sailing in the deepest Southern Ocean with its world circling swells and fiercest of storms and I wondered if this might be my last chance to find out. Would this be my last grand sailing adventure? Not because of any physical limitation, but because in my heart my interest in ocean sailing was waning. I was enjoying this cruise, because I enjoyed sailing with John and Marie Christine, with them everything was an adventure. But modern technology, the GPS, weather fax and grib files, satellite phones and the Internet, whilst vastly increasing safety and opening up the oceans to anyone with the desire and money to go voyaging, had reduced the challenge in my mind, and for me the romance was dying. I wondered if I'd ever go to sea again.

But on this voyage, the sailing aspect, whilst always most enjoyable to me, was balanced by my interest in our use of the communications capability we had. I realised that over a number of years my work (in international project management) and consequent learning had become focused on communications. Working with new channels, applying them in new environments, and promoting their use, was my interest and strength. This was my professional identity. The Albatross Voyage had enabled me to combine this professional interest with my long interest in ocean sailing and expeditioning.

Academic Learning

But as in the virtuous spiral of a reinforcing loop (Senge, Roberts et al. 1994, p. 116), where one good thing can lead to another, so this sailing opportunity led to the opportunity to study, and structure and rigour. So it was that the need for a valid methodology led me to Crotty and Constructionism (1998) to thinking about the social construction of meaning (Berger and Luckmann 1966), to the use of narrative and the power of story telling (Wetherell, Noddings et al. 1991) and to phenomenology, and an underlying pedagogic approach (van Manen 1990) that would enable me to share my communications experience without placing judgements on it that would prejudice the reader.

In this way I came to think about the ideas of Husserl and Heidegger, to study hermeneutic phenomenology through the writings of van Manen (1990), Barnacle (2004) and Sharkey (2001) and look at existential phenomenology (Latham 2001), (Brearley 2001).

I came to see that through using a phenomenological approach the voyage was transformed from a merely physical event, to a more universal experience whose meaning and emotional content could be shared with others. But at the same time, as van Manen warns, I wanted to avoid generalising or seeming to use the study in any sort of empirical analytic scientific way (van Manen 1990, p. 22).

Following on from my earlier methodological decision not to undertake structured thematic analysis, so I chose not to pursue hermeneutic phenomenological reflection as proposed by van Manen (1990, p. 77-109) but instead to discuss the more general areas of learning covered in this Chapter. In hindsight, following continued learning about phenomenological methodology, I have come to think a phenomenological thematic analysis of the voyage story could provide further insight into my lived experience as an expeditioner responsible for communications. This is a possible area for further research.

During the writing of the voyage accounts themselves, drawing on my Journal, John's Notes and emails, the photos and my memory, I learnt much about the need for a disciplined approach, the power of reviewing and re-writing again and again. The more I have practiced, the more I have come to appreciate great writers, and to study their ways. Every time I read my own accounts today I want to edit and improve them, and always feel I have so far to go to write in a way that stimulates the reader to construct vivid images of their own. But I feel that I have at least started on this long road towards engaging writing.

In writing this research paper I also found myself facing ethical issues, as already mentioned in this Chapter, which took me into yet another area of study, that of Ethics (Mackie 1977), (Grace and Cohen 1995). This was unexpectedly helpful, enabling me to think more critically about the underlying environmental issues and also to more comfortably accept my conflicting feelings about including material I felt was sensitive (such as my periodic irritation with John Ridgway) and about my own feelings of narcissism and egoism.

Most importantly the extent of my lived experience and the restrictions of this research paper led me to explore ways of drawing further meaning from the experience without including the account of the whole voyage. I explored the validity and use of experience for learning, studying Jarvis (2003), Boud, (1993), Schon (1983), Postles (1993) and Usher (Usher 1993), a dimension of study I had not expected at the beginning of the research, but which became the richer for it.

I also became aware of the benefit and influence during reflection of learning about the experience of others. I mention this in Chapter 7:Analysis, reading with new eyes about Chichester's pioneering use of a marine radio to talk with family and sponsors in the 1960s, and the support that Jesse Martin received via phone and email on his single-handed circumnavigation in 1999.

Learning about and for myself

In addition to the insights about narcissism and egoism I gained after the voyage, there were valuable lessons on the voyage itself.

During the voyage, in our cycle of watch keeping and short sleeps for many weeks at a time, the four to six of us aboard mainly trod carefully around each other to minimise conflict and maximise support. We came to know each other very well, particularly John, Marie Christine and I. "No man is a hero to his butler," John would say, sensing his own failings were obvious to us all. I came to a new understanding of myself too, partly helped by feedback from John.

For instance "You are so confident you are right," he would say, "How wonderful that must be, don't you think MC? I never think I know anything." Having said almost the same to my younger daughter when she was about 14, I suddenly saw myself in a new light. I had always admired John's wisdom and this was feedback I hadn't really heard before (although on reflection I remembered it had been said). Personally I had never regarded myself as particularly confident, but John seemed to be irritated by his sense of it. As a result I became more aware of my behaviour on the boat and tried to be less definitive towards him. Subsequently I have become more sensitive to the impact I may have on other people, wondering if others sometimes feel similarly. I appreciated Ridgway expressing his view.

Marie Christine too, going about her daily Watch keeping and other work with John, often unwittingly gave me lessons on how to care for and accept someone you truly love.

On Journal writing, reflection, phenomenology and story telling

Throughout the voyage I tried to record both events and my feelings about them in my Journal. But as van Manen writes, one cannot reflect on an emotion whilst one is experiencing it as the very writing of it dissipates it (1990, p. 10), emphasising that phenomenological reflection is retrospective not introspective. This led me into studying the nature of reflective learning and perhaps the most convincing lessons for me over this entire experience. That of the power and importance of reflection in learning (Boud, Cohen et al. 1993). Reflection on events at the time of writing my Journal, reading and thinking about it shortly after the voyage and then again 12-18 months later, has led to new insights and understanding about myself. I now realise the truth of what van Manen is saying.

At the same time I learnt the value and importance of allowing time for reflection during an experience (Ibid., p. 75) and the importance of writing this down (Usher 1993, p. 174).

For instance when angry or frustrated or happy, and writing my Journal, my whole being was angry, frustrated or happy. I couldn't really write understandingly about the nature of my feeling at that time as it was the essence of my whole condition, but the process of writing sometimes defused it too. To gain value from reflection on it, I had to read it later, when I was no longer in that situation. Then my emotion could be seen in my words. It wasn't a matter of being subjective and objective, it was always just variations of a subjective view.

A specific example is of the way some of John's attempts to gain publicity irritated me. I perceived him to be seeking personal publicity, and coming from a home where I'd been brought up not to do that, led me to making critical judgements. But increasingly I thought that actually I was projecting an aspect of myself onto him, in that despite my upbringing, I wanted the publicity, but was ashamed of my desire for it and projected it onto him, where I could openly disapprove of it to myself. But then later, upon more reflection and thinking about our (both him and my own) disinterest in feedback from our website audience, I began to think that perhaps we were both more narcissistic than egoistic. We seemed to treat our third party audience fairly badly. Perhaps we weren't really interested in their response. Were we really just looking for a mirror?

This conclusion has been fuelled over the post voyage 18 months as I found myself not seeking publicity, in fact almost uninterested in telling people about the voyage. Congratulations, wonder, questions about what it was like, have almost been something I have tried to avoid. I don't know where to start to talk about it. I'm still learning about this response and feel I still have more learning about myself to come before the event and its memory take a comfortable place in my mind and my story of my life. In this process I am finding writing about it enlightening in the way that Usher proposes, in that creating a discourse on a subject gives it a vocabulary, a set of concepts ... a way of "talking about" (it) (Usher 1993, p. 169).

I learnt too the power of telling stories, gaining particular insight from Witherell and Noddings (Witherell, Noddings et al. 1991). Now I find myself always looking for the very short story that encapsulates a very much bigger one, and makes it's point with withering succinctness, such as John's 'National Hero' story I tell in Chapter 6: The Voyage.

Another area of learning that came from my study was about the use of images in social research ((Adams 1994), (Bateson and Mead 1942), (Becker 1942), (Berger 1972), (Dowdall and J. Golden 1989), (Walker and Moulton 1989). Unfortunately technical and financial constraints ended up limiting the sending of pictures from the boat to the website and as a result I felt they played only a small role

in communicating meaning. Whilst I have used them to illustrate the accounts I wrote of each Leg and Stopover, I chose not to include them in this study. But the nearly 5,000 photos I took on the Voyage do tell a story which I may study one day.²⁸

During the course of the overall study I learnt of my capability to study alone, and to value fortnightly meetings with my Supervisor, a reference from whom would frequently send me off exploring a rich new vein of thinking.

Hardly touched on has been learning about technology, deliberately so as it is evolving quickly. But suffice to say I learnt a great deal about the sending of data over a satellite telephone and over high frequency radio and the use of weather fax and granulated binary files (.grb) for weather forecasting.²⁹

I learnt too that I still had as good sea legs as when I sailed the world aboard The Aegre thirty years before, and re-learnt to value every day at home with my family.

Learning about Methodology

"Phenomenology does not project a structure onto things in advance" (Barnacle 2001, p. 4).

The evolution of the methodology has already been covered in Chapter 5: Methodology. In this Learning Chapter I retrospectively discuss the process and the learning that resulted.

A retrospective view of the Methodology

During the preparatory phase I explored a number of social research methodologies. It took some time, considerable research and discussion to select the constructionist epistemology, interpretivist theoretical perspective and naturalistic methodology outlined in the initial research proposal. In the process I learnt a lot about various methodologies, a new area of study for me. The process prepared me to gather appropriate data during the voyage and a philosophical basis upon which to approach the study. I felt I had a clear understandable approach

Returning from the voyage the only way to make sense of all the data seemed to be to collate it, enter (type) all my handwritten journals, assemble the photos by day and write summaries of each Leg. From this I believed themes would emerge and the learning would become clear.

As already said it took much longer than expected. I was about half way through when I began to realise the power of the narrative itself and to question what I was coming to see as an almost positivist approach to drawing out conclusions. I started to think there was no objective position, any judgements I or anyone made were strongly influenced by the people we were, our values, what we individually wanted from the communication or from an expedition.

A phenomenological approach seemed to suit this view. I was attracted to exposing the reader to my account of the lived experience, the narrative, and encouraging them to draw their own conclusions. Unfortunately by this time the summaries of each Leg and Stopover totalled more than 143,000 words alone. Far more than realistic to include. But the process had driven me to reflect on every part of the voyage.

To keep it within the realistic bounds of the study I reduced the narrative to the summary account of just one Leg, the first in the Southern Ocean, together with my Journal for the first four days of the Leg. But how then to draw learning from the whole voyage?

The answer I decided on was to acknowledge my subjectivity and then go on to discuss my own learning. But I then wondered on what basis I could claim to have learnt anything? This led me to research the nature of learning, adult learning in particular. I extrapolated this into thinking about learning on expeditions, learning from experience and reflective learning, which in turn led me on to draw conclusions about learning on and after expeditions. An area I hadn't expected even to be studying.

Also drawn into this was study of narrative inquiry, the use of journals, and the power of telling stories.

Looking back I wonder if another approach would have been more efficient. Was it really necessary to study all the Legs, Stopover and the Preparation for instance? Should I have not bothered with the summaries at all but written it as a case study examining a limited number of issues I *knew* from perusal of my Journal, John's Notes, the emails and my memory? Should I have written an account of just one leg and then used a phenomenological thematic analysis method such as the holistic or sententious approach? (van Manen 1990, p. 92). Surely I am not the first researcher to wonder, with hindsight, if the methodology they chose was really the most efficient and productive.

I think the process I followed probably took longer and was more work intensive than the original plan, but the result is richer. The phenomenological thematic analysis may have led to a more detailed and structured result, however as a first look at the lived world of an expedition communicator, the methodology has given a broad view and set the scene. The reader keen to pursue the topic can read my entire account in the Durable Record and make up their own mind about the Internet on expeditions. If they want to know what I think, well they can learn that too. Structured thematic analysis may be an appropriate next level of study of this area

This research is evidence of a unique methodology, but one that is consistent with phenomenology. It has applied the phenomenological approach to a new area, that of the lived world of the expedition communicator. The combination of this sort of phenomenological study and the window into an expedition that can be gained with the Internet has the potential to greatly increase the understanding of the lived world of the expeditioner.

I would like to think this study provides a base for the further study of communications on expeditions.

In addition to this Exegesis I have created comprehensive detailed and organised records of the voyage. These together with the summary accounts of each Leg and Stopover can be found in the Durable Record. A future researcher wishing to learn just what it was like sailing around the world in a yacht in 2003-4 will not have to look much further.

"How many generations to work a story down to size, to rub away the burrs and sawdust of its making? You have to forget 90% Of what happens if you want to tell the story right." Wilma, quoted in *Stories Lives Tell* (Witherell, Noddings et al. 1991, p. 17).

Chapter 9

CONCLUSION

There is no snow on my sleeve today. Sometimes I miss it, and think back with a sentimental smile to the whole adventure. The excitement and anticipation of the planning, the final preparations in Scotland, the voyage, Andre Bocelli's Con Te Partiro as the yacht lifted to the first swells of the Atlantic as we headed out to sail round the world, the day we sighted our first albatross, the night we weathered Cape Horn, and the morning we sailed under Tower Bridge near the end of it all.

Just as significant were the subsequent countless discussions with my Supervisor, on how meaning is constructed, the value of the lived experience, and the nature of learning. Memorable too were the flashes of understanding that came through reading and reflection on learning, narrative, the role of the Internet and about myself.

In Summary

In this study I have explored the effect of Internet communication on the Save the Albatross Voyage. I have shown how the planned use of the Internet was intrinsic to the very conception of the Voyage, how the use of a website enabled the Voyage to forgo traditional media sponsorship and yet still attract and engage a worldwide audience of more than 105,000 concerned people from 131 countries. People who went on to sign a Petition that was presented to the United Nations. A milestone in the Save the Albatross Campaign.

To assist the reader understand what it was like to use the Internet on an expedition I included an example of lived research describing the experience on one Leg of the Voyage. I presented this as a form of phenomenological text, and one I hope that will give the reader the opportunity to construct

for themselves in their own terms, just what it was like to be on the voyage and using the Internet. But at the same time I went on to share my own learning, both about the use of the Internet, about learning on expeditions, about methodology and about myself.

I explored the purpose of expedition communication. On the Albatross Voyage its overt purpose to raise awareness of the albatross cause was moderately successful but looking more closely I wondered if our failure, and that of other expedition websites, to utilise discussion forums was indicative of disinterest in feedback. I speculated that websites had the potential to give narcissistic expeditioners whatever view of themselves they wished to see. I went on to categorise expeditions by their leadership and organisation basis, and postulate how the purpose of external communication might differ between them.

Whilst I believe the Internet was intrinsic to the design and success of the Albatross Voyage, the daily exchange of email was time-consuming, stressful and power hungry. It certainly enabled us to maintain contact with supporters, friends and family, and added a sense of security. Its general reliability appeared to lead to a sense of casualness and ease. This may have diminished the sense of remoteness that some expeditioners may value, and increased the feeling of obligation to communicate.

John Ridgway engaged an online audience by writing a daily piece for the BBC website h2g2. He demonstrated the power of a good understanding of his audience who in turn seemed to regard him as a credible source. He achieved this just using timely, evocative and a very personal form of narrative, but without using the sound, image and network discussion capability of the Internet.

Through the project I came to consider and gain a new understanding of ethical issues relating to the environment, to privacy, to egoistic and narcissistic behaviour, and to consider the issues regarding behaviours that should be included and omitted from a social research project such as this.

In terms of personal growth, I learnt about my motivation to participate, about my behavioural repertoire under stress, about my own narcissism and egoism, about journal writing, reflection, phenomenology and story telling.

I learnt the importance of methodology in a research project and the valuable contribution of previous researchers.

A contribution to knowledge and ideas for further study

This study has contributed one of the first explorations of a particular form of communication, that employed by and relating to expeditions. A brief overview of its evolution over the last 100 years has

been given, together with an introduction to the use of the Internet by expeditions. The study goes on to look particularly at the life and communication experience on an 11-month sailing yacht voyage around the world aimed at raising consciousness about an environmental issue.

With expedition communication being in transition, from the use of HF radio to the use of online media, this study provides a view of how this phenomenon was being experienced in 2003-4 on this expedition. The study also explores the experience of learning on and after expeditions.

Through both the narrative of one Leg, (and others in the Durable Record), the reader can construct their own learning and if they choose, supplement this with the learning I draw out. With this base they may go on to look at other aspects of expedition communication. For instance economic and technical limitations on the voyage did not support direct participation in an online forum, and the resultant building and engagement of an online community. However the potential of such forums to engage an audience was considered and I believe if utilised may make expedition websites more attractive locations for sponsor advertising in the future. Further study on the use of forums by expeditions is needed to better understand their potential to engage audiences and the constraints they may impose on an expedition.

The benefits, challenges and role of a base communication centre for an expedition using the Internet was touched on, and this is also an area worthy of further study.

This research study has also revealed new ways of understanding the domains of expeditions through the use of the Internet and the study of expeditions through their website. Combined with phenomenological methods, this has the potential to give previously unattainable insights into live expeditions such as the motivations of participants, the causes and management of conflict, effective leadership practices, and the relationships with families and friends not on the expedition, and other aspects of the life of an expeditioner.

In addition to the learning outlined above, many very practical lessons about using the Internet on an expedition were learnt which are contained in a paper submitted to the Royal Geographical Society and which is available in the Durable Record.

But what about the Albatross?

For many months after our return I was despondent. The greed of human beings seemed an unstoppable force, and the albatross, indeed life in and on the ocean, seemed doomed. But my mood is changing, heartened by the growing interest in the issue by people and organisations such as British Yachtswoman of the Year Ellen MacArthur and the Volvo Round the World Race. More countries too have signed the ACAP. But perhaps the most important initiative has been the setting up

of Operation Ocean Taskforce by the RSPB. This is an international initiative to establish a team of experts to train fishermen around the world on how to prevent seabird deaths.¹

But there is still far to go. I feel our voyage built another stepping stone for the campaign and was worthwhile, but still I remain disappointed we did not take the awareness of the issue to a new level worldwide and many of the opportunities of the Internet went unrealised.

Final Word

In John Ridgway's opinion;

The use of the Internet to publicise the voyage directly led to 105,000 people from 131 countries signing the Petition. Without the use of the Internet this would not have happened. The presentation of the Petition at the United Nations Food and Agriculture Meeting in Rome in June 2004, directly led to the formation of Operation Ocean Task Force by the RSPB (BirdLife in the UK), I really believe this gives hope. The Albatross may yet be saved.²

Endnotes

Chapter 1 –

Chapter 2 -

¹ For information on the communications technology used during the Albatross Voyage see the Durable Record. Durable Record Home > Hardware and >Keeping it dry.

Chapter 3

¹ For a full account of the voyage see the Durable Record>Voyage Story

² John Ridgway discusses these voyages and other expeditions and the communications employed on them, in a number of interviews I conducted during this voyage. These can be listened to on the Durable Record DVD. In particular the interviews conducted on Leg 2 between 10th and 25th September 2003. Go to Durable Record DVD Home>The Interviews.

³ This is drawn from John Ridgway's , *'Wing and a Prayer'* page on h2g2, in which he talks about his motivation for the voyage. See Durable Record Home>BBC h2g2 website>John Ridgway – On a Wing and a Prayer.

⁴ An introduction the Birdlife International, Save the Albatross Campaign can be viewed on the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>Background>Introduction to Save the Albatross Campaign.

⁵ For an explanation of long lining and its threat to seabirds see; Durable Record Home>Background>About the Albatross>Long Lining and its threat to seabirds.

⁶ Illegal fishing continues to threaten Toothfish. See Durable Record Home>Background>About the Albatross>Long Lining and its threat to seabirds.

⁷ To learn about the Greenpeace Patagonian Toothfish Campaign and the voyages of the Arctic Sunrise see Durable Record Home>Background>About the Albatross and Long Line Fishing.

⁸ Wake Forest University developed an interactive schools programme to encourage young students to learn about albatrosses and track their flight paths using the signal from small satellite transponders attached to the birds. To learn more see Durable Record Home>Background>About the Albatross and Long Line Fishing>The Wake Forest Albatross Tracking Programme.

⁹ The British Antarctic Survey (BAS) have been studying albatrosses in the Southern Ocean for the last 25 years. They are currently conducting a programme of tracking Wandering Albatrosses in the Southern Ocean. They have identified long line fishing as a significant contributor to the decline in

numbers of these birds. To learn more see [Durable Record>Background>About the Albatross and Long Line Fishing>Albatross Fisheries Interaction Studies by BAS](#).

¹⁰ In email from John Ridgway to Nick Grainger, 22 November 2002.

¹¹ In email from John Ridgway to Nick Grainger, 22 November 2002.

¹² Photographs taken during this preparatory visit to Ardmore are contained in the Durable Record. Go to [Durable Record Home>Photos & Video>Preparation](#)

¹³ Ridgway's comment on sponsorship, in conversation with N.Grainger, 4 February 2003

¹⁴ Often stated by John Ridgway during the voyage.

¹⁵ To learn about the preparation of the yacht and support of various suppliers see the [Durable Record Home>BBC h2g2 website>Preparation of the Yacht English Rose VI](#).

¹⁶To learn more about ACAP see the [Durable Record Home>Background>About the Albatross and Long Line Fishing>About ACAP](#)

¹⁷ To view the suite of pages built on h2g2 for the voyage go to: [Durable Record>BBC h2g2>The John Ridgway Save the Albatross Voyage on the BBC h2g2 website](#).

¹⁸ The Petition text can be found in the Durable Record. Go to [Durable Record Home>Background Information](#)

¹⁹ More about the crew and their stories can be found in the Durable Record in the h2g2 pages ([Durable Record Home>BBC h2g2 website>The Crew on English Rose VI](#)), and in the [Voyage Story \(Durable Record Home>Voyage Story\)](#).

²⁰ A recording of the official speeches at the Tower Bridge RSPB event is contained in the Durable Record. To listen go to [Durable Record Home>Interviews>18 June 2004](#)

²¹ Each year the Ocean Cruising Club awards the Barton Cup to a member for 'the most meritorious voyage'. It was awarded to John Ridgway in 2004. See [Durable Record Home>Printed Media and Award>The Barton Cup awarded by Ocean Cruising Club](#).

Chapter 4

¹ The words of British newspaper journalist and author Trevor Fishlock who sailed with us on Leg 3 of the voyage, from Cape Town to Melbourne. I interviewed him three times on this Leg and his research and experience reporting on difficult international assignments provides insight into the time before the Internet, and the challenges reporters face today. These interviews are available on the Durable Record DVD and can be listened to in full. Go to [Durable Record Home>The Interviews>Leg 3>Interviews on 7th and 9th November and 4th December 2003 with Trevor Fishlock](#).

² To learn of the nautical self descriptive origin of many words in common use in English today see Smith, C. J. (1627). *A Sea Grammar*. London, Michael Joseph.

³ Nikon online forum <http://www.dpreview.com/forums/forum.asp?forum=1007> last accessed 19 June 2003

⁴ See study in Appendix: Expedition websites and the use of online forums.

⁵ See McGregor, A. (2004). *Frank Hurley A Photographer's Life*. London, Viking (Penguin Group).

⁶ According to the official Volvo Ocean Race Information Guide (2005-6 Race), each boat is equipped with 9 fixed camera, complemented by wearable head-cameras, all transmitting data to a media centre below decks. A high speed satellite link gives broadband connectivity to the Internet enabling video, sound and still pictures to be transmitted to the website. More information about the media set up on the Volvo 70 yachts can be found in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>The Hardware>Technology Update.

⁷ The Ridgway's describe their participation in the 1978 Whitbread Race in *Around the World with Ridgway*. Ridgway, J. and M. C. Ridgway (1978). *Round the World with Ridgway*. London, Heinemann.

⁸ John Ridgway describes communications during this Whitbread Race in an interview held in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>The Interviews>Leg 2>Interview recorded on 25 September 2003.

⁹ KitKat Ice Kites Antarctica – Christmas 2002. A great idea to sail across Antarctica but unfortunately that year there was little wind. With a high profile on the Internet there was no quietly forgetting about this expensive jaunt. To learn more see Durable Record Home>Expedition Websites>Kite Ice Carts in Antarctica.pdf

¹⁰ See pages in the Durable Record from the website of Ben Saunders, solo traveller to the North and now the South Pole. The 'Five Ways You Can Help' are in fact five ways to give him financial assistance. Ben does invite emails but doesn't promise to answer them, although he does have an FAQ page. Considering he mainly travels solo this is understandable. Got to Durable Record Home>Expedition Websites>Ben Saunders.

¹¹ Explorersweb, supplying news and online hardware and software to expeditioners. See Durable Record Home>Expedition Websites>Explorers Web.

¹² Webexpeditions offers a website management tool for expeditioners. Information about it can be found on the Durable Record Home>Expedition Websites>Webexpeditions xJournal

¹³ Webexpeditions offer a freely available whitepaper on Expedition website design, an outline of which is included in the Durable Record; Durable Record>Expedition Websites>Webexpeditions Expedition Website Guide.

¹⁴ More information about the technology being used on the Volvo Open 70 yachts in the Volvo Ocean Race 2005-6 can be found on the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>The Hardware>Technology Update.

¹⁵ In conversation with N Grainger, July 2003.

¹⁶ Sir Peter Blake was subsequently killed by river pirates near the mouth of the Amazon. More can be learnt about this outstanding expedition communicator in his biography. Sefton, A. (2004). Sir Peter Blake An Amazing Life. Auckland, Penguin Group Australia 2004.

Chapter 5

¹ Crotty supports this structure proposing each level informs the other. Crotty, M. (1998). The Foundations of Social Research. St Leonards, NSW, Allen & Unwin Pty Ltd.

² See the Durable Record for Version 1 and the version being used by the end of the voyage (v9). Go to Durable Record Home>Background>Form used to collect daily information for h2g2.

³ Details of the recording equipment I carried on the Voyage can be found in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>The Hardware.

⁴ The interviews recorded during the Voyage are all available to be listened to on the Durable Record DVD. Go to Durable Record Home>The Interviews

⁵ A selection of the photographs taken on each Leg can be found in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>Photos and Videos.

⁶ For information about the still photographic equipment taken go to Durable Record Home>Background Information>Photography>Stiff Photography Equipment.

⁷ The video shot list is contained in the Durable record. Go to Durable Record Home>Background Information>Photography>Video Shot List

⁸ Notes written by John Ridgway and published each day on the h2g2 website can be viewed on the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>BBC h2g2 website>Voyage Log pages

⁹ A record table of all emails sent and received via the Iridium Satellite telephone was set up early in the voyage so that I could track usage, and at Ridgway's request bill individual users. Whilst I did use it in this way, it proved to be a valuable record in its own right for this research. It can be viewed in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>Background Information>Listing of all emails sent and received by Iridium phone.

¹⁰ With Sailmail usage not being charged by time, there was no initial driver to keep tabular records of emails sent and received via Sailmail. However I did eventually start to regret I had no such tabular

record and rather late in the event started to keep one. This can be viewed in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>Background Information>Listing of all emails sent and received by Sailmail from April 2004 to the end of the voyage.

¹¹ Once the system was mastered, weather maps received via the HF radio were imported and saved directly and automatically onto the laptop computer, for viewing at any time. From the hundreds of saved weather maps a small number have been selected and added to the Durable Record. These can be viewed at Durable Record Home>Background Information>

¹² To Do lists were assembled prior to Stopovers. These give an insight into the work required on the yacht and our concerns. They are stored in the Durable Record. See Durable Record Home>Background Information>Stopover To-Do Lists.

¹³ The Doghouse Manual. With new crew joining us on most Legs I became used to giving them a briefing on the yacht. Eventually I assembled some Notes into a Manual for the Cockpit as I was particularly concerned about safety as we sailed up the congested Channel and through the North Sea with new crew-members. It can be viewed in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>Background Information>About the yacht English Rose VI>Cockpit Manual

¹⁴ A list of everything I took on the Voyage can be found in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>Background>Personal Clothing and Equipment taken on the voyage>Kit List

¹⁵ There were many people associated with the voyage, quite apart from those who sailed on the yacht at some point. A listing of people mentioned in this research project together with a brief note about their role in contained in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record>Background>The People Involved in the Albatross Voyage>The Players.

¹⁶ To gain some understanding of the extent and nature of video recordings made on the voyage, a copy of the Shot List can be viewed in the durable Record. See Durable Record Home>Background Information>Digital Video>Shot List

¹⁷ During the voyage I took 71 one-minute QuickTime videos on my digital still camera. For me these capture the spirit of the moment very well and I often wish I had taken many more. Unfortunately I did not take Quicktime videos on every Leg. Relevant QuickTime videos are stored on the Durable Record DVD and can be viewed with a Quicktime Player. Go to Durable Record Home>Photos and Video>Select Individual sailing Leg.

¹⁸ The paper I drafted and submitted to the Royal Geographic Society's Expedition Handbook Editor can be viewed in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>Practical Suggestions

¹⁹ Winser, S., N. Winser, et al. (2004). Royal Geographical Society Expedition Handbook. London, Profile Books.

²⁰ Peter Berger, writing in 'The Social Construction of Reality' discusses the phenomenological analysis of everyday life and the nature of knowledge. Berger, P. L. and T. Luckmann (1966). The Social Construction of Reality. New York, Allen Lane.

Chapter 6

¹ Van Manen appears to support this approach when he writes of Phenomenology, 'The aim is to construct an animating evocative description (text) of human actions, behaviours, intentions, and experiences as we meet them in the lifeworld. (van Manen, M. (1990). Researching Lived Experience. London, Ontario, Canada, State University of New York Press.

² In Notes written by John Ridgway for Sunday 2nd November 2003, published in h2g2.

³ Personal Journal 5 November 2003.

⁴ Personal Journal 6 November 2003.

⁵ Notes by John Ridgway posted to H2G2 8 November 2003.

⁶ Notes by John Ridgway posted to H2G2 8 November 2003.

⁷ Notes by John Ridgway posted to H2G2 6 November 2003.

⁸ Drawn from interviews conducted with Trevor Fishlock. Three interviews recorded with Trevor Fishlock are stored in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record>The Interviews>Leg 3, 7th and 9th of November and 4th December 2003.

⁹ Email from Birds Australia received 12 November 2003.

¹⁰ Composed by Trevor Fishlock, aboard English Rose VI in the Southern Ocean. 24 November 2003.

¹¹ To listen to the interview with Quentin Hanich go to Durable Record>The Interviews>Leg 3, 25 November interview.

¹² Personal Journal 10 December 2003.

¹³ Personal Journal 10 December 2003.

¹⁴ John Ridgway, to Nick Grainger, in mid-January 2003 at Ardmore.

Chapter 7

¹ The accounts of all the Voyage Legs and Stopovers can be found in the Durable Record. Got to Durable Record Home>Voyage Story.

² A copy of the suite of pages about the voyage created within the h2g2 website can be found in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>BBC h2g2 website.

³ Details of the hardware including the design and set up of the computer equipment is contained in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>The Hardware> and Hardware>Keeping it dry.

⁴ The Durable Record contains a list of people involved in the whole venture, their location and roles. Go to Durable Record Home>Background Information>People involved in the Albatross Voyage>The Players.

⁵ The Durable Record contains a copy of the initial Communications Plan. See Durable Record Home>Background Information>Original Communications Planning

⁶ Personal Journal 28 July 2003

⁷ Personal Journal 29 May 2004

⁸ Bernard Moitessier's 14,216 mile non-stop voyage from Tahiti to France via Cape Horn in 1965/6 was the longest non-stop small boat passage of its time, and famous too for its course around Cape Horn, in those days still rarely rounded by yachts. Moitessier's published account of weathering violent Southern Ocean storms using an innovative approach was much talked about by yachtsmen of the time and was subsequently widely adopted. See *Cape Horn the Logical Route*. Moitessier, B. (1969). [Cape Horn: The Logical Route](#). London, Adlard Coles Ltd.

⁹ Miles Smeeton's account of the pitch-poling (somersaulting) of the 47ft yacht Tzu Hang in a storm on her approach to Cape Horn in 1956, followed by repairs in Chile, a second attempt at Cape Horn, and a second capsize, are told in *Once is Enough* perhaps one of the best known accounts of ocean yacht cruising in the second half of the 20th century. Smeeton, M. (1959). [Once is Enough](#). London, Adlard Coles.

¹⁰ All of the interviews I recorded on the voyage are contained in the Durable Record in mp3 format. Go to Durable Record Home>The Interviews.

¹¹ A copy of the paper submitted to the Royal Geographical Society is contained in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>Practical Suggestions.

¹² See the Durable Record for a copy of the paper of practical suggestions for expeditioners using the Internet I submitted to the Royal Geographical Society.

Chapter 8

¹ The devolution of the initially ambitious Communications Plan is largely covered in the account of Preparations, contained in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>The Voyage Story>Preparation.

² In conversation with John Ridgway during the preparatory phase and discussed more fully in the account of the Preparation for the Voyage in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>The Voyage Story>Preparation>No Sponsorship?

³ For example a website about the 2005 Expedition to Kayak Around South Georgia, see Durable Record Home>Expedition Websites>Kayak Around South Georgia.

⁴ Expedition websites commonly feature profiles of expedition members, such as that of Wave Vidmar, who completed a solo trek to the South Pole in 2004 and is planning a solo trek to the North Pole in 2006. To view a selection of pages from Wave's site go to Durable Record Home>Expedition Websites>Wave Vidmar

⁵ The Australian Antarctic Division supports and maintains a base in Antarctica and regular expeditions. The home page of their website can be viewed in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>Expedition websites>Australian Antarctic Division. The full site was viewed at <http://www.aad.gov.au/default.asp> on 21 January 2006.

⁶ Greenpeace supports multiple expeditions every year to promote environmental awareness. For information from their website homepage go to the Durable Record. Durable Record Home>Expedition Websites>Greenpeace. The site at <http://www.greenpeace.org/international> gave more information on 21 January 2006.

⁷ Author Hazel Edwards visited the Australian Antarctic Division's Casey Base in 2001, travelling on the re-supply ship Polar Bird. Her published diary provides much information about the use of email by the expedition members around her. Edwards, H. (2002). *Antarctic Writer on Ice*. Altona, Victoria, BooksOnWriting, Common Ground Publishing.

⁸ The 2005-6 Greenpeace voyage to protest against Japanese Whaling around Antarctica has demonstrated the capability of transmitting short video clips and still photographs to the media. These images have possibly been more effective in arousing public concern than any other initiative to date. These images could be viewed at <http://oceans.greenpeace.org/en/photo-audio-video> on 21 January 2006.

⁹ 51-year-old Trevor Robertson sailed his 35-foot Wylo gaff-cutter, Iron Bark II, to the Antarctic in 1998 where he spent the winter alone aboard his boat, frozen into a remote bay on the Antarctic Peninsula. See Durable Record Home>Expedition Websites>Iceman of Ironbark.

¹⁰ Between 1983 and 1986, New Zealander Gerry Clarke circumnavigated Antarctica in a quest for new information about seabirds in a 10 meter wooden yacht. Clarke, G. (1989). *The Totorore Voyage*. Auckland, Century Hutchison New Zealand Ltd.

¹¹ Quadriplegic Hilary Lister sailed a small boat across the English Channel in 2005, and is featured on her website <http://www.hilarylister.co.uk/da/18355>

¹² See the daily account of the Voyage on h2g2 for an example of the regular insight that may be gained by viewing an expedition website. Go to Durable Record Home>BBC h2g2 website. Other

examples of expedition websites can be seen on the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>Expedition websites.

¹³ Our initial ambitious communications plan using the Internet can be seen on the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>Background>Original Communications Planning>Communications Plan January 2003.

¹⁴ Peter Brand's advocacy for sponsorship is outlined in the account of the Voyage Preparation contained in the Durable Record. See Durable Record Home>The Voyage Story>Preparation.

¹⁵ Brent Stephenson describes his upset at the content of John's Notes sent to h2g2 in an interview on 8th February 2004. Go to Durable Record Home>The Interviews> 8 February 2004.

¹⁶ For John's views on writing the Notes for h2g2 each day listen to interviews with him conducted during the voyage, in particular interviews conducted on 1 December 2003, 25 February 2004, and 5 July 2004. Durable Record Home>The Interviews>.

¹⁷ The paper written for the Expedition Handbook of the Royal Geographical Society can be found in the Durable Record. Go to the Durable Record Home>Practical Suggestions>

¹⁸ In conversation with Hazel Edwards July 2005. See also Edwards, H. (2002). Antarctic Writer on Ice. Altona, Victoria, BooksOnWriting, Common Ground Publishing.

¹⁹ Peter Brand, a previous Instructor at the John Ridgway School of Adventure, now living in Canada, who strongly advocated sponsorship. See Endnote (13) above.

²⁰ From an interview with Trevor Fishlock aboard English Rose VI 7 November 2003. Can be listened to on the Durable Record together with interviews conducted with him on 9 November and 4 December 2004. Go to Durable Record Home>The Interviews> 7 November 2003.

²¹ Shortly after his return Fishlock's latest book was published, see Fishlock, T. (2004). Conquerors of Time: Exploration and Invention in the Age of Daring. London, John Murray.

²² For example, John's Notes published to h2g2 on 25 October 2003, the day we left Cape Town: Notes: Up at 0530 for the last hot shower. We sailed on the dot of 0900. A strong NW wind made it a bit of a test. Flashing daggers slashed ropes as we sprang backwards into the huge dock lined with tankers and fishing boats. Hope nobody was watching.

A radio message came from the Yacht Club anxiously asking if we were returning. We were motoring into a big swell and forty knots of breeze. "No!" I said. It was 25 years to the day since we'd sailed out of here on the 1977/8 Whitbread Round the World Race.

Anyway it was a dreadful day, all six of us were horrifically sick. I must go and lie down.

Into the mist...

John Ridgway

John's Notes for the entire voyage can be viewed in a copy of all the Voyage web pages on h2g2 made at the end of the voyage, and stored in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home>BBC h2g2 website>Daily Log.

²³ John talked about his dislike of writing and publishing the account of the voyage as we went along in a number of interviews, in particular that recorded on 5 July 2004. Go to Durable Record Home>The Interviews>

²⁴ The Aim of the Save the Albatross Voyage was stated in the banner at the head of every page in the h2g2 suite of pages. These are stored in the Durable Record. Go to Durable Record Home> BBC h2g2 website>

²⁵ John describes some of these inter crew conflicts on earlier voyages in interviews during this voyage. In particular the interview conducted on 25 September 2003, which is recorded in the Durable Record. GO to Durable Record Home>The Interviews>Leg 2, 25 September 2003.

²⁶ During Leg 3, across the Tasman, and during Leg 4, between Wellington and Stanley, I was particularly petulant about John's Notes for h2g2. This can be found in my accounts of these Legs (which are largely based on my Journal) which can be found in the Durable Record. GO to Durable Record Home>The Voyage Story>Leg 3 and Leg 4.

²⁷ The Albatross Voyage research proposal, June 2003, p31

²⁸ A selection of the still photographs and video taken on the voyage can be viewed in the Durable record. Go to Durable Record Home>Photos and Video.

²⁹ An outline of practical aspects of using the Internet on expeditions is given in a paper I wrote and submitted to the Royal Geographic Society, see Durable Record Home>Practical Suggestions.

Chapter 9

¹ Royal Backing for Operation Ocean Taskforce, see Durable Record Home>Background Information>Royal backing for Ocean Taskforce.

² John Ridgway in conversation with N Grainger, 22 December 2005.

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