

YEAR OF COMMEMORATION ...

The year 2012 is a significant one for reasons other than the dire prophecies of the early Mayans. Before the 'world's end' – predicted by an ancient Mayan calendar to occur on or around December 21 this year – seafaring souls among us will have commemorated Australian geologist Sir Douglas Mawson and his team's historic arrival in Antarctica on January 8, 1912; revisited the itinerary and site of the sinking of the *Titanic* on April 15, 1912 (see p78 for our Historic Ships feature by Maggy Oehlbeck); and celebrated the 175-year anniversary of P&O Cruises.

Cruise passengers have already paid homage to Mawson's scientific expedition with a voyage in January aboard Aurora Expeditions' *Akademik Shokalskiy* to Commonwealth Bay, Antarctica, the site of his historic landing. The ship sailed into the bay on the evening of January 10, 2012, just two days after the estimated

centenary of Mawson's landing in 1912 on *SY (Steam Yacht) Aurora*.

Akademik Shokalskiy's expedition leader Roger Kirkwood said, "Our landing in Commonwealth Bay was simply magical. Our passengers went trekking over the ice, scattered with Adelie penguins, under a clear blue sky with no wind.

"The Antarctic Plateau and Cape Denison, the home of Mawson's Huts, were both within sight. It was certainly an experience of a lifetime!"

April will see Fred.Olsen Cruise Line's *Balmoral*, Azamara Club Cruises' *Azamara Journey* and *Saga Pearl II* carrying passengers to the ports visited by and affiliated with the doomed *Titanic* and on to the site of its wreckage.

Then on July 3, 2012 there will be the 'Grand Event', a meeting of P&O Cruises UK's entire fleet of seven ships in their home port of Southampton for a massive celebration.



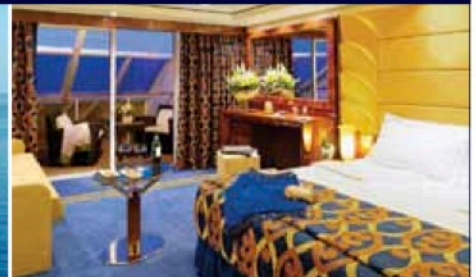
Adelie penguins



Pack ice, Antarctica

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