

Sailing with the Sea Shepherds

Teale Phelps Bondaroff
University of Cambridge, Clare College
Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS)

Introduction

I am a Commonwealth Scholar and PhD researcher at the University of Cambridge in the Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS). My PhD research in general looks at the strategies of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in international affairs, and specifically examines the strategy of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society (Sea Shepherd). As part of my research into the strategy of Sea Shepherd, I undertook fieldwork where I engaged in participant observation on board the Sea Shepherd vessel the *Bob Barker* as it took part in 'Operation No Compromise,' from December 2, 2010 to March 6, 2011. The *Bob Barker* spent 95 days at sea, and was at the heart of an action-packed campaign, Sea Shepherd's seventh campaign against Japanese Antarctic whaling and its most successful campaign to date.

What follows is a collection of the e-mail updates which I sent home to friends and family throughout the duration of the campaign, via my partner who acted as intermediary. I should make several notes on the material which follows. First, with respect of format, each e-mail is identified with the date and location when it was sent. Location is given both in broad geographic terms as well as using coordinates, the coordinates are typically those taken at noon, according to the ship's time. With respect to the content itself, I have removed some of the content of the first and last e-mail which refers to specifics on how I would communicate with recipients throughout the

campaign. Some e-mails were written over the course of several days, and an effort has been made to delineate sections written at different times and to fix some of the verb tense issues which arose as a result. I have also converted all times to 24-hour time to avoid confusion as I tended to alternate throughout the original e-mails. I removed the complimentary close component as well as the short personal messages which followed each e-mail, as these typically included such things as birthday greetings or congratulations. Removals are indicated by an ellipsis (...). Apart from these changes, I have endeavored to present the e-mails as they were written on campaign in order to preserve their original tone and convey the action and emotions of the campaign and its influence on me as a researcher. One thing readers will notice is the use of the first person plural personal pronoun ('we') throughout the e-mails. I found this was the easiest way to convey what was happening, and it also reflects my position as a participant observer. I use this type of language because in addition to observing these actions I also took part in them.

Finally, throughout the campaign, secrecy was of the utmost importance. The first month of the campaign involved the Sea Shepherd fleet searching for the elusive whaling fleet, and this task would have been seriously compromised if the whaling fleet had known the position of Sea Shepherd vessels. As such, crew members had to be careful with their communications, which relied almost entirely on e-mail.¹ Each e-mail had to be written so that if it were to be intercepted it would not contain information which could damage the success of the campaign, and e-mails were screened by the first mate to ensure that no potentially damaging information was released.² This type of information included any reference relating to the condition of vessels and equipment, potential tactics to be used, fuel reserves, and most importantly, the position of the ship. While avoiding overt disclosure of this type of information seems rather simple, there is a great deal of inane information which one would typically include in an e-mail which could have been used to calculate a relative position of a ship. This includes information such as wildlife encountered (whales, sea birds, seals etc.), the time of the sunset or, as

¹ Once the fleet was found, crew members were permitted to make a monitored phone call home using the satellite phone, once a week for fifteen minutes, depending on the ongoing circumstances of the campaign.

² The fact that the e-mails were mediated by an individual whom I was actively studying added a further challenge, as it meant I was unable to provide significant discussion about my research in the e-mails, as this could have had an influence on our interactions.

was often the case, the absence of a sunset, and the presence of icebergs or sea ice. Any of these details could be used to determine the general location of the ship, and as such were deliberately excluded in early e-mails. Most of this type of information is no longer secret and as such I have added further explanation in the form of footnotes throughout the sections which follow. I have also added additional explanatory notes, providing more detail about events, vessels, outcomes etc. for the benefit of the reader.

A Short Introduction to Sea Shepherd

Sea Shepherd is a marine conservation organization which engages in confrontational direct action on the high seas. It was founded by Paul Watson in the late seventies, and it was incorporated the organization in 1981 in Oregon.³ Prior to starting Sea Shepherd, Watson was one of the founding members of Greenpeace, but was dismissed from this organizations board in 1977 after a difference of opinion on tactics and strategy. Sea Shepherd is well known for its use of direct action on the high seas, where its vessels confront and physically obstruct those who conduct activities which the organization opposes.⁴ The organization claims responsibility for disabling and sinking numerous vessels, and proudly displays the flags of these vessels on the sides of its ships and on merchandise. Sea Shepherd campaigns on a variety of marine issues,

³ See Sea Shepherd, "Our History," <http://www.seashepherd.org/who-we-are/our-history.html> (February 23, 2010). An examination on the phenomenon of direct action on the high seas can be found in Glen Plant, "Civilian Protest Vessels and the Law of the Sea," *Netherlands Yearbook of International Law*, 14 (1983), 133-163, and Glen Plant, "International Law and Direct Action Protest at Sea: Twenty Years On," *Netherlands Yearbook of International Law*, 33 (2002), 75-117.

⁴ There are several journalistic books which describe various Sea Shepherd campaigns; these include Peter Heller, *The Whale Warriors: The Battle at the Bottom of the World to Save the Planets Largest Mammals*, New York, United States: Free Press, 2007, and David B. Morris, *Earth Warrior: Overboard with Paul Watson and the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society*, Golden, Colorado, United States: Fulcrum Publishing, 1995. As well as numerous movement-generated books, mostly written by Paul Watson, which include Pete Bethune, *Whale Warrior*, Auckland, New Zealand: Hodder Moa, 2010, Paul Watson, *Seal Wars: Twenty-five Years on the Front Lines with the Harp Seals*, New York, United States: Firefly Books, 2003, Paul Watson, *Ocean Warrior: My Battle to End the Slaughter on the High Seas*, London, United Kingdom: Vision Paperbacks, 1994, Frankie Seymour, *All Hearts on Deck: A Personal Account of the 1981-2 Campaigns of the Sea Shepherd*, Canberra, Australia: Boris Books, 1993, and Paul Watson, as told to Warren Rogers, *Sea Shepherd: My Fight for Whales and Seals*, ed. Joseph Newman, New York, United Kingdom: W. W. Norton & Company, 1982.

which include the Canadian (and recently Namibian) seal hunts, shark fining, dolphin slaughter in Japan, bluefin tuna poaching in the Mediterranean, and pilot whale hunting in the Faroe Islands. Since 2005 Sea Shepherd has been actively campaigning against Japanese whaling in Antarctica.⁵

In its Antarctic campaigns, Sea Shepherd employs a wide range of direct action tactics aimed at disrupting whaling operations, which have included throwing canisters of butyric acid (stink bombs, which contaminate whale meat and make decks unworkable), throwing cellulose powder (a white powdery substance which makes decks slippery), attempting to disable whaling vessels by entangling prop fouling lines in their propellers, and boarding whaling ships. Several collisions between Sea Shepherd and whaling vessels have also occurred over the years. While its tactics remain confrontational and controversial, none have ever resulted in any casualties or serious injury, either on the part of the activists or their opponents. Sea Shepherd is able to deploy this broad range of confrontational tactics due to its sophisticated use of international law, and by taking advantage of overlapping international legal regimes, and it is this strategy which is at the centre of my research.

November 2, 2010

Cambridge, United Kingdom (52°12'N, 0°6'E)

Hello everyone, first of all, I hope all is well, and you're having a good autumn! I'm sending out this e-mail because, as you might know, I will embark on my fieldwork in Antarctica in a short while and this is the official update information e-mail. If you are receiving this, it means you have been selected to be on my e-mail update list, which means you will be getting irregular updates about what I'm up to during my fieldwork. Let me know if you would rather not get these or if I have left anyone off the list.

⁵ While Sea Shepherd has been campaigning in Antarctica every season since 2005, the first Antarctic campaign took place in 2002, thus 'Operation No Compromise' was the seventh Antarctic campaign, but the sixth consecutive one.

Trip Details:

I'm leaving on November 21st for Australia (via Singapore), arriving in Perth where I will be getting on to the Sea Shepherd ship the *M/Y Steve Irwin*⁶, which sails to Hobart in Tasmania and then down to the Southern Ocean as it participates in 'Operation No Compromise' against Japanese whaling in the area. I will be engaging in participant observation while on board, gathering information about the Sea Shepherds for my PhD, looking specifically at their strategy and use of international law, but also getting general information about the organization as well.

I'm going to be away from November until sometime in early March, I don't know the exact date I will be getting back as it depends on the campaign, weather, etc. but sometime early March. I do not know exactly where we will be sailing, or when, if at all, we will be making landfall, as this is all dependent on how the campaign progresses.

Communications:

I will not have access to the internet while onboard the ship. I will have the ability to receive e-mails, how this will work is that the entire ship will be assigned a single e-mail address, and to get an e-mail to me, you will need to put my name as the subject line. I do not know what this e-mail address is as of yet, but I will include it in my next update. Bear in mind if you are sending messages that this is not an entirely private system. Also communications to this remote part of the world are very expensive, so please avoid sending me e-mails unless it is vitally necessary....

I will be able to send one, or possibly two e-mails a week, each which cost about \$1, so I will most likely send one big summary email for everyone to my partner Stephanie, and she will forward along my message to everyone on this list, or to specific people if they are more personal messages.

⁶ Sea Shepherd vessels are registered as motor yachts, which allows them to avoid the greater number of restrictions and requirements placed on commercially registered vessels. For example, commercial vessels are required to have a paid crew, whereas Sea Shepherd primarily crews its vessels with volunteers.

Getting Information:

Information about the campaign will be sporadic, also the type of information I will be able to release is limited. I will not be able to give certain details about the campaign: exact or event inexact locations as to where I am, ship details, plans, etc. as these could hurt the campaign and as a researcher I must follow the principle of 'do no harm.' Sea Shepherd campaigns are however highly public in other ways, you can find out what's going on:

1. Through these e-mails (see communications above).
2. By looking at the Sea Shepherd website at: 'www.seashepherd.org', which should have daily (or close to it) updates of newsworthy occurrences in the campaign. This is also a good place to start, especially if you're interested in knowing more about Sea Shepherd, and can't wait for my thesis! Note: these press releases are by their nature dramatic, they will describe things in such a way as to make the appealing to the media, so don't be alarmed if they are very strongly worded, or exaggerate the dangers involved. The campaign website was just launched: www.seashepherd.org/no-compromise.⁷
3. Normal news media sources: significant news stories will be picked up by mainstream media, these will typically be the most dramatic stories so once again do not be alarmed. If you can save clippings and video and audio clips for me that would be awesome!
4. *Whale Wars*, on the American cable station Animal Planet: the entire campaign will be filmed as part of the fourth season of the popular reality television program *Whale Wars*.⁸ This is by no means an up to date means of learning more about what's going on, as it will not air until the summer of 2011, but you can

⁷ Over the course of the campaign I also recommended people look at the Institute for Cetacean Research (ICR) website (www.icrwhale.org/eng-index.htm), the website of the organization responsible for conducting Japan's whaling program, as this site often had very up to the date information, and also provided an alternative perspective both with respect of information as well and videos and photographs. The media battle between Sea Shepherd and the ICR was carried out at the same time as naval engagements and often the ICR website would have a press release and video footage of an engagement uploaded to their website before Sea Shepherd's fast boats had even returned to the ships, making the ICR website a good place for information.

⁸ Rather than being classified as reality television, I was later told by Chris, the Animal Planet producer on the *Bob Barker*, that the program is more accurately described as a docu-drama.

watch previous episodes to learn more about the campaign (online or on Animal Planet: <http://animal.discovery.com/tv/whale-wars/>). Be aware that these shows do portray the actions in a very dramatic way; also note that I will not be riding on the zodiacs for any actions.

Safety and Security:

Some of you might be wondering about safety and security, while there is no denying that there are certain risks and dangers associated with this kind of fieldwork, there have *never been* any major injuries or deaths as a result of any Sea Shepherd campaign. As far as safety at sea is concerned, I have been training with the Cambridge University Yacht Club, and am certified with a VHF radio, maritime first aid, and am even licensed to sail a small sailing boat,⁹ which for a prairie boy, I'm rather proud of. The ship is crewed by a very skilled and experienced captain and set of officers who have been campaigning in the area since 2002. And finally I will not be taking any major risks, such as riding on the zodiacs or helicopter during actions, and will most likely be stationed on the bridge...¹⁰

⁹ I spend the year prior to my departure in preparation for my fieldwork. Since a key component to participant observation was going to be my involvement in the general activities on board the ship, I sought to develop my seamanship skills, so that while on board I could focus on studying Sea Shepherd rather than being distracted by the nautical environment. Towards this end I became a member of the Cambridge University Yacht Club (CUYC), from whom I took a number of courses. I attained a Royal Yacht Association (RYA) Short Range Certificate to operate a VHF radio, first Aid certification, and completed the theory components for the RYA Day Skipper and Yachtmaster certifications, eventually attaining Day Skipper certification just prior to my departure.

¹⁰ I went to great pains to elaborate on the safe nature of this undertaking as can be seen throughout this section, mostly to allay the fears and concerns of my family and friends. However the theatre in which the campaign was carried is by no means a safe one. Antarctica and the Southern Ocean is one of the most dangerous and remote places on the planet. Just prior to the beginning of the campaign, four French researchers died in a helicopter crash, see France 24, "French Research Team Killed in Antarctic Helicopter Crash," October 30, 2010, <http://www.france24.com/en/20101030-french-research-team-killed-antarctica-helicopter-crash-blizzard-weather-penguins> (July 30, 2011), and towards the end of the campaign three Norwegians went missing after their yacht, the *Berserk* disappeared in a storm, see UPI, "Norwegian Yacht Missing in Antarctic Sea," February 28, 2011, http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2011/02/28/Norwegian-yacht-missing-in-Antarctic-sea/UPI-48661298875042/ (July 30, 2011). The

November 29, 2010

Hobart, Tasmania (42°52'S, 147°20'E)

Hello everyone, I hope you are all doing well. I arrived safely to the Sea Shepherd fleet in Hobart after 46 mind-bogglingly long hours of travel. I left Cambridge at 5:00 on the 21st of November. After a 4 hour bus ride, I arrived at Heathrow and two hours later was on a Qantas flight to Singapore. This flight took 12 hours, and it was followed by a (relatively) quick 8 hour hop down to Perth, a 5 hour stop over and I was on my way to Hobart via Sydney.¹¹

I was picked up at the airport by Benjamin Potts, also known as Pottsy, who was one of the crew members who boarded a whaling ship two years ago.¹² I arrived and took my berth in the *Steve Irwin*, and after a great vegan dinner (the ships are all vegan and have a great galley crew) I slept for a good 12 hours. The *Steve Irwin*¹³ looks just like it does in all the pictures except they have added a massive satellite bulb on the top of

Sea Shepherd vessel the *Steve Irwin* was actively involved in the search and rescue effort to find the missing ship and crew, however they were unsuccessful and the three men were presumed dead.

¹¹ The *Steve Irwin* left Perth early and I was required to make a last minute travel alteration and fly to Hobart, hence the difference in travel arrangements between the first and second e-mails.

¹² On January 15, 2008, the Australian Benjamin Potts and a British citizen, Giles Lane, boarded the *Yushin Maru #2*, which precipitated an international incident where the governments of Japan and Australia were forced to enter into a dialogue to negotiate the release and transfer of the two crew members. See Benjamin Potts, "Taking the Whale War Hostage," *The Next Eco-Warriors: 22 Young Women and Men Who are Saving the Planet*, Ed. Emily Hunter, San Francisco, California, United States: Conari Press, 2011, pp. 51-62, and also from personal interviews and conversations with Potts.

¹³ The *MY Steve Irwin* is the flag ship of Sea Shepherd; it is a 59 meters, 885 gross register tonnage (GRT), Dutch registered vessel which formerly served as a Scottish Fisheries Protection Agency conservation patrol vessel prior to her acquisition by Sea Shepherd in 2005. She is captained by Paul Watson, the founder and president of Sea Shepherd. She was painted entirely black, save for the yellow 'SeaShepherd.org' emblazoned on her sides and yellow anti-boarding spikes which are installed once she leaves port. Other prominent features include the stern helideck, which sports a retractable hangar, on top of which was recently installed the new satellite bulb which sports the Sea Shepherd skull and crossed crop and trident. The *Steve Irwin* was docked behind the Sea Shepherd's other large vessel, the *Bob Barker* (described below, see note 18), and the third ship in the Sea Shepherd fleet, the *Gojira*, the fast interceptor vessel had yet to arrive (see note 23). The *Steve Irwin* was named in memoriam of the noted Australian conservationist, who was also known as 'The Crocodile Hunter.' I use the past tense to describe certain the parts of the Sea Shepherd vessels as they have all subsequently been repainted and refitted following the campaign.

the retractable Helipad.¹⁴ A massive black thing, emblazoned with the Sea Shepherd skull and crossed trident and crop.¹⁵

I spent the next four days on the *Steve Irwin*, helping out during the day (swabbing the companionways, doing dishes, re-organizing the rope locker etc.). The ship is very large, and a winding maze of rooms, and dead ends. Every wall surface is covered in murals of sea animals (mostly whales), and pictures, plaques and mementos from previous campaigns. The crew is from 19 different countries and dinner is like the UN, if you don't like the English conversation you can tune in on the French one, or another.¹⁶ Most of the people on the ship have been here since the end of the summer's blue fin tuna campaign (Operation Blue Rage¹⁷) which took place during the northern summer in the Mediterranean, so there are a lot of Europeans. There are some very interesting characters amongst the crew; people covered in animal rights tattoos, a small mousy French mechanic, and a bearded Greek technician. The captain, Paul Watson, has not yet arrived, so I mostly do what the boson James tells me to do. In port, all crew report to the boson (except engineers and galley crew).

Every day in the morning we are assigned chores which we do in twos, which makes them less boring, and gives you someone to talk to. On my first day out, I'm swabbing the companion ways with Sue, from Aruba, who hopped on the ship in the Med. The food is amazing, all vegan. On the third day, the galley whipped up a three course, vegan 'American Thanksgiving' meal for the crew of both ships - the *Bob Barker* crew almost didn't make it was up river re-fueling. When the *Bob Barker* did get back it,

¹⁴ The retractable helipad was built to protect the helicopter from being targeted and damaged by the whaler's water cannons, something which they had attempted to do in earlier campaigns, as well as to protect the delicate aircraft from the harsh conditions of the Southern Ocean.

¹⁵ Sea Shepherd employs a broad range of symbols and logos, its original logo of a blue whale has gradually been replaced in prominence by the organizations very own Jolly Roger. The emblem, designed by one of my roommates, Geert Vons, is a skull with a dolphin and whale on its forehead over top of a crossed trident and shepherds crook on a field of sable. The emblem has incredible popular appeal and is a powerful symbol. Sea Shepherd has an entire range of 'Jolly Roger Gear' available on its website, which sells very well.

¹⁶ By the end of the campaign a total of 23 nationalities were represented by the crews of all three of the Sea Shepherd ships.

¹⁷ For more information on this campaign, see <http://www.seashepherd.org/blue-rage/> (July 30, 2011).

was ridding very low in the water, as it now had enough fuel for the entire 3 month campaign.

The captain, Paul Watson, arrived on the weekend and he has spent most of the time giving interviews, but I've had the chance to hang out with him in the mess from time to time. Also on board until Tuesday (November 30) is Michelle Rodriguez, the film star who you might recognize from such films as 'Avatar', or 'Machete', or the 'Fast and the Furious', and also from the TV show 'Lost'. She is quite an interesting character, and has spent much of the past few days doing pictures and running around Tasmania visiting forests and wildlife preserves.

I have put in about 5 watches, and have recently been doing a lot of evening (8-midnight) watches, which is great because it allows me to sit undisturbed and write up my notes. I have already taken two Bic pens worth of notes on topics which range from everything from what I did during the day, to the views of the crew on various issues, to the food we had for lunch. I've been talking to everyone on board, finding out where they are from, and their reasons for joining Sea Shepherd. I have also had whimsical conversations as well, I even had a long conversation with Doug, the ships carpenter, about Dadaist art of all things, which lasted well into the night.

For day watches, I stand around watching the gangplank, talking to the constant stream of visitors and well wishers. Over the weekend I ran the information table in front of the *Bob Barker* as we did tours for the public. Apparently 6000\$AUS of t-shirts and other merchandise was sold. My job was getting the guests into groups of 10, and then chatting with them answering questions until they went on the tour. In the evening on Sunday, November 28th, we did a benefit where Paul Watson and Michelle Rodriguez talked and then Michelle spun music (deejayed).

.....

There are 47 crew members on the *Steve Irwin* and 30 on the *Bob Barker*, and as they had limited accommodations on the *Steve Irwin*, I got moved from the *Steve* over to the *Bob Barker*, where I will be serving on the deck. So I have spent the last day getting

to know the *Bob Barker*. The *Bob Barker* is a former Norwegian whaler¹⁸, however for a Norwegian ship it has incredibly low ceilings, today (Monday, November 29th) I have hit my forehead a total of 9 times. I'm hoping I will learn to intuitively duck soon. Today we launched the fast boats for practice and to test the engines, and the *Steve Irwin* was refueled, both ships are now totally fueled.¹⁹

Rumors fly around the ship, one rumor which I can confirm at the moment is that to date, the Japanese whalers have not yet left port. Two hours ago we received a report that the *Nisshin Maru*, the factory ship was still in harbor in the city of Enoshima.²⁰ We will be departing from Hobart on the second of December, but as the whalers are not yet in the Southern Ocean, we won't start looking for them just yet. I'm not sure where we will be going next, but we will likely be heading out and doing some practice and training and waiting to see what the whalers will do, but this is the first year Sea Shepherd will be down there first.

¹⁸The Dutch registered *MY Bob Barker* is a 52m, 801GRT, ice-strengthened, former Norwegian whaler. This sixty year old vessel was acquired by Sea Shepherd in 2009 with the help of its namesake, the American television personality Bob Baker. She is captained by Alex Cornielssen, a Dutch citizen, who runs Sea Shepherd's Galapagos program. Like the *Steve Irwin* she was painted entirely black, save for the yellow 'SeaShepherd.org' emblazoned on her sides. She also sports yellow-tipped anti-boarding spikes on all sides. She is equipped with a helipad on the stern, and carries two rigid inflatable boats (RIBs) amidships and a large crane with which to launch them. As this was only the *Bob Barker's* second campaign, her interior had yet to become as colourful as that of the *Steve Irwin*, although several marine-wildlife-themed murals were added during the campaign by Geert, who also served as the ships artist.

¹⁹ The *Bob Barker* is equipped with two Zeppelin RIBs, which I referred to alternately as 'small boats' and 'fast boats', for clarity I have changes all references to the latter terminology. The two RIBs were named the *Hunter*, after Robert Hunter, a co-founder of Greenpeace and friend to Paul Watson and also the previous name of the *Steve Irwin*; and the *Farley*, named after the noted Canadian author and conservationist Farley Mowat (also a close friend of Paul Watson), and also the name of the former Sea Shepherd vessel the *RV Farley Mowat*, which was seized by the Canadian government in 2008 during Sea Shepherds anti-sealing campaign conducted that year.

²⁰ The Japanese registered *Nisshin Maru* is 130m, 8,030 GRT and is described as a converted stern trawler. She has black hull, emblazoned with the mandatory word 'Research' in white. Her deck was covered in a chaotic collection on beige cranes and structures and her stern sports the much sought after slipway where whales are hauled aboard to be butchered on the stern deck. She is owned by Kyodo Senpaku Kaisha, Ltd. which is the conglomerate whaling company contracted by the Institute for Cetacean Research (ICR) which conducts the controversial Japanese Whaling Research Program Under Special Permit in the Antarctic (JARPA) whaling program, on behalf its parent organization the Japan Fisheries Agency. See the Institute for Cetacean Research, <http://www.icrwhale.org/eng/background.pdf> (July 30, 2011).

I am sharing my cabin, up at the front of the ship, with Geert a tattoo artist and general director of Sea Shepherd Netherlands, from Amsterdam, and Garry, one of the ships photographers, from Hong Kong. The Animal Planet film crew, who is filming the program *Whale Wars* is just moving into their cabins downstairs. They did a briefing this morning and have started filming.²¹

It's very warm here at the moment, a beautiful sunny day, over the past few days the weather has been alternately sunny and raining torrentially. Preparations are coming along well and the people of Hobart have been steadily dropping off donations. We just received about 200 DVDs and a huge hamper of BBQ Shapes (Australian savory crackers, which are vegan).

We will be spending the next few days getting everything in order. The day we leave or the day after that, the new Sea Shepherd ship, *Gojira*, arrives. It is the replacement for the *Ady Gil*,²² with a similar design, only larger.²³ It will be catching up with us later.

²¹ While the film crews worked for Lizard Trading Company, which is the company contracted by Animal Planet to produce the program, they were typically referred to as the Animal Planet film crew, or the 'Animals' during the campaign.

²² The *Ady Gil* was the previous interceptor vessel deployed for the 2009-2010 Antarctic anti-whaling campaign. On January 6, 2010 the *Ady Gil* was split in two after it was struck by the whaling fleet's security vessel the *Shōnan Maru #2*. No crew members were harmed but Sea Shepherd was later forced to scuttle the heavily damaged vessel. After the collision, Pete Bethune, the New Zealand captain of the *Ady Gil*, boarded the *Shōnan Maru #2*, to deliver a warrant for the arrest of that ship's captain. He was promptly detained and returned to Japan where he was charged with several minor offences and given a two year suspended sentence. Several countries were involved in this incident. Pete Bethune's New Zealand citizenship, and the New Zealand registry of the *Ady Gil* forced the New Zealand government to support its citizen as well as launch an investigation into the collision. The fact that the collision occurred in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Australian Antarctic Territory (AAT) also drew Australia into the incident. See for example Maritime New Zealand, "Investigation Report: Ady Gil and Shonan Maru No. 2 Collision on 6 January 2010," *Maritime New Zealand*, November 2010, Australian Maritime Safety Authority, "Fact Finding Report Into the Reported Collision Involving the New Zealand Registered Craft Ady Gil and the Japan Registered Whaling Ship Shonan Maru No. 2 in the Southern Ocean on 6 January 2010," *Government of Australia*, as well as Pete Bethune, *Whale Warrior*, Auckland, New Zealand: Hodder Moe, 2010, Sea Shepherd, "Support Captain Bethune: Background Information," www.seashepherd.org (April 15, 2010), and News.com, "Charges Against Sea Shepherd Captain Pete Bethune Are Bogus, Say Activists," April 2, 2010, www.news.com.au, (April 19, 2010).

²³ The Australian registers *MV Gojira*, (currently the *MV Brigitte Bardot*), is a 35m, 41 GRT trimaran (or stabilized mono-hull) speedboat. It was originally built in 1997 to circumnavigate the globe in less than 80 days, and it set the world record in 1998 for accomplishing this feat in just under 74 days. She was

.....

Another few days have passed and we departed Hobart today, December 2, at 13:00 after a press conference. I spent the day battening down the hatches and moving some surprises for the whalers around the ship.²⁴ We are currently at anchor in the Derwent River, near Ralph's Bay, just off the coast outside of Hobart, and will likely remain here for the next 3 days, awaiting the arrival of the *Gojira* and also because the Japanese have not left Japan yet, which means they will not be in the Southern Ocean until January....

December 15, 2010

Derwent River, Tasmania (42°56'S, 147°23'E)

Hello everyone! The *Bob Barker* has officially departed from Hobart. For security reasons I cannot tell you where we are bounds but at the moment we are at sea, out of sight of land, in considerably large swells.²⁵ I have spent the past three days dealing with varying degrees of sea-sickness, on the 13th I spent most of the day in my bunk, only getting up to try to eat meals, and ending up seeing them again. Today I was much improved but I am still a little queasy.

We have had a wandering albatross tailing our ship for the past two days and some of the deck hands and I have named it Larry. Today, December 15th, we spent the morning practicing launching the fast boats, and after lunch had a fire training exercise.

captained by Lockhart Mclean or Locky, an experienced Canadian sailor and environmentalist. The *Gojira* was a valuable addition to the campaign as it was capable of exceeding the speed of the harpoon vessels, unlike the other two Sea Shepherd vessels. This sleek and hydrodynamic ship was painted black and sported a green lizard clutching a broken harpoon on her nose.

²⁴ Here I am referring primarily to bottles of butyric acid, the non-toxic albeit foul smelling stink bombs used to disrupt whaling by making working on deck unbearable and also contaminating and rendering commercially worthless any whale meat it comes into contact with.

²⁵ The Sea Shepherd's emphasis on security is not without its merits, during the previous season the whaling fleet stationed a security vessel, the *Shōnan Maru #2*, to intercept the Sea Shepherd ships as they left the Australian EEZ, and this security vessel tailed the *Steve Irwin*, relaying her position to the rest of the whaling fleet. It was later involved in the ramming the *Ady Gil*, see note 21. At 5:45 on December 14, 2010 we successfully left the Australian EEZ without encountering a security vessel.

.....

As we left Hobart we had a pod of long-nosed common dolphins swimming all around the ship. At first there were 3 or 4 riding the bow wave, and then you could see them coming from all around, jumping clear out of the water, across the waves converging on the ship. At one point there must have been over 30 of them playing in the waves around us. It was very beautiful! We also passed a small pod of orcas just as we were exiting the Derwent River.

Tonight I'm taking my first shower in over a week!...

December 26, 2011

*Ross Sea, Southern Ocean*²⁶

Hello everyone, I hope this e-mail finds you well and that you are all having good holidays. As always, it has been a while since I've written, partly because I have limited time and partly because there is very little I can comment on which would not hurt security, something which is being taken very seriously.²⁷ What I will do here then is tell you a little about the typical day in the life of a Sea Shepherd Deckie and researcher, and then share with you what we did for the holidays.

Generally, I am doing very well; today, December 26th we have rough large seas and I am a little queasy but this has only been the last day, prior to this, all was well and we had relatively calm seas. We have had countless wildlife encounters, which has been absolutely fascinating. While I can't tell you what we've been seeing, I can say we've seen a lot of amazing sea creatures and birdlife.

So what do I do all day? Well, I usually get up by 7:30 which gives me time to head down and get a hot breakfast before the 8:00 crew meeting. Here we are filled in on any progress, plans or news. For example, today we learnt that the Japanese Fisheries Agency has announced that its officials have been receiving free whale meat

²⁶ Coordinates excluded for security purposes.

²⁷ This early stage in the campaign was spent primarily sailing around the Ross Sea and training intensively.

when they should not be.²⁸ These meetings are not typically very long, unless a new significant change of course is proposed or something significant has happened. We are also updated on what the *Steve Irwin* and the *Gojira* are doing. We learn if there are any special events taking place during the day, for example, the past few weeks we have done fire safety training, anti-boarding training, and hull breach training.²⁹ In all these cases all crew members are given jobs and given very good training on how to do them. Once this is over, depending on how long it is, we either go and start our daily chores, or have a deck crew meeting at 8:30.

Our daily chores include cleaning the heads, sweeping and mopping the companionways, washing the dishes after every meal, cleaning the galley and clothes washing area, or cleaning the scullery. Today for example I cleaned the heads with Andrea (Dre), the ships manager and boson's mate. Once a week, or as needed, we burn all the paper waste from the ship in an incinerator on the back of the ship, which Mike, one of our very skilled deck crew members, created out of an old oil barrel.³⁰ Yes, this includes paper from the heads, we can't flush any paper as it would clog the ships plumbing system, and so we have to burn it all.

After our chores, we get to work on whatever needs to be done, getting instructions from our boson, Pottsy. This can include securing the anti-boarding spikes³¹, battening anything which came loose in the night, or while, we were in port,

²⁸ See Japan Today, "Fisheries Agency Officials Penalized for Receiving Whale Meat," December 23, 2010, <http://www.japantoday.com/category/national/view/fisheries-agency-officials-penalized-for-receiving-whale-meat> (Link no longer active as of July 30, 2011), see also Japan Today, "Fisheries Agency Warned Not to Accept Whale Meat Gifts," December 24, 2010, <http://www.japantoday.com/category/national/view/fisheries-agency-warned-not-to-accept-whale-meat-gifts> (July 30, 2011).

²⁹ In most of the previous campaigns collisions between Sea Shepherd and whaling vessels had occurred and on several occasions the hull of a Sea Shepherd ship was punctured. Thus far, none of these had been below the waterline, however the punctures had been moving progressively lower and there was a concern that should a collision occur this campaign it might involve a potentially deadly hull breach.

³⁰ There were in fact three Michaels on the ship, as well as three Ben's. The Michael referred to here was better known as Glab, who served as the ships welder and leading seaman, and was an excellent teacher. Among other things, he taught me how to weld and use an oxyacetylene-torch.

³¹ The ship is protected with meter-long black and yellow-tipped anti-boarding spikes which serve to deter potential boarders. They were designed and manufactured by Vincent, the second mate. The *Steve Irwin* also bristled with yellow anti-boarding spikes. I spent the week we were at anchor in the Derwent River drilling holes in the spikes to they could be bolted down. The spikes were then installed once we

more maintenance related activity on the ship. The past few days there have been fewer tasks as it is the holidays and we are underway.

Lunch takes place at noon, and we grab food in mess and sit and chat, or head into the lounge where we watch a TV program or part of a movie. The past few days, the crew has been watching the British TV show 'Skins', prior to this we were watching 'Family Guy.' This gives crew members some much needed down time. I have only watched about two complete movies so far, and usually catch a small portion of one before heading off to chat or work on my notes. Today we watched the 'Golden Compass', and in the back ground as I write this e-mail, I can glimpse cheetahs eating an ostrich on 'Planet Earth'.

We head back to work at 13:00. Lately we've been doing training and briefings in the afternoon. These end by 18:00 when we sit down to another amazing vegan meal. The galley is absolutely fantastic; they crank out three hot vegan meals a day. Today we had leftovers from the massive Christmas/holiday dinner we had last night, which I will tell you about shortly.

After dinner, we typically have free time and can do whatever we please. I usually chat with members of the crew, head up to the bridge to chat with whoever is on watch, or sit and work on my notes. There very often is a movie playing in the evening as well, all of varying degrees of quality depending on who is in charge of selecting a film. I typically try to get to bed by 23:00 but sometimes will spend longer on the bridge asking research related questions or talking with crew members in the mess.

That's basically the typical day. Yesterday was rather different. We had the morning off, so I got up for breakfast (delicious crêpes with real maple syrup), and then went back to bed for a nap. I got up after lunch and helped prepare the big holiday feast, cutting beans and carrots. I also finished up on my notes, which were rather back logged and then at 18:00 the dinner started. We had beans, roasted potatoes, stuffing, salad, fresh baked buns (literally delivered hot out of the oven), and 'tofurky' (tofu turkey substitute which is absolutely delicious). I had dinner dish duty so I headed off

were underway. Large sections of spikes were removed to allow the launch of the fast boats, and we spent a great deal of time during the campaign moving these spikes around to deck to allow other work to proceed.

and did those and came back for desert, which was rhubarb, strawberry and pear pie and vegan fruit cheese cake. While we were eating, Mikey, the Kiwi boat driver and quartermaster, gave out the presents which were part of our secret Santa. Crew members have been working on these gifts for many weeks and there were some very cool gifts. There were whales carved out of metal and wood, a hand-sewn pillow for the ship's doctor Tom, bottles of iceberg water with the engraved coordinates of where it was collected and so on. I got a very cool hand-made rubber tri-corner pirate hat, which Pat, the blond dread-locked Australian engineer, made for me.

That's all the news I have so far. Thank you all who helped Stephanie put together my gift, it's awesome I've been watching the little movie clips for the past few days and am transferring some of the audio books and TV shows onto my iPod.³² Thank you all so much I really appreciate all of them! Hope you all have a great holiday, happy New Year!

December 31, 2010³³

Southern Ocean (64°09'S, 149°15'W)

Greetings friends and family! I have a new update for you all! Things have really heated up down here in the frozen south! We have been scouring the Southern Ocean for the whaling fleet for the past month and have just found it! On December 31st we came upon the *Yushin Maru*, one of the whaling fleets harpoon vessels, moving through the ice.³⁴

³² My partner Stephanie secretly put together a fantastic CD with video greetings and digital gifts from family and friends.

³³ This date indicates the date the e-mail was initially started, but it was written over several days and sent several days later.

³⁴ While there were rumours that the whaling fleet would be the same size as the previous season (a factory ship, three harpoon vessels/spotters, and a security vessel), this season the fleet only comprised of the *Nisshin Maru* factory ship, and three harpoon vessels: the *Yushin Maru*, the *Yushin Maru #2*, and the *Yushin Maru #3*, the latter of which also served as a security vessel and was equipped with water cannons rather than water hoses. The *Yushin Maru*, similar to all three of the harpoon vessels, is Japanese registered, 70m, 747 GRT ship, capable of surpassing speeds of 22 knots and extremely manoeuvrable. All three harpoon vessels are painted blue-gray and have black stacks towards their sterns and prominent

The 31st began as a normal day. I had a great breakfast of fried leek on toast, and garlic rice. I tidied up the deck moving line around the ship (coiling and tidying all the line we pulled in from the long liners a few days back, we must have pulled in well over two kilometer of heavy blue line, which has filled our rope locker.³⁵ After a delicious lunch of Peanut butter soup and rice, the deck team headed out to prepare for a practice launch of the fast boats. This entails taking off the covers, tying straps, making sure they are ready to go, setting lines and so on. It takes a good number of people to launch the boats, the more people and lines on the boats, the smoother they go in. As we were doing this, we got a radar contact and at 13:30 we had confirmed that there was another ship on radar, and suddenly it was no longer a drill.

white flying bridges high above their bridge, which is located towards the bow of the ship. Leading from the bridge is a catwalk which connects to the high protruding bow of the ship, where the harpoon is installed. This raised bow provides the harpoon gunner, who was traditionally also the captain, hence the catwalk, the height needed to fire upon their quarry. Similar to the *Nisshin Maru*, the harpoon vessels all sports the word 'Research' in large white letters on their sides.

³⁵ I was unable to recount this important event in an earlier e-mail for security reasons. At 21:00 on December 22nd we came upon buoys in the water and suspected they were illegal long lines, set by poachers fishing for Patagonian tooth fish. There was also a vessel lurking on the horizon, and the captain hailed it; however it refused to answer the hails and fled. We therefore launched the fast boats, which approached the line and inspected it for a radio beacon and identifying marks, the presence of which would indicate that it was a legally set line, none were found. As our hail was ignored and the lack of markings and radio beacons provided strong evidence that the line was illegal, we spent the remainder of the night, labouring until 4:30 the next day, slowly pulling up the line on the ships winch. We recovered close to three kilometres of line, and discovered that it was an illegal gill net rather than a long line as was first suspected. After pulling up half of this line, we removed the buoys from the other end and sunk the remainder of the line using weights. In the process, we uncovered an additional pair of buoys indicating another net, and rather than recover this net, we removed the buoys and sunk the net using weights. The entire event, from encountering the lines to pulling them up was incredibly invigorating and it energized the entire crew, such that they were more than willing to work through the night, despite having already worked a full day. I think the change of mood on the ship following the encounter with the gill net indicates one of the strengths of direct action, namely that participants get to accomplish something which is tangible, in that the impact - regardless of how small - is visible, tactile and ultimately quantifiable. At the end of the night we were able to look at the large coil of light blue-green line and associate that with our actions. It was very easy to feel as though one has made a positive contribution to a cause when one sees a quantifiable result, and this is the power of direct action. Poetically, this line was later used to manufacture numerous prop-foulers which were used throughout the remainder of the campaign.

We didn't launch the fast boats, as we were between large flows of small growlers³⁶ and slushy ice, which does not do the fast boats any good whatsoever. As we prepared a few last minute tricks for the harpoon ship³⁷ the ice got heavier, so that every so often the whole ship would be rocked by a shudder as we ploughed through a small berg. At 15:00 we could see the vessel from the deck and it was definitely a harpoon vessel. The harpoon vessels are much faster than the *Bob Barker* and as a result we would never be able to catch one, but we pursued it none the less, and it fled south, taking us into increasingly heavy ice.

We pursued the harpoon vessel well into the afternoon, hoisting the flags and readying lines and the deck. At 17:30, we found out that the *Steve Irwin*, our second large ship, had just picked up a tail, another one of the other harpooners, the *Yushin Maru #2*. We chased after the *Yushin Maru* until after dinner, when it was decided that we would turn around and head back to the *Steve Irwin* and assist it in getting rid of its tailing harpoon ship and in the process, perhaps lose our own. We turned around and the hunter became the hunted. With the *Yushin Maru* pursuing us we head north to rendezvous with the *Steve Irwin*.

The evening passed and I was just sitting down in the mess to update my notes for the day, when suddenly the *Bob Barker* turned. Moving through heavy ice, every time we pushed our way through an ice flow, we would create a lead, which the pursuing *Yushin* used to stay close to our vessel. The captain decided that we would stop them from being lazy and make them break their own way through the ice, and so turned the ship around the faceoff with the *Yushin*. I went up on deck just as the two ships faced off, in a standoff over a short distance of water. The lead through the ice was no greater than 3 ship lengths and slowly closing. Twice we turned to leave and the *Yushin* turned to pursue us, and twice we turned around again to stand them down, preventing them from using the lead long enough for it to close. Then turning, we made a dash to the next ice flow and this time the *Yushin* took the long way around,

³⁶ A growler is a small piece of floating ice, typically a few meters across and a few meters above the surface, similar to icebergs, the majority of a growler is beneath the waves. This makes them a particular hazard to navigation, because growlers are just as capable of puncturing even ice-strengthened ships if struck in a certain way, and they are considerably smaller than icebergs making them harder to spot.

³⁷ At this stage, these 'tricks' constituted various prop-foulers the deck crews had been working on over the past few weeks.

circumnavigating rather than traversing the ice flow.³⁸ This was around 21:00, and at this time we are told that we would meet the *Steve Irwin* at 2:00 and that we should be ready to go, so I stay up working until that time. I grabbed a few hours of sleep before being woken up to help refuel the *Gojira*, our speedy interceptor boat, at 5:30 the next morning. All in all, not a bad way to spend New Year's Eve, a very happy new years to everyone by the way.

The next day (January 1st, 2011) was as action packed. I shall set the scene. We now had all three ships gathered together, and the *Gojira* re-fueled. After a meeting between all the captains on board the *Steve Irwin*, a plan is hatched to take on one of the *Yushin*'s, which are still sitting off on the horizon still watching the black Sea Shepherd armada. This is both a good and bad thing by the way. While the harpoon vessels are tailing us, they cannot whale. As the fleet comprises of only 3 harpoon vessels and two of them are taken up watching us, this means that at the very least, the whaler's capacity to whale is reduced by two-thirds.

Returning to the engagement, after a feint with the helicopter³⁹ and the *Bob Barker* (where they aimed at the other ship further away and then turned at the last moment to engage the target vessel), all the ships along with two fast boats, converge on the *Yushin Maru* #3 which lay just across a patch of ice from the *Bob Barker*. The harpoon vessel took off, running before the fast boats, which circled it, attempting to lob non-toxic cellulose powder (to make the deck slippery), red paint (to re-paint the 'Research' sign on the side of the ship), and some whalers eau-de-toilet (butyric acid stink bombs), as well as prop-foulers to foul the propellers of the ship and slow or stop it. During this time I was posted with another crew member on the aft deck as part of the ships defensive team. Here I could see everything play out.

³⁸ We were unable to shake the harpoon vessel due to its superior speed, although at subsequent leads, prop-foulers were dropped to dissuade the *Yushin Maru* from its pursuit, however these proved ineffectual at delaying the harpoon vessel.

³⁹ This was the first campaign for the *Nancy Burnet*, the Sea Shepherd's new helicopter. This white, four-person helicopter emblazoned with Sea Shepherd's blue whale logo was a replacement for the previous helicopter, and had a considerably greater range and twice the crew capacity. It was also funded by Mr. Bob Barker, and named after the president of United Activists for Animal Rights, and another organization he supports.

The fast boats harassed the *Yushin Maru #3* to the point where the harpoon vessel was thrashing about like a wounded animal. The harpoon vessels are incredibly fast and agile, and at times it appeared as though they could turn on a dime. It was spectacular, the *Yushin* came within about 40 meters of our ship and I could hear their anti-boarding announcement:

“Warning, Warning, this is the *Yushin Maru #3* Captain, stop your illegal activity immediately. Do not try to board this vessel, or you will be detained and charged in Japan. Keep away from our ship, or we will have to hose you to fend you off.”⁴⁰

Or something similar, I got the gist of it scribbled into my waterproof note book. In order to shake off the fast boats, the *Yushin Maru #3* headed into the ice, and the *Steve Irwin* roared past us, in hot pursuit, with our ship following quickly behind.⁴¹ The fast boats were now forced to ride behind the *Yushin Maru #3* and the second ship came closer. After landing a few good shots and withstanding the *Yushin Maru #3*'s fire hoses, the *Bob Barker*'s fast boat came back in and the deck crew had it out of the water by 13:00. The entire engagement was spectacular, the highly mobile harpooners weaving through fantastic ice flows and speeding black fast boats circling like tiny flies under a clear blue sky. It was the clearest day we have had yet, and the perfect day for this type of action.

After the engagement the crew was exhausted as they had barely scraped together 3 hours of sleep in the past two days. Never the less, I did the lunch dishes and pushed on with my day, working on stowing the fast boats and talking strategy in the mess. I finished off the day with a much needed shower, after having spent 13 hours in my Mustang survival suit.

.....

⁴⁰ The latter part of this message took several engagements to decipher as the word 'fend' was very unclear; it was also often slightly different for each *Yushin*.

⁴¹ This was rather startling as the *Steve Irwin* does not have ice classification and thus typically the ice-reinforced *Bob Barker* would lead the way through this type of ice, breaking a path for the *Steve Irwin*.

Today (January 2, 2011) we are sailing with a *Yushin*⁴² on our tail, where it has been since the fleet broke up to search for the *Nisshin Maru* yesterday, following the engagement. The *Nisshin Maru* is the whaling fleet's factory ship and primary target of the campaign, while Sea Shepherd can cut down whaling by occupying the harpoon ships, the real goal is to stop the factory ship. This means first finding the vessel and then blocking its slipway to prevent whale carcasses from being loaded. As the *Bob Barker* has a tail, I can reveal our current location, as the fleet obviously knows where we are. We are currently at exactly 61°32'82 S, 158°13'53 W; try typing it into Google Earth and see our location. We are so far south that we haven't had night in weeks, which is very strange. Last night there was a small snow storm and that's the darkest the sky has been since three days after we left Hobart.

As it is no longer a security risk, I can tell you about all the amazing things I saw in December. On December 11th, we departed Hobart for Antarctica. We saw dolphins swimming along our bow as we left; they were later identified as common dolphins. The swells picked up as we left storm bay and I went to bed early, late at night we turned around and headed into Adventure Bay. On December 15th at 15:31 (ships time, a special time which is hard to tell what it means⁴³), we crossed the Antarctic Convergence, which means we officially entered into the Southern Ocean. You could notice the temperature change very rapidly; the water temperature went from 12°C to 6°C very quickly! We sailed in front of a low pressure weather system (a very low one) but right in front of it so the wind and swells were tolerable, for the most part. To celebrate crossing of the convergence, I had a shower. We were on water ration while at anchor and needed to get sufficiently out to sea to run the water filtration system, and so as of December 15th we were permitted to take a 2 minute shower every two days.

⁴² It was often difficult to identify which *Yushin* was pursuing our vessel, and we discovered that the tails were often switched, so that if one identified the tailing vessel as the *Yushin Maru* #2 one day (by approaching the vessel and photographing it with a high powered lens), there was no guarantee that it would be the same vessel the next day. As a result the harpoon vessels were often generically referred to as *Yushin's*, both on the ship and in my notes and e-mails home.

⁴³ It was almost impossible to determine the time on shore, as ship's time remained constant and we wove back and forth across the International Date Line and through so many time zones that often when the sun did set or dip, it did so in the late afternoon and it would be completely light out by the time dinner ended. For convenience, our ships typically operated on New Zealand time, whereas I have every reason to believe that the whaling ships kept their clocks on Tokyo time.

We set up an iceberg pool, with everyone guessing hours when we would see our first iceberg. The winner was Zin, one of our Australian galley cooks, when we spotted the first iceberg on December 18th. The pool-winning iceberg was only on radar unfortunately, as a fog set in and visibility was very low. Early in the day we had started seeing small growlers, of fantastical shapes and sizes, everyone went up on deck, and made seemingly bizarre observations, pointing out such things as a swan, a duck, a camel, a face, which only made sense once you looked out at the ice. There were little pins holding up large bulbs of ice, and twisting cloud-like structures. Looking out at the twisted and phantasmagorical forms made you feel as though you were looking at something from a Dr. Seuss book. We also spotted a humpback a little ways of the port side. At first only a little hump and then it breathed a few times, before hunching its back and diving, flipping its tail up as it dove. The whale was absolutely majestic!

I didn't see my first proper, massive iceberg until the next day, December 19th, when we saw a large one, with three humps, pure white with splashing surf around its base and the deepest turquoise in the water around it. As the fleet was nowhere near where we were at this point, we did a tour of some icebergs, with each berg more fascinating than the last. We headed for the second iceberg of the day, which had two parts riding out of the water: a large mound and a thin tall column with a shallow section between the two of them which was of the lightest blue-turquoise colour. Between these two surface bits there was a little shallow sea, which had its own waves and splashing water, slowly eating away at the bases of the berg.

Each iceberg has its own little ecosystem, and when we approach one our ship was often buzzed by flocks of sea birds and there was a noticeable temperature drop. So far I have seen sooty albatross, petrels of all varieties, including the all white snow petrel. I can't even recall all of the different types. Later this day I saw my first penguins, which were the wildlife highlight of the voyage so far! They were absolutely fantastic! Penguins look so noble when they are standing still on the drifting bergs and growlers, a perception which is quickly shattered when they begin to wiggle and waddle when they move. They are, however incredibly agile and elegant swimming in the water.

The weather is actually not too bad, as the ocean water regulates the temperature very effectively, in fact for those of you in Calgary⁴⁴ you would be (pleased?) to know that it's significantly colder in Calgary than here in the Southern Ocean. On December 20th I saw a huge number of penguins, which were sitting on the growlers apparently conducting little conventions and meetings. I'm afraid I do not know the collective word for a group of three or more penguins, but it's got to be either a dinner party of penguins or a convention of penguins. I saw a king penguin towering over a group of smaller penguins, as well as a leopard seal, which is one of the top predators of the south, with a mouth which can eat anything and which I was told makes up two-thirds of its head.

We have encountered icebergs of incredibly size. We passed a table top berg which took over 30 minutes to pass travelling at 7 knots! Each iceberg is as fantastical as the next, with arches and deep caves, pounding surf frothing around its base, an incredible pallet of blues and whites, even yellows, browns, grays. I have even seen a few upside-down bergs, which are dark and at first appear to be whales.

This basically takes us up to date. The first few weeks of the campaign were quiet and amazing, as we toured through the Southern Ocean, training, and spotting whales, penguins, and seals. Now that we have encountered the fleet, the touring component has ended and the action has begun in earnest. It was very good for the crew to see all the things we will be endeavoring to protect.

I write this in the crew lounge, as we have a short lull. We are unable to work on deck as it is too windy and the sea is very rough, so much so that I spent a portion of the afternoon cleaning up a shattered jar of mustard in the fridge. Crew members have been thrown around and sea sickness has hit some again. I am fortunately doing well myself, and relishing the chance to sit down and tell everyone at home everything that has been happening. My research has been going very well: I've filled almost two entire notebooks. One of the big advantages of being on the ship fulltime is that I can slowly develop ideas over time and follow up on them, and I can make observations over long periods of time. I wish everyone the very best New Year and thank you all that sent me special messages and treats on the USB stick my partner gave me for the holidays...

⁴⁴ Calgary, Alberta, Canada, my home town.

January 16, 2010

Southern Ocean (54°55'S, 170°45'W)

Hello everyone, greetings from the Southern Ocean. It has been a few weeks since my last update and there is good reason for this, we have been very busy chasing whalers here in the Antarctic Whale Sanctuary.⁴⁵ When I last wrote, I told you about how the entire fleet of Sea Shepherd ships converged on a single harpoon vessel, and how all the Sea Shepherd ships had then split up in search of the *Nisshin Maru*, the Factory ship and lynchpin of the whaling fleet. A lot has happened since then, and I will attempt to fill you in on a few of the details.

⁴⁵ This comment raises some of the interesting legal claims which Sea Shepherd makes about its actions as well as some of the jurisdictional complexities surrounding direct action on the high seas. When I refer to the 'Antarctic Whale Sanctuary', I am in fact referring to two specific sanctuaries; the first is the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary (SOWC), established by the International Whaling Commission (IWC) in 1994. The second is the Australian Whale Sanctuary which was established in 1999 and includes the EEZ of continental Australia, as well as the EEZ's surrounding Australian external dependencies and the Australian Antarctic. This piece of domestic legislation is only recognized by a handful of countries, and neither of these two sanctuaries is recognized by Japan. Australia has recently taken Japan to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to resolve the issue of Japan's continued whaling in the AAT EEZ. Australia filed with the ICJ on May 31, 2010, see International Court of Justice, "13 July, 2010, Whaling in Antarctica (Australia v. Japan)," <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/148/15985.pdf> (July 31, 2011). In addition to whaling within both of these sanctuaries, critics of Japan's 'research' whaling program argue that it does not constitute research but rather is a commercial hunt. This means that it is in contravention of the 1982 decision of the IWC to set commercial catch limits to zero effectively establishing what has been come to be called the IWC Whaling Moratorium, which came into effect in 1986. Japan maintains that its activities constitute research and are therefore permissible under the IWC moratorium which allows for research whaling to occur. Sea Shepherd claims its actions constitute the enforcement of international law, and it claims to be upholding the laws which created these sanctuaries. Sea Shepherd claims to derive its mandate from the United Nations World Charter for Nature (UN Document, A/37/51 (1982)), Sections 21-24, which Sea Shepherd argues provide "authority to individuals to act on behalf of and enforce international conservation law," Sea Shepherd, "International Laws and Charters," <http://www.seashepherd.org/who-we-are/laws-and-charters.html> (July 31, 2011). While this is not the place to enter into a discussion on the question of the legality of either Japanese whaling or Sea Shepherds claims to enforce international law, it is important that these issues be introduced. For further discussion of these issues consider Amanda M. Caprari, "Lovable Pirates? The Legal Implications of the Battle Between Environmentalist and Whalers in the Southern Ocean," *Connecticut Law Review*, pp. 42:5 (July, 2010), pp. 1493-1526, Andrew Hoek, "Sea Shepherd Conservation Society v. Japanese Whalers, the Showdown: Who Is the Real Villain?" *Stanford Journal of Animal Law and Policy*, 3 (2010), pp. 159-193, and Joseph Elliott Roeschke, "Eco-terrorism and Piracy on the High Seas: Japanese Whaling and the Rights of Private Groups to Enforce International Conservation Law in Neutral Waters," *Villanova Environmental Law Journal*, 20 (2009), pp. 99-137.

On the 2nd of January, we set sail on our own, and as we did so, we were tailed by one of the *Yushin Maru* harpooners (there are three, the #1, #2, and #3, the latter of which also serves as the fleet's security vessel and is equipped with a high powered water cannon, unlike the other two which only have feeble fire hoses). The tailing ship is particularly irksome as its presence significantly reduces our chances of finding the factory ship. One of the crew members likened it to a blindfolded person running around a football field trying to catch someone who was not blindfolded. Not an easy task, and hence the need to find a way to lose the tail.

So why is the factory ship so important you might be asking? Well, so long as the harpoon ships tail us, we put a dint into whaling, as the fleet only has three harpoon vessels and at this point two of them were tailing Sea Shepherd ships. However this leaves a third harpooner which could possibly continue to whale, although there has been no evidence that the whalers have begun to do so yet. While we do a significant amount of damage to the whaler's quota in simply being here and being tailed, there is a much more effective method of stopping whaling: finding the factory ship and blocking its slipway so that it is unable to process whales. If harpooners are unable to load their kills they will not harpoon whales, and whaling will stop.⁴⁶

Before we can find the factory ship, we first need to lose our tail and so I spent the next few days working on some of the various tricks and toys that Sea Shepherd deploys to stop, slow down, or harass a vessel. I learned how to use an oxyacetylene torch to bend metal bars, something which is quite a challenge in rough swells. Planning meetings, where ideas for changes to old classic tactics and wacky new ideas are proposed, debated, discussed and drawn out, have been very time consuming. When creating a new tactic or improving upon an old one, there is always several factors which must be taken into consideration, that the tactics/toys will

- a) not hurt any of the whaling crew in any way,
- b) not harm the oceans and marine wildlife if and when something ends up in the water,
- c) and that the tactics actually work!

⁴⁶ Whale meat only stays good for about ten hours, so even if a whale is killed, preventing its being loaded onto the factory vessel for this amount of time makes the meat commercially worthless.

So a lot of discussion takes place. Our first mate, Peter Hammarstedt, joked that we deploy “organic, faire trade, non-lethal, non-violent, non-toxic, biodegradable, vegan” methods, and this is in fact very much the case, but it does pose a tactical challenge.

.....

A few days after the initial contact with the whaling fleet, the crew was keen to see the end of our tail, and a plan is gradually hatched to lose the *Yushin*. The plan included numerous newly innovative tactics which I contributed to by helping make some of the components needed and helping with the many planning sessions, and by developing and manufacturing the prop-fouling hook.⁴⁷ The plan would see the fast boats harass our tail for sufficiently long enough so that the *Bob Barker* could make it over the radar horizon and make an escape. The operation required calm enough waters to use the fast boats safely, and so once the plan was meticulously planned, and

⁴⁷ This section I believe was edited out of the original e-mail due to its reference to tactics. However two new tactics which the deck teams developed were the prop-fouling hook and the ‘Mick Jagger’ smokes. The hook is a meter and a half long metal bar bent into the shape of a shepherds crook at one end and a small eye on the other. A several meter-long chain is then attached to the eye, and different lengths of line are attached to the end of the chain, and streamers, tendrils and weights are added to the line (several different designs were used). The hook then hooks on to the side of the harpoon vessel and trails the line along the side. The line trails along parallel to the ships course, until the ship turns, which the fast boats force it to do by dropping additional prop-foulers in front of it. When the ship turns, the line comes in close constant with the prop for an extended period of time. The hook works on the principle that the longer a line is in close proximity to the prop, the greater the chance it will become entangled in the prop, thus once the hooks are affixed, the harpoon vessel’s captain has the choice to stop to allow the hooks to be removed, continue on a straight course while the hooks are removed (potentially running into the prop-foulers dropped in front of the vessel), or turning, potentially entangling the hooks line in the ships propeller. Thus every possible outcome is desirable and delays the whaling ship, providing the *Bob Barker* with time to escape. The chain prevent the line affixed to the hook from simply being cut off, and the tension caused by the weight of the line in addition to the drag caused by weights and streamers prevents the hook from being easily dislodged. In response to Sea Shepherd’s use of butyric acid and other thrown projectiles, the whalers have protected their ships with high netting, which makes throwing projectiles from the fast boats difficult. The ‘Mick Jagers’ are emergency smoke signals covered in small metal hooks which seek to use the whalers protective netting against them. The smokes easily become entangled in the netting, thrown on netting in front of the bridge the smokes could distract the bridge and reduce their visibility, forcing them to slow to a safer speed. Thrown into the netting around the location of the hooks, they can temporarily prevent the hooks being approached, keeping them in place longer. Thrown elsewhere on the ship, they act to harass and distract the ships crews and potentially force them to remove or damage the netting removing them.

the crew fully briefed, we set about waiting for the right weather, which took several tedious days!

The right weather came on January 9th, and in the evening we launched the operation. [At this stage I included a link to the Sea Shepherd and ICR websites, as these contained all the information about the January 9th action.⁴⁸ To summarize the events, the fast boats approached the *Yushin Maru* #2 and placed a tracking device on the stern of the vessel before they were detected.⁴⁹ They then proceeded to affix a prop-fouling hook on each side of the vessel and threw 'Mick Jagger' smokes into the netting around where the hooks were placed in order to further prevent their removal. Two safety flares with hooks similar to the smokes were also thrown on the bow to cause a distraction, keeping the *Yushin's* crews away from the hooks. The *Hunter* was slightly damaged when its pontoon struck the side of the *Yushin* while it was deploying its hook; a portion of the rubber bumper attached to the pontoon was knocked off. The fast boats then spent the remainder of the engagement dropping prop-foulers in front of the harpoon vessel as well as throwing cellulose powered and butyric acid. At one stage a prop-fouler was tied to the transom of the *Farley* which then crossed in front of the bow of the *Yushin*, towing the line. The line caught on either the underside of the *Yushin* or its prop, and the crew was unable to cut the line in time and the boat was violently jerked backwards when the line came under tension. At this stage the *Yushin Maru* #2 stopped as did the fast boats, all combatants assessing the damage. This was at 23:36, and at this stage the *Bob Barker* was 27 nautical miles (NM) away. At midnight, when the *Bob Barker* had managed to get 30NM away, the fast boats threw disengaged and began their progress back to the *Bob Baker*].

⁴⁸ See, Sea Shepherd, "The Bob Barker Engages Poachers in the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary," January 10, 2011, <http://www.seashepherd.org/news-and-media/2011/01/10/the-bob-barker-engages-poachers-in-the-southern-ocean-whale-sanctuary-72>, July 31, 2011, and Institute for Cetacean Research, "Bob Barker Activists Attack Japanese Research Vessel Yushin Maru No. 2," January 9, 2011, <http://www.icrwhale.org/pdf/110109ReleaseENG.pdf> (July 31, 2011). There was some controversy over whether or not the fast boat crews threw 'flash bangs,' however these were in fact two emergency flares similarly affixed with the 'Mick Jagger' hooks which did burn holes in the netting. It was not the first time Sea Shepherd has fired emergency flares at a vessel; however it was the first time such flares were to become spectacularly entangled in netting.

⁴⁹ This was very significant as the device allowed Sea Shepherd to locate the whaling fleets' re-fuelling vessel, which is discussed further below, it was also the first time a device of this nature was used.

The operation was a huge success. We managed to lose our tail within a few hours and when I took a short nap at 2:00 everything was looking very good. Unfortunately, on the way back from the operation one of the boats got damaged in the large swells and we were forced to turn back and pick them up.⁵⁰ The brave boat crews took shelter from the freezing wind in the lee to keep warm as we sailed back to pick them up. They were all retrieved safely; 12 hours after the operation began.⁵¹ Unfortunately not only was one of the boats damaged, but we also picked up a tail again after heading back into the area of the engagement.⁵² The crew was very tired, all in all I got about 3 hours of sleep over the period of 38 hours. As a member of the deck team, our job is to be ready to pick up the fast boats at any time, and so we stay up most of the time they are out, only taking short naps, that and we were very worried about the safety of the small boat crews.

Instead of going to bed immediately after we picked up the fast boats crews, I stayed awake, as I had tonnes of notes to write and didn't want to damage the excellent sleep pattern I had been cultivating. After a while, I headed up to the bridge which was nearly empty. The ranks of officers was severely denuded as many of them had been awake for even longer than myself, and still others had been out on the fast boats. As I came up the captain was just leaving the bridge after being there for what must have been 20 hours straight! So I shared the bridge with our second mate Vincent, who is a violin maker from Australia, for a good long watch, and we kept each other company and awake. We were treated to visits from over 10 whales at different times, and

⁵⁰ There was considerable debate as to how the fast boats were damaged, only one received significant damage and it did not come from large swells as I note here. Rather the transom of the *Farley* was badly bent when a prop-fouler it was towing caught in either the *Yushin Maru* #2's prop or on the underside of the ship. The true extent of the damage emerged on the journey back to the *Bob Barker*, when the pontoon of the *Farley* began separating from the hull. We were unable to determine whether the separation was related to the bent transom.

⁵¹ While I downplay this in the e-mail, this was one of the most dangerous and potentially life threatening events of the entire campaign. The small boat crews were in the water for twelve hours, already wet from their engagement with the *Yushin Maru* #2. By the time they were retrieved, some of the crew members were dangerously hypothermic.

⁵² This was in fact a different harpoon vessel than that which was targeted in the engagement, we were found by the *Yushin Maru*.

various flying friends.⁵³ I saw a group of three humpbacks breathing in close succession, so that it looked like three large fountains going off one after the other on the port side of the *Bob Barker*.

.....

It took the crew a few days to recover from the operation, and nothing notable happened over the next few days, apart from the deck crew working to replenish our diminished supplies of toys and surprises. At times the mess looked like arts and craft day! Making various items is very challenging on the rolling sea and I was responsible for releasing a cup of mung beans onto the lounge floor where they rolled around for 30 minutes while we chased them all down (yes mung beans, I will let the creative minds among you ponder how these can be turned into a tool to stop whaling).⁵⁴

On January 12th, the ship was electric as we learned that the *Gojira*, our interceptor boat, had located a ship which we had not initially known was part of the fleet. The *Gojira* had found the *Sun Laurel*, a Panamanian registered tanker contracted to re-fuel the whaling fleet, and which was sailing north of us (most things are north of us at this point). We sped off in pursuit of the tanker in all haste but being the most southerly of the three Sea Shepherd vessels, we did not arrive until the evening of January 13th.

The 13th was the warmest day we have had in weeks, so warm that one could wander about the deck in only a crew shirt.⁵⁵ Apart from the weather, the 13th was

⁵³ Here I am not only referring to sea birds, the ship was over flown by an Orion surveillance aircraft. At 14:24, much to our surprise, we were over flown by an aircraft which when hailed identified itself as an Orion but beyond this we were unable to determine its nationality, nor did we make out any identifying numbers or markings on the aircraft itself. I have been unable to determine whether it was an Australian or New Zealand plane and I am still pursuing inquiries. Prior to the campaign, the governments of Australia and New Zealand both declared that they would monitor the situation in the Southern Ocean, although were unclear as to whether this could include coast guard vessels or aircraft.

⁵⁴ Not only did we replenish the stored of 'Mick Jagger' smokes and prop-foulers, but designs were also improved upon. The fast boat crews were consulted and provided feedback on the items they deployed during the engagement, and changes were made to designs. At this stage I cannot release some of the details of the changes which were made to prop-foulers or items which incorporated mung beans, as doing so could harm future campaigns.

⁵⁵ Crew members are required to wear uniforms at all times, this is a recent policy and one implemented after the first season of the television program *Whale Wars*. Uniforms are themselves not uniform in composition; crew members are simply required to wear Sea Shepherd gear at all times, and were left at liberty to customize this as much as they liked. The uniform consisted of a black Sea Shepherd shirt

exciting time for two reasons. First I volunteered as a guest chef in the galley and spent the morning making beet borsht using 'Mama Bondaroff's Famous Recipe', with a few subtractions as fresh garden chard could not be located. The borsht received mixed reviews, but overall making a meal for 30+ people on a rolling ship was a good challenge and gave me a huge appreciation for what our galley crew does every day. I also learned how to make vegan sour cream, which was actually better than normal sour cream! I wiped up a bowl in about 2 minutes!

In the afternoon right before dinner we came into visual range of the *Sun Laurel* which was already being shadowed by the *Steve Irwin* and the *Gojira*. It was a powerful scene. As we approached the *Sun Laurel* we left the cloud-free warm area, through which we had been sailing all day, and entered into a clouded dark area on the edge of a low pressure system. Looking out at the scene, you could see the *Steve Irwin* and the *Gojira* illuminated with sunbeams piercing through the fluffy cumulonimbus clouds, and ahead of them, cloaked in shadow, the *Sun Laurel* fleeing into the low pressure system! Each of the large Sea Shepherd vessels had a *Yushin* harpoon vessel tailing them, so in total 6 ships made up this scene. The day ended with a spectacular sunset, one of the few on the campaign so far, as we have been too far south for sunsets.

.....

Since the 13th the *Bob Barker* has been doggedly pursuing the *Sun Laurel*. The strategy at this stage is that as the whaling fleet will need to refuel soon, and the *Bob Barker* will prevent them from doing so. The fleet of course will likely do anything to refuel, yesterday, in what can only have been an attempt to lose us, the *Sun Laurel* turned tail north and fled into a very large storm (which was the size of Australia). The *Bob Barker* has pursued undaunted, but as a result, we have been tossed and thrown about for the past few days and things will likely be quite uncomfortable over the next little while. I have got my sea legs and so I have not been seasick in weeks, which is very fortunate. I am in fact able to comfortably sit and write notes on a table rolled over

(although there was one baby blue children's t-shirt which made its rounds) and a Sea Shepherd hat for those who wore hats. The result was a smattering of black t-shirts representing decades of Sea Shepherd campaigns and various nationalities festooned with all manner of patches. The uniform instilled a sense of professionalism and orderliness amongst the crew and also projected this image for the television cameras.

at 30 degrees for hours on end! Despite the size of the storm we are very safe, and there should be minimal danger to the ship as a result of the storm. So far, the only victims have been the many cups, bowls and plates which have met untimely ends thanks to our old friend gravity! Sleeping is difficult when you are woken up every few hours by a 40 degree roll, but I'm getting quite used to it by now.

At the moment, I am sitting in the crew lounge, having just watched a film which would make anyone vegetarian ('Earthlings') and watching the one couch which is not tied down moving elegantly back and forth across the lounge in front of me. Do check the Sea Shepherd and ICR websites for more updated information, I am often vague or exclude things which I think are confidential only to find out days later that they have been put up on either of these websites. There are also some nifty pictures and videos on the ICR site of our most recent action as well.

I hope everyone is having a good year so far, as of today, January 16th I have been doing my field work for 56 days. I have filled three full 220-page notebooks, learned how to weld, tie knots, how to use an oxyacetylene torch, and how to identify whales by their blows, backs and dives. Everything is going very well; I'm healthy and eating lots of tasty vegan food, although our fresh veggie supplies are dwindling...

January 31, 2011

Ross Sea, Southern Ocean (66°05'S, 154°03'W)

Hello everyone, greetings from the Ross Sea! It has been some time since I last wrote (on January 16th) and there is a lot to recount. I will go over some of the bigger events over the past two weeks step by step for lack of a better approach. When last I wrote we were tailing the *Sun Laurel*, the Panamanian registered re-fuelling vessel, in order to prevent the whalers from re-fuelling their vessels. They have not had the chance to re-fuel since arriving in the Southern Ocean, and chasing after Sea Shepherd ships for the past four weeks has burned up a great deal of their fuel.

On January 18th the *Steve Irwin*, the other SSCS large ship, split away and headed off in search of the *Nisshin Maru*, leaving the *Bob Barker* to tail the *Sun Laurel* alone. The long hours following the ship allow us to prepare tricks and surprises for the harpoon

vessels, as well as time to relax, and it has given me time to catch up on my notes. I even had to chance to review and type some of my earlier notes and it's interesting to see how much better they are becoming (in relevant content and details and so on), and I can now say that my collection of notes will soon warrant the adjective 'voluminous.'

The slower days also give us a chance to watch movies, and the crew watches a broad range of films, good and bad, many of which are related to oceans which act as a way of educating the crew on various oceanic issues.⁵⁶ We started setting 16:30 as the time when we watch western movies and we have been steadily working our way through the classics. I usually sit in the back and write notes. The *Sun Laurel* did lead us into a very large storm, which prohibited many activities and tossed us about quite a bit, but the weather calmed as the days passed. I spent most of the 19th cleaning the mess; I washed the walls, cleaned the condiments, lamps, seats, everything. In the evening a large segment of the crew worked out in the lounge, something we have been doing for a few weeks now. We use a deck of cards, and each card drawn tells you the number of repetitions, while the suit of the card indicates the type of exercise. This starts off easy but quickly gets hard; pushups are particularly hard to do when the ship is being tossed about and rolls!

I saw the full moon on the 20th and it was this night that the *Sun Laurel* left the whaling grounds and we turned back to join in the hunt for the *Nisshin Maru*.⁵⁷ We sailed from the large rolls of the storm (which aren't so bad and only lead to broken condiments and crockery), through a patch of relatively calm seas, and into continuous

⁵⁶ Numerous activist films were also watched, including films about Sea Shepherd, and thus in a way watching movies served as a means of enculturating new crew members into the organization in addition to educating them on marine conservation issues.

⁵⁷ Just prior to departing the *Sun Laurel*, the *Bob Barker* launched a dangerous night operation in order to affix a tracking device on the re-fuelling ship. A promised full moon turned out to be mostly obscured by clouds when the operation was launched adding an additional element of risk. A fast boat was launched in complete darkness and radio silence and was retrieved within half an hour, its mission complete. Unfortunately Sea Shepherd was unable to get a signal from the device; however the operation stood out for me as a good example of the detailed and meticulous planning which Sea Shepherd puts into its operations and engagements.

rolling of the high seas,⁵⁸ which unfortunately triggered rather uncomfortable sea sickness for me, and I spent much of the 21st laying on my bunk or vomiting.

The seas calmed somewhat on the 22nd, enough to allow us to play a game of chicken with the *Yushin* harpoon vessel which constantly tails the *Bob Barker*. These confrontations typically involve us turning around and charging towards the *Yushin*, challenging them to let us approach or to turn tail and keep their distance. If we do get close (which was the case on the 22nd), both ships turn and wheel around one another pressing for an advantage. The game ends when the *Yushin* tires and runs off, other possible outcomes have not occurred.⁵⁹ These games are repeated from time to time, and they all serve a tactical or operational purpose. On the 22nd we had the pleasure of facing off against our tail with an iceberg filled backdrop. And I was fortunate to be busy on deck as we passed an iceberg which had four arched doorways on its side, with an icy foyer. It is nice to see ice again, as it has been some time since I was able to sketch an iceberg into my book.⁶⁰

Unfortunately, the 23rd of January saw the *Bob Barker* tossed about violently, which sent me back to my bunk. However, we were once again hot on the trail of the *Nisshin Maru*, with only a single ship tailing our vessel. Remember a harpoon vessel tailing us is not able to whale, so this is good news! We continued on our way and the pace of our days settled down again. I spent much of the 24th reading the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and working on notes.

The morning of the 25th was characterized by the same relaxed pace, and I spent this morning tidying the deck with my fellow deck crew. Finally the seas were calm enough to do laundry, and it was a good thing too, as I was down to my final pair of socks! In the afternoon, right before dinner when we were just settling in to watch a documentary on lions which one of our Animal Planet film crew helped film, we were called into the mess and it was announced that the *Steve Irwin* had spotted the *Nisshin Maru*, at a distance using its helicopter. With this news the mess exploded with

⁵⁸ The stormy waters circling Antarctica are notorious for their storms, which circle the globe and gather considerable force without land to impede them, this is why the southern latitudes are known as the 'Roaring Forties,' the 'Furious Fifties,' and the 'Screaming Sixties.'

⁵⁹ The other outcomes eluded to here refer to collisions, which have occurred on previous campaigns.

⁶⁰ Our pursuit of the *Sun Laurel* had taken us towards the north and west, hence the night operation (see note 57), which would have not been possible had we been at a more southerly latitude.

excitement. We immediately changed course to help the *Steve Irwin* track down the elusive *Nisshin Maru*.

In addition to the great news, we were also treated to some amazing weather! The sun came out and the blue skies and calm seas meant that on the 26th we could have a burn party! So after breakfast we set up the burn barrel on the helipad and we spent the morning until about 13:30 burning waste paper and hanging about. Some of the crew hauled a couch up and brought out some music and we had a good time.

We are heading into the Ross Sea and all around is ice: big majestic giants, towering like office blocks illuminated by the sun, middle sized growlers, flat bergs where wildlife tend haul up and relax, and tiny small slushy ice which fills in the gaps between their larger neighbors. The sun came out and the sky was the perfect blue, everywhere there is ice bobbing all around us. The ice is very tightly packed here. And here and there, the tops of the growlers are etched with the prints of penguins and seals and little sea birds.

We were halfway through our burn, when we headed into seal country! I mean serious seal country. We saw crab eater seals, one after the other, three at a time, and then seven in a big cuddly clump; a mother and a pup, then a pup by itself, all around the ship. From 10:30 to 13:00 I recorded seeing 74 seals at different times. Sometimes they were so close to the ship, you could look them in the eyes. There were seals everywhere. They would look up as we passed. Some would vocalize to raise their objections to our presence. The day is so perfectly warm that you can go out on deck with only a hoodie, and much of the deck crew spent their time sitting on deck baking in the sun, rotating occasionally to properly baste. This weather continued for the next few days.

.....

The 27th was an emotional rollercoaster of a day. It began with even warmer weather than the previous day, and the deck crew went up on deck to enjoy the good weather. I did some painting on deck [repairing some of the chips which the deck had sustained] and sat working on notes, roasting in the sun. We were treated to seven little penguins swimming past our bow, the first time I've seen penguins swimming. They

are very fast. At lunch we found out that two of our crew members would be leaving us, something for which we had some foreshadowing but which we didn't think would happen so soon. Frabrizio, our Italian communications officer is heading back to Europe as his partner is expecting a child, and Glab, our knowledgeable welder and one of the deck crew, had to hurry back to his home in Australia as it was badly damaged by the flooding. Over the past few months, Glab has become a close confidant and friend and he will be particularly missed. Our crew members were helicoptered over to the *Steve Irwin*, which should be on its way to Hobart to refuel as I write this. In exchange, we got a new crew member from the *Steve Irwin*, a very skilled American boat driver named Chad, whose presence has re-invigorated the deck crew to some extent.⁶¹

The day was not over; instead we were treated to a spectacular 5 hour 'sundip' (I call it a dip as one cannot really call it a sunset, as the sun never quite made it under the horizon, but rather loitered just above the waves). Let me paint the scene, the sea was mirror calm, so that when a lone penguin swam past us, it looked as though it was swimming through oil. The sunset at times looked like something you would witness on the Manhattan Project, a fiery awe-inspiring red orb supported by an orange column of cloud, later it changed into a tableau of oranges and lavenders painted generously across the horizon, a dark silhouette of an iceberg completing the scene.

By the 29th we were once again in the land of white giants, for on all sides the ship were surrounded by massive icebergs, large flat table top bergs and other with pointed tops which evoke the spires of the Cambridge skyline. We continued the search for the *Nisshin Maru*, shadowed by a persistent *Yushin* and fueled by excellent vegan food. Despite the fact that we mourned 'last fresh fruit day' on the 30th of January, the crews spirits remain high. I'm happy to report that I'm getting a great deal of excellent research notes, I have filled seven small, 96-page notebooks, and just started my 5th large long-form note book yesterday. I'm getting a very good picture of Sea Shepherd and its strategy! I hope everyone is well, and wish you all the best from the Ross Sea in the Southern Ocean!...

⁶¹ The *Bob Barker* also got the *Steve Irwin's* Delta boat, a replacement fast boat for the damaged *Farley*, which was returning with the *Steve Irwin* to Hobart where a repair would be attempted. This exchange meant that the *Bob Barker* was again able to launch fast boat operations, which had been suspended after the *Farley* was damaged. The captain had been loath to launch an operation with a single working boat, as a second boat was needed for safety purposes.

February 14, 2011

Amundsen Sea, Southern Ocean (69°41'S, 109°09'W)

Hello everyone, Greetings from the Amundsen Sea in the Southern Ocean. That's right we have left the icy Ross Sea and are moving east, at the time I'm writing this, we are close to the same longitude as Alberta! We are currently travelling through sea ice, not the solidly frozen kind, but small chunks separated by narrow leads of slushy ice, but it is warm (by Calgary standards) up on deck and snowing. Here and there on the ice are gray glossy coated seals, their blubber rippling as they move along the ice. Ahead of us is the stern of our quarry for the past two months, the *Nisshin Maru*, the whalers factory ship, we have at last caught up with it and have ground whaling to a halt. How did we come to this position, with a factory ship at our bow and a harpoon/security vessel doggedly shadowing us? Well read on my friends, read on!

There is a great deal of things which have happened in the past week so this will be a somewhat lengthy update, as my last update took us up to the events of January 31st. At that time we were sailing in the Ross Sea, and constantly shadowed by the looming form of the *Yushin Maru #3*, whose presence encumbered our ability to find the factory ship. The first two days of February were largely uneventful. I spent much of the first day catching up on my notes, reading and resting. On the 2nd we spent most of the day doing fast boat launch training; as we have all worked a single line for the entire campaign, we are unfamiliar with each other's jobs (it takes more than 8 people to launch the boats), so we each spent time explaining how our line or job worked to the rest of the deck team. This was very good training as it allows us to replace one another in case someone is detained doing something else when we need to launch the boats, it makes the deck team more versatile. We also spent time preparing some surprises for the whalers.⁶² In the evening I played a game of cribbage with Stu, one of our Australian engineers, on a home-made whale-shaped cribbage board which Pat, another Australian engineer and myself, have been working on.

On the 3rd of February we met up with our speed boat, the *Gojira*, this occurred very late and we didn't get the fast boats into the water until 2:15 on the 4th, as the *Gojira*

⁶² Mostly the deck crew prepared new prop-foulers.

came from port recently, they brought us some much appreciated fresh veggies! I crawled into bed at about 3:00 and only got about 4 hours of sleep as I was up again the next day at 7:00 for breakfast and also to plan an action that morning. With the help of the *Gojira*, we were going to try to lose our tail so that we would be able to prowl the Southern Ocean for the factory ship at our leisure. After an action meeting at 9:00 we headed out up on deck and prepared the fast boats, which entails uncovering them, refueling, and checking them over using a detailed check list which we devised on the 2nd. The deck team was incredibly efficient, especially given our lack of sleep, and we had the boats in the water by 10:30, at which point we went below to await news. The fast boats and *Gojira* converged on the *Yushin Maru #3*, and blocked it from pursuing us. The *Bob Barker* sped off towards the radar horizon and the harpoon vessel gave chase.

Over the next four hours we slowly gained and lost ground against them, it looked as though we would be unable to lose them after all, as their captain pressed on, nearly running into the *Gojira* and fast boats at times. The video footage of the encounter is truly spectacular, and raises the hair on the back of one's neck!⁶³ Apart from endangering the lives of the boat crews, some of the crew on the *Yushin Maru #3* threw long bamboo poles at the boats crews in what can only have been an attempt to puncture the rigid inflatable's pontoons!⁶⁴ At about 13:30 the *Yushin Maru #3* put out a 'distress signal'.⁶⁵ Although having only recently completed my day skipper's certification prior to my departure, even I know that a mayday should only be made when there is immediate threat to vessel or life, which in this instance was clearly not

⁶³ At one stage the bow of the *Yushin Maru #3* bumped the stern pontoon of the *Hunter*, as it crossed the harpoon vessels bow while laying a prop-fouling line.

⁶⁴ It is an interesting effect of hot situations and their ability to enculture. In this e-mail I use the words 'we' and 'our' to describe actions and ships to a much greater extent than previous messages. This represents an interesting shift in the perspective of my observations towards the Sea Shepherd view, and raises the interesting question of the perspective of the observer in the field, a question which is hotly debated particularly amongst anthropologists, who tend to employ participant observation more than any other discipline.

⁶⁵ There was considerable debate and media traction on this issue. See for example Institute for Cetacean Research, "Bob Barker, Gojira Activists Sabotage Japanese Research Vessel Yushin Maru No. 3 Even After Sending a Mayday Signal," February 4, 2011, <http://www.icrwhale.org/pdf/110204ReleaseENG.pdf> (August 1, 2011), and Sea Shepherd, "Japanese Whalers Issue a False Distress Signal," February 6, 2011, <http://www.seashepherd.org/news-and-media/2011/02/06/japanese-whalers-issue-a-false-distress-signal-54> (August 1, 2011).

the case.⁶⁶ Additionally, the mayday did not include a digital selective calling (DSC) signal and they were clearly not imperiled. It is interesting that the ICR then put out a press release claiming that Sea Shepherd did not respond to their distress signal (a grave thing indeed, regardless of the sincerity of the signal), when there is clear video footage of the *Gojira* responding to the distress signal which apparently included the words “we are under attack from *Gojira!*” The *Yushin Maru #3* stopped its engines at about 17:00 and sat dead in the water. The longer it stayed unmoving in the water, the quicker the *Bob Barker* increased its distance from them. By 18:00, when the deck crew prepared to recover the fast boats, and the *Bob Barker* was more than 30NM away from the *Yushin Maru #3* and well beyond their radar range!

The *Yushin* remained dead water, and was watched over by the *Gojira*, which remained with them until they were instructed they could move on by Australian maritime authorities, who were handling the distress call. This was the prudent and responsible thing to do given that a ‘distress call’ had been made.

After the action I went up to the bridge to watch the subsequent media battle unfold, and remained up there until 1:00 am. At 23:30 we were already 100NM from *Yushin*! We had succeeded in losing our tail and were finally free, after being tailed by the *Yushin* since the beginning of the New Year! The media storm emerged over our reputed failure to respond to the *Yushin*’s distress call by the ICR, and on our part the fact that bamboo poles have been lobbed at the fast boats. I should add that both of the poles landed in the fast boats, so we have them at the moment. One of them is displayed in the lounge over the top of the TV, like a trophy.⁶⁷ It is so strange to glance at the radar on the bridge and see it totally devoid of anything but ourselves!

.....

⁶⁶ The Royal Yacht Association (RYA), quoting the 1979 Search and Rescue Convention’s definition, describes distress warranting a mayday call as “grave and imminent danger to a person, ship, aircraft, or other vehicle requiring immediate assistance.” Whether this was the case, remains in doubt at this time.

⁶⁷ In addition to retrieving a bamboo pole each, one of the fast boats retrieved what can only be described as a rat ball, a tangled mess of four to seven prop-foulers, various chunks of metal and twisted and broken buoys, which was spat out by the *Yushin Maru #3*’s prop at one time during the confrontation. After the mandatory photo-ops with this ‘war prize,’ Matt, an American deckhand, and myself, spent many hours untangling the mess and the recovered lines were later made into new prop-foulers to be used in future engagements.

I jumped out of bed at 8:00 on the 5th; I had a tonne of things to write about the past few days! On the 6th I continued to write up my notes from the successful action, I took over 60 pages of notes for the 4th alone! One notable thing which happened on the 6th was that in the evening we passed an iceberg which was well over 7 miles long, you could see it disappearing over the horizon, it looked a lot like a large boomerang, 7 miles long but only 300 meters wide, the captain says that such icebergs can float around the Ross Sea for decades before they melt! Fortunately I managed to catch up on my sleep with a nap in the afternoon, as I had had only about 6 hours of sleep in the past three days!

.....

February 7th was my birthday (a quarter of a century)! For breakfast the galley cooked me blueberry pancakes and brought out the last of the maple syrup (the real Canadian stuff). I spent the morning working in the foc'sle and up on deck, where it was very chilly in the wind. I spent the afternoon, after a delicious vegan lunch of left over pasta (with olives!), working on notes in the lounge. And then dinner! The galley made me 'Mac n' No Cheese', with veggie hot dogs, and garlic bread. The crew made me a great birthday card with a picture of me up on deck in my mustang suit wearing my tri-corner pirate hat on ones side and birthday messages on the other. My fellow deckies carved and wood burned a fin whale for me, which was absolutely beautiful! I had just moved into the lounge to get back to work when there was a 'crew meeting' in the mess which turned out to be dessert, the galley made three cakes! I got two strawberry and rhubarb and apple pies, one which had 'TEALE' written on it, and the other was decorated with a pastry snail! The third cake was a blueberry cake covered in a marzipan lattice with a snail made out of marzipan on the top! It was a fantastic birthday which was only made better by my getting to call my partner at 3:00 am and opening my birthday present from her, thanks Stephanie! An amazing birthday, thank you all who e-mailed me birthday messages, Stephanie forwarded many of these along and it was great to hear from you all!⁶⁸

.....

⁶⁸ I also describe my birthday on a 'Crew Blog' entry on the Sea Shepherd website: <http://www.seashepherd.org/no-compromise/crew-blog/> (July 30, 2011).

On February 8th, we started passing chunks of whale meat floating in the water! It was so strange seeing these, our boat crew brought a chunk on board and at first it was hard to believe this stringy blubbery white-ish pink glob was a piece of one of the largest animals on the planet. We are close, like a blood hound hot on the trail we are spending all of our time actively looking for our quarry. We have expanded our watch: the ship has started a mast watch, where one crew members bundles up and climbs the mast and try to spy the factory ship. I was up on the bridge in the morning and in 45 minutes I spotted 81 penguins, but unfortunately, not the *Nisshin Maru*. I watched up on the mast from 10 to noon and still no *Nisshin*, although I did spot 5 whales and 33 penguins and there is nothing more beautiful than being alone at the highest point on the ship, at the bottom of the world!⁶⁹ I was up the mast again in the evening, but unfortunately came down as visibility dropped, so I moved to the bridge.

Right after I arrived on the bridge we got a call from the *Gojira*, they had spotted something on the radar which was moving much too fast to be an iceberg. They called back a few minutes later and confirmed that it was the *Nisshin Maru*! The mood on the ship suddenly changed and we sped off to catch the *Nisshin*. The factory ship made for the ice in order to lose the *Gojira*, who was doing its best to delay them so that the *Bob Barker* could catch up! The *Nisshin* was about 40NM away from our ship and it could have taken us some time to catch up with them if they had been moving directly away from our ship, we were anywhere from 4 to 40 hours away. So at 1:00 am I went to bed, ready for us to find the factory ship at any time.

It came sooner than I thought; I was woken up at 3:30 to hear that we were closing in on the *Nisshin*! So I went up on deck around 3:40 and there, in the morass of ice, their tops covered in the crisscrossing of animal tracks, was the distant darkened shape of the *Nisshin Maru*. It resembled dark pillared city looming in this white, peaceful wilderness. Almost like stumbling upon a multi-turreted gas processing plant

⁶⁹ Two hours is the maximum stay for a person on the mast, although a typically watch lasts for 4 hours. While it may not be as cold on deck, the top of the mast is completely unsheltered so there is an increased wind-chill factor, additionally it is very difficult to move to any great extent and as such you get colder much quicker than you would on the deck. As such, we were paired with another deck crew member to share the watch, with each pair being left to make up their own timing arrangements (some teams alternated every hour, others every two). I was paired with Amanda, a mother of three from the Netherlands.

while walking in the boreal forest in Northern Alberta. The *Nisshin* is large, and covered in pointy turrets and towers and is a lot less tidy in appearance to the *Yushins*, which are sleek and streamlined and appear as though they are constantly leaning forward energetically. The factory ship is all blocky and angular, with strange boxes with port holes jumbled on the deck (accommodations for its 150+ strong work force?).⁷⁰ The thing is draped in protective netting and looks like it is covered in mouldering spider webs, spewing forth water from its powerful water cannons. We soon pulled in behind them and assumed a position directly off of their slipway. They sped off into the ice, the *Bob Barker* in hot pursuit, chasing the *Nisshin* through seal and penguin covered ice bergs and growlers!

By breakfast at 8:00 we had been behind the *Nisshin* since 4:00, a position which we continue to maintain!⁷¹ It was very strange, the work day continued like any other, but with an undercurrent of excitement and energy pervading everything. I was tasked with cleaning the heads today, so I stocked them with the last of our two-ply toilet paper. In the evening I opened up the celebratory jar of pimento-stuffed olives I had been saving at the back of my locker for just this occasion!

We were in position, but the action was not over, the *Yushin* decided to test our resolve and tried to manoeuvre themselves between the *Nisshin Maru* and the *Bob Barker*, passing very close on our starboard side! But the captain would have none of it, and he out manoeuvred the *Yushin* and succeeded and maintaining our position with some incredibly sailing.⁷²

⁷⁰ While the harpoon vessels has small crews, similar to the sizes or smaller than those of the larger Sea Shepherd vessels, the *Nisshin Maru* in addition to the crew needed to pilot such a large ship in addition to handling all of the whale processing. The *Nisshin Maru* sports two remote controlled water cannons on its stern which remained on full force for the entire time they were pursued by the *Bob Barker*.

⁷¹ At this point, I asked my partner to include the following web link to the Sea Shepherd press release concerning finding the *Nisshin Maru*: Sea Shepherd, "Sea Shepherd Successfully Finds the *Nisshin Maru*," January 24, 2011, <http://www.seashepherd.org/news-and-media/2011/01/25/sea-shepherd-successfully-finds-the-nisshin-maru-61> (July 30, 2011).

⁷² These instances, which occurred several more times, are perfect examples of the game of chicken, which is one of the traditional tactics in the Sea Shepherd repertoire. The game of chicken is a classic model used in game theory, and it conjures up images of 1950's adolescents and tests of bravery and bravado. In a game of chicken, or a chicken run as it has been popularly called, two participants drive cars towards one another on a collision course, and the driver who swerves out of the way first is the 'chicken' and loses. If neither driver swerves, they risk a dangerous collision. Such scenarios arose numerous times on the

We were now sailing through rather thick ice, which consisted mostly of large growlers, with large looming angular bergs in the distance. There are too many penguins and seals to count on these growlers, and this is the first day I gave up recording sightings of them. There are a lot of king Penguins, which stand tall over the other penguins, and have a distinctive yellow patch on their necks. They are moulting and you can see their fuzzy feathers here and there on the ice as well.

.....

Most of the 11th of February was rather relaxed. It was a popular activity amongst the crew to go up on deck to verify that the factory ship was still there. Otherwise I spent most of the day writing notes, composing e-mails home and talking with the crew. At 00:30 at night I climbed into bed, not quite tired but knowing I would need to get so sleep soon, when Rosie, the South African deckie, came to rouse me and said the ships were manoeuvring! I found out how fast I could get up and get dressed in my mustang suit (just under 3 minutes), and went up on deck to see what was going on. What was happening was a repeat from the previous day, where the *Yushin* and *Bob Barker* manoeuvred against one another, with the *Bob Barker* seeking to maintain its position on the slipway and the *Yushin* attempting to interject itself between the *Bob Barker* and the *Nisshin Maru's* slipway. For these types of interactions the deck crew

campaign and it is not without reason, as Sea Shepherd is well suited to win games of chicken for several reasons. In a game of chicken where one party is using an ageing refitted ship which cost under \$6 million (USD) such as the *Bob Barker*, and the other is using a high-tech, expensive, and purpose built ship whose manufacture costs likely exceeded \$20 million (USD) such as a *Yushin*, it is clear which side has the most to lose from a collision. One could compare these instances to games of chicken where one of the players is driving a brand new Porsche, and the other a Yugo. Another factor which adds to Sea Shepherd's ability of win a game of chicken is reputation: the game which is being played on campaigns is not a one-time game, but rather a repeated one. Sea Shepherd has a strong reputation for not backing down when faced with chicken game scenarios. The captain explained to me that this is one of the major differences between Sea Shepherd and Greenpeace, where when Greenpeace is faced with a situation where a collision could occur they tend to back off and avoid it, Sea Shepherd makes a point of never backing down. As such, Sea Shepherd behaviour becomes predictable, other actors know Sea Shepherd never back down, and take this into consideration when making their own decisions. This is similar to the player in a chicken run throwing their steering wheel out of the window prior to a run, their actions become completely predictable (they cannot possibly swerve) and they force the other actor to decide or face the consequences. Given the reputation of Sea Shepherd, it is little wonder that the whalers only tested the captain resolve on a few occasions. This is also one of the features of Sea Shepherd which makes it an interesting research subject from a strategic perspective.

always goes to action stations just in case anything should happen (I'm stationed on the stern). Nothing did come of it, as our captain maintained our position despite the superior manoeuvrability of the *Yushin Maru* #3. I recall our first interaction with this ship, when I swear the captain of the *Yushin* was turning the ship almost on the spot simply to show off his ships capabilities. The harpoon vessels are some of the fastest and most manoeuvrable commercial ships on the seas as they need to go fast enough and manoeuvre well enough to keep up with one of their main target species, the minke whale, which is one of the fastest whales.

I spent the evening in the foc'sle working on making birthday presents for two of our crew members who were celebrating their birthdays the next day. All my grade 7 shop class is coming back to me, and I'm getting pretty handy, compared to how handy I was when I joined the ship.

The next day (February 12th) proved to be as eventful as the previous! As we celebrated a double birthday with tacos, Mikey, our Kiwi boat driver, came down to inform us that we could see Antarctica! We all hurried up on deck, tacos forgotten, and out over the haze of the horizon you could see a looming towering mountain, a lot like seeing Mount Baker from Galiano Island British Columbia, Canada. It looked a lot like a classic volcano but with a tiny nub on the top. I spent a lot of time up on the bridge that night looking at the mountain, which was soon identified as Mount Siple, which towers over the area as the highest peak. When we spotted it (at 72°26'S 128°44'W for those of you following our course at home), it was over 80NM away! The mountain is charted at 3110m and it even turns up on radar! This is the first land we had seen since we left Storm Bay outside of Hobart over 60 days ago! The mountain remained on the horizon for many hours, and we got to watch the sun dip below the horizon just adjacent to the mountain and the raise again shortly afterwards.

The other noteworthy feature of the day was that our proximity to the continent means that we are seeing fantastically large icebergs. The solid flat table-tops are interspersed with towering tall pointy ones, which send their angular peaks probably over 100m into the sky. I don't think there are many places in the world where you can see bergs this tall, as they contain ancient water trapped in the enormous Antarctic glaciers and ice shelves. As we passed Mount Siple, we left the Ross Sea behind, and

entered the Amundsen Sea, which on first blush appeared to have slightly more penguins, and definitely more ice.

This brings us up to date, as nothing noteworthy occurred on the 13th apart from my learning how to bake vegan naan bread from scratch in the galley! Today, the 14th has been celebrated with a Valentine's Day cookie decorating party, and generally a good happy mood pervades the ship. I hope that everyone back home is doing well....

February 23, 2011

Amundsen Sea, Southern Ocean (68°38'S, 129°53'W)

Greetings from the Amundsen Sea in the Southern Ocean! When last I wrote (February 14th) we were hot on the heels of the *Nisshin Maru* factory ship, heading towards the Drake Passage, shadowed by the ever lingering *Yushin Maru #3*. But things would not remain this way for long! The campaign is highly dynamic, as I write this (on February 23rd), the *Bob Barker* is sailing triumphantly back to Hobart, after the Japanese government has announced that the hunt would end a month early, announced their kill totals and summoned the ships back to Japan! Oh, how things can change in nine days!

.....

I stayed up late on the 14th and joined the 0:00 to 4:00 watch on the bridge, where I interviewed Vincent, the second mate, for well over half the watch. We had a great conversation about Sea Shepherd and its strategy, and at one memorable point, Vincent said "I'm here to save...those" gesturing out the window, as three humpback whales appeared appropriately on cue. I called it a night at 5:30, after writing up some of the interview in the abandoned lounge later that night. I use the term night figuratively, as we are venturing further and further east towards the Drake Passage, off the tip of South America, and ultimately the Atlantic Ocean, we have traversed so many time zones that the sun now sets at 16:00 or 17:00 in the afternoon and rises at about midnight, so the 'night shift' is the night shift by fiat and little else.

I was up the next day at 9:30, only to learn that an hour earlier the *Yushin Maru* #3 had turned tail and headed the opposite direction. This would be the last we would see of this harried vessel again! The gloriously sunny day meant that we had the chance to have a burn party on the helideck, which is how we dispose of our burnable items, including the head paper. After a much needed nap in the afternoon, and an excellent dinner, I headed up to the bridge just in time to witness the ship crossing 90° degrees west! This is a significant point as it is the edge of the whaling grounds, and the point at which we thought the *Nisshin Maru* would turn around. It did not, instead we pursued it past a magnificent arched iceberg and on towards the southern-most point of South America.

It is strange but now that we have found the *Nisshin Maru* and don't have to worry about the trailing harpoon ship, things are quite relaxed on board the *Bob Barker*, such that I was able to spend a large part of February 16th working on a monthly report for my supervisor and dealing with my threatening backlog of notes from all the excitement of the previous week. At 16:00 I went up to the helideck to watch several enormous albatross play in the sunset. And still the *Nisshin Maru* was sailing towards South America.

Right before dinner the captain called the entire crew into the mess for a special announcement. Sleeping crewmembers were roused from their beds, so we knew something big is about to be announced. The captain read two news articles which had just arrived; one quoted a Japanese government official suggesting that the whale hunt might end early, and the other referenced Chile, and its opposition to Japanese whaling, and the fact that the Chilean government had informed the Japanese embassy that they would not tolerate the transportation of whale meat through their territorial waters. In essence saying that should the Japanese stray into Chilean waters, their factory ship would be confiscated! This news was exciting for many reasons, chief amongst them being that whaling could very well be ending early this season, but also that this was due almost entirely to pressure from Sea Shepherd, and potentially through diplomatic pressure from Chile. Even Chilean diplomatic pressure was a result of the work of Sea Shepherd, as Chile would not have needed to put pressure on Japan were their factory

ship not close to entering Chilean territorial waters, and this was only the case because the factory ship was being pursued by the *Bob Barker*!⁷³

At last, the official announcement that whaling would be ending a month early and the potential for whaling in the Southern Ocean to end for good was read! This is tremendous news. It is the first year the Japanese have ended their hunt early! A few days later they announced their kill totals (something which usually takes them several months): 170 minke and 2 fin whales, these are the smallest numbers since the Japanese started their 'research whaling' program after the implementation of the international whaling moratorium the year I was born (1986)! Not only did the Japanese government end their season early, but they also claimed that they did so on account of the obstructive actions of Sea Shepherd.

A brief digression on the subject of my research if I may: in the study of social phenomenon it is rare to have evidence of direct causation. So often one can establish correlation – that this factor is strongly correlated with that (for example a link between a voter's income and the party they vote for) – but one cannot be certain of a direct causal link (that the persons income caused them to vote the way they did). This case was about as close as you can come to evidence of direct causation. Not only are the Japanese claiming that Sea Shepherd is the reason for their ending whaling, but other contributing factors (Chilean diplomatic pressure) can also be linked back to the actions of Sea Shepherd. This was very exciting!

Over the next few days the excitement on the ship was palpable, but restrained. My roommate Gary, the professional photographer from Hong Kong, put it best, describing it like the end of the Second World War, where at first people did not believe it, and it took a while for jubilation to sink in.

.....

⁷³ Here I asked my partner to include a link to one of the news stories concerning the early end to whaling: Daily Mail, "Victory for Eco-warriors as Japan Abandons Whaling Season - Having Caught Just a Fifth of 850 Mammals Targeted," February 18, 2011, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1358253/Japan-abandons-whaling-season-victory-eco-warriors.html> (July 31, 2011), and also a link to the Sea Shepherd website and press release on the issue which they later dubbed "Victory in the Southern Ocean Day," February 18, 2011, <http://www.seashepherd.org/news-and-media/2011/02/18/vso-day-44> (July 31, 2011).

Despite the fact that we had received the news (and we are chronically the last to find out any news), it appeared that the captain of the *Nisshin Maru* had not been informed that his ship would be returning to Japan, and so for the next few days we continued to doggedly follow them as they continued towards the Atlantic Ocean! On the 18th they finally made a course change and turned north, turning off their water cannons (which that had left on 24/7 since we first encountered the factory ship, at what I'm told by our boson Potsy, was hugely wasteful on fuel). At this point our course brought us closer to South America than to Australia, and there was some discussion on the 19th as to whether we should head to Chile rather than Hobart. To many people's relief it was finally decided that we would return to Hobart when we broke off from the *Nisshin Maru*. I am glad Hobart was finally selected, but I would have enjoyed Chile as well, as I could have practiced my Spanish and seen a little bit of South America and wild llamas.

We wouldn't have to wait long, that evening, at midnight the first mate Peter Hammarstedt and Japanese translator Kuniko bid the *Nisshin Maru* safe sailing back to Japan and reminded them that should they decide to return next year, the black ships would be waiting for them. We turned west and south, taking us out of the Bellingshausen Sea towards the Amundsen Sea, the great circle route to Hobart.

.....

The seas grew rough on the 19th. When we left the *Nisshin Maru* we were in large swells and by the morning of the 20st the sells reached over 10m and the ship, light after our lengthy journey, rolled up as much as 45 degrees. We even had a 50 degree roll on the night of the 20st which took care of most of the remaining mugs, including my favourite mug, an ugly brown lumpy thing which commemorated something which happened in 1973-74 although I was unsure what, as it was written in Norwegian.

The next few days passed uneventfully. Yesterday, the 22nd, the seas died down sufficiently for us deckies to clean up some of the spills which were a result of rough seas, including a very slippery one in the cargo hold.⁷⁴ I went to bed early so that I could get up for the 4:00-8:00 watch, so I could interview Peter, the Swedish/American first

⁷⁴ One of the oil barrels in the cargo hold got punctured and leaked its slippery contents all over the hold. The deck crew spent several days sliding around and squeezing into tiny spaces to clean up the mess.

mate. I started today by losing a game of cribbage spectacularly to Pat the Australian engineer, over tea at 4:00 and then spent the next few hours grilling the obliging Peter.

This takes us up to date. The campaign has been an utter success, and we are 9 days out of Hobart. As of today I have written a colossal number of research notes, now totaling 1800 pages which consumed 19 ball point pens, and required 12 smaller jot-note books, and two waterproof note books! I have filled my computer's hard drive with movement related films and other materials. I will be spending the little over a week it will take for us to get back, wrapping up lines of inquiry and helping to tidy the ship (when the swell allows it)....

March 19, 2011

Cambridge, United Kingdom (52°12'N, 0°6'E)

Hello everyone, from solid ground and Cambridge once again. Last week I returned safely to Cambridge after 48 hours of travel which took me from Hobart to Melbourne, Melbourne to Perth, Perth to Singapore, Singapore to London, London half the way to Cambridge only to have the bus break down, so that this final leg was completed on two buses. Of course each stop had the requisite 2-4 hour stop over, so basically I raced the sun around the globe, and lost. But I am here at last. My apologies for taking so long to write this final update, the past week has been a series of my getting used to being on land and also simply recovering.

Let me fill you in on the last week of the campaign. We sailed into Storm Bay outside of Hobart on the night of the 5th of March, meeting up with the *Steve Irwin* in Adventure Bay, where we circled the other vessel and Paul Watson on the *Steve Irwin* launched fresh apples at us, using their slingshot until it broke and they gave up and dropped a few off for us by fast boat. The first fresh apple I ate was truly amazing! Additionally, you could actually smell land, I know they always say that you can, but this is of course taken to be metaphoric, but no, you could smell the wet humus smell of the earth! And it smelled spectacular.

After enjoying apples (I had upwards to 6), we got a few hours of sleep and then weighed anchor at 4:00 the next morning. As we did, you could see countless squid feeding around the ship as our lights had attracted lots of tiny aquatic creatures. We sailed into the Derwent and up to Hobart, picking up a pilot, who steered us the last little way. Then arriving at the dock where we were greeted by Australian Customs, Agriculture officials (doing quarantine inspections), and the usual boarding party from the Australian Federal Police (AFP). As the welcoming crowds cheered from a ways down the dock behind a protective obscuring barrier, our ship was gone over by all sorts of officialdom. Fortunately my confidential and well concealed research notes remained unfound, which avoided all sorts of difficult questions, and which would have put my research ethics at risk. The crowds had shown up because the day before the Australian Green Party had taken out ads in the local paper with the heading “Whale Heroes Arrive Tomorrow!”

After about 4 hours we were let go, however I would only get to take a few steps on land, as I had the first 4 hour gangplank watch. So from noon to 16:00 I sat at the gangplank. While this seems a little bit of an anti-climax, it did offer me a great chance to gather in the first batch of donations from the overgenerous Hobartians, and I got to enjoy fresh strawberries which were spectacular. Also taking this watch meant I would get to enjoy the welcome home party that night, so I didn't mind.

That night we celebrated at the Salamanca, which is Hobart's trendy bar district. And a band made up of members of the *Steve Irwin* played. We were also treated to a picture slideshow and speeches from the captains. Only two were present, as the third, Lockhart Maclean also known as Locky and the captain of the *Gojira*, was in Tahiti along with the ship.

We celebrated late into the night, and I ended up getting into a long discussion (in French) with several researchers from the French vessel *l'Astrolab*, which had just put into port the same time we did (with much less fanfare and considerably less police interest). I spent the night drinking with the Sea Shepherd crew, onshore volunteers and a 'penguinologist' from Brest and a couple of glaciologists from Toulouse.

We got back to the ship late and the next day I was up at 7:00. I spent the day wandering around Hobart with Gary, gathering some of the last minute things I would

need and basically revelling in being on land. We made it over to Senator Bob Brown's Office (the leader of the Australian Greens) so I could pick up some documents and information, and then headed back to the ship for a shipboard celebration. In the night, a massive cruise liner had shown up on the docks behind us, and its massive white looming sleek shape contrasted sharply with the dark angular lines of the two Sea Shepherd ships. With this backdrop, we all shared drinks on the helideck.

Going to bed late again, I was up early, as the next day we had a tour of some of Tasmania's amazing wilderness ahead of us, thanks for the Greens and Potsy who drove us out into the magnificent Tasmanian wilderness. I drove out with Senator Brown's Electorate Officer Adam, and ended up taking 100 pages of notes in the car about the Tasmanian forestry conflict, which is fascinating. We visited a wildlife rehabilitation centre where I got to see all sorts of Tasmanian wildlife (a pootaroo, wallabies, platypus, emus, koalas), I even got to pet a wombat which was high on my list of 'must do's' in Tasmania, it was very cuddly.

We then headed off to the Florentine Blockade, where I got a personal tour of some of their defensive structures and got to wander around the lush rainforest snapping pictures at mushrooms (800 pictures were taken on this day, which is more than I took for the last two months of the campaign!). Then off to the Styx forest, where we got to see 300 year old gum trees and finally we got to see some of the devastation which is being done to this spectacular landscape by commercial interests. The clear fells were devastating, very similar to what is being done in Kananaskis Country near Calgary. It was great talking to the people on the blockade as it allowed me to get some background research done on another paper I'm working on, which looks at forest blockades⁷⁵, and some of your will know my previous thesis examined land-based tactics and strategy, so it was nice to see it in action.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ This later became Teale Phelps Bondaroff, "Climbing High, Locking on, and Digging Down: Examining the Strategy of Environmentally Motivated Direct Action Blockades," *Spaces of Alterity: Conceptualizing Counter-Hegemonic Sites, Practices, and Narratives*, April 27-28, 2011, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom.

⁷⁶ Teale Phelps Bondaroff, "Bitter Green: An Examination of the Strategy of Ecotage," April 30, 2009, unpublished honours thesis, University of Calgary, Canada, see <http://tiny.cc/xha4x> (August 22, 2011).

Then back to ship to supposedly pack, but instead of packing right away I ended up going out for dinner with some of the crew (pizza at the Salamanca) and then wandering around town getting into adventures, which involved beaches, casinos, hitched rides, and the opportunity for me to sample a tiny amount of the spectacular Louis XIII cognac! Then finally back to the ship to pack. I was leaving at 5:00 am to grab a ride to the airport, and didn't have the chance to sleep as I was on the 0:00 to 4:00 gangplank watch. This gave me the opportunity to sit on the dock and slowly sort through all my stuff, spreading it across the dock. With my 7 notebooks and new wardrobe of Sea Shepherd gear I needed to jettison some of my things to make my flights baggage weight restriction, and I ended up throwing away a lot of cloths and gifting unused toiletries. As I could not lose my notes in any luggage mix ups I had to haul all 7 notes books with me in my carry on. Additionally, I had 18 small jot notes books which similarly could not be lost (my only back up notes if the others should prove unreadable or incomplete or get lost), and as these could not fit in my carry on, I sewed them into the lining of my jacket. Thus equipped, I was ready to head to the airport at 5:00, after lots of goodbyes. Enter once again my epic 48 hours of travel....

The past week has been very strange; it takes some getting used to buying food again, not worrying about dishes moving while you wash them, and being around other people. Having been with the same 37 people the entire campaign, once I got off the ship I found myself staring at everyone as I wasn't used to seeing new faces. It was fabulous getting home to Stephanie after more than 3 months. Thank you Stephanie for being such a wonderful communications officer, and thank you all for all of your support.

For those of you who are interested in the raw numbers:

- The Japanese whalers only killed 170 Minke whales out of a quota of 935, and 2 Fin whales out of a quota of 50.
- We were on the *Bob Barker*, at sea, for 95 days, only seeing land once, and that was 80 miles away!
- The largest iceberg we saw exceeded 7 miles long! (But was rather skinny).
- I enjoyed 3 months of excellent vegan food, although we ran out of fresh veggies quite early. I ended up losing 22 pounds! (Which I put on in research notes).

- I banged/bumped my head against various parts of the ship 53 times, and yes I was keeping track in my notebook.
- I took 1920 pages of notes in 8 large note books, and 1869 jot notebook notes in 19 small notebooks, 5 of which I had to make myself, using zip ties and recycled paper while at sea. I also filled two waterproof notebooks.
- I used 22 ballpoint pens completely, destroyed one knife, three pairs of gloves, and broke 6 size 16 drill bits (in the course of two days drilling anti-boarding spikes early in the campaign).
- We pulled up 3 kilometers of illegal gillnet, most of which was manufactured into prop-fouling devices of some kind.
- The photographers took over 45 000 still pictures and the Animal Planet film crew took over 500 hours of video!

You should be able to catch all the highlights of the campaign on the Animal Planet television program *Whale Wars*, the fourth season of which starts airing June 3rd, 2011.

Works Cited

- Australian Maritime Safety Authority. "Fact Finding Report Into the Reported Collision Involving the New Zealand Registered Craft *Ady Gil* and the Japan Registered Whaling Ship *Shonan Maru No. 2* in the Southern Ocean on 6 January 2010." *Government of Australia*.
- Bethune, Pete. *Whale Warrior*. Auckland, New Zealand: Hodder Moa, 2010.
- Caprari, Amanda M. "Lovable Pirates? The Legal Implications of the Battle Between Environmentalist and Whalers in the Southern Ocean." *Connecticut Law Review*, 42:5 (July, 2010), 1493-1526.
- Heller, Peter. *The Whale Warriors: The Battle at the Bottom of the World to Save the Planets Largest Mammals*. New York, United States: Free Press, 2007.
- Hoek, Andrew. "Sea Shepherd Conservation Society v. Japanese Whalers, the Showdown: Who Is the Real Villain?" *Stanford Journal of Animal Law and Policy*, 3 (2010), 159-193.
- International Court of Justice. Whaling in Antarctica (Australia v. Japan). 13 July, 2010. <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/148/15985.pdf> (July 30, 2011).
- Maritime New Zealand. "Investigation Report: Ady Gil and Shonan Maru No. 2 Collision on 6 January 2010." *Maritime New Zealand*, November 2010.
- Morris, David B. *Earth Warrior: Overboard with Paul Watson and the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society*. Golden, Colorado, United States: Fulcrum Publishing, 1995.
- Plant, Glen. "International Law and Direct Action Protest at Sea: Twenty Years On." *Netherlands Yearbook of International Law*, 33 (2002), 75-117.
- . "Civilian Protest Vessels and the Law of the Sea." *Netherlands Yearbook of International Law*, 14 (1983), 133-163.
- Potts, Benjamin. "Taking the Whale War Hostage." *The Next Eco-Warriors: 22 Young Women and Men Who are Saving the Planet*. Ed. Emily Hunter. San Francisco, California, United States: Conari Press, 2011, 51-62.
- Roeschke, Joseph Elliott. "Eco-terrorism and Piracy on the High Seas: Japanese Whaling and the Rights of Private Groups to Enforce International Conservation Law in Neutral Waters." *Villanova Environmental Law Journal*, 20 (2009), 99-137.

Seymour, Frankie. *All Hearts on Deck: A Personal Account of the 1981-2 Campaigns of the Sea Shepherd*. Canberra, Australia: Boris Books, 1993.

Phelps Bondaroff, Teale. "Climbing High, Locking on, and Digging Down: Examining the Strategy of Environmentally Motivated Direct Action Blockades." *Spaces of Alterity: Conceptualizing Counter-Hegemonic Sites, Practices, and Narratives*. April 27-28, 2011, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom.

----- "Bitter Green: An Examination of the Strategy of Ecotage." April 30, 2009. Unpublished honours thesis. University of Calgary, Canada, <http://tiny.cc/xha4x> (August 22, 2011).

United Nations. World Charter for Nature. UN Document, A/37/51 (1982).

Watson, Paul. *Seal Wars: Twenty-five Years on the Front Lines with the Harp Seals*. New York, United States: Firefly Books, 2003.

----- *Ocean Warrior: My Battle to End the Slaughter on the High Seas*. London, United Kingdom: Vision Paperbacks, 1994.

Watson, Paul, as told to Warren Rogers. *Sea Shepherd: My Fight for Whales and Seals*. Ed. Joseph Newman. New York, United Kingdom: W. W. Norton & Company, 1982.