

# Bringing Heard Island to the world



Many tourists (and some Australians) are amazed to learn of a distant Australian outpost in the Southern Ocean called the Territory of Heard Island and McDonald Islands; where penguins and seals number in the millions and the landscape is dominated by a 2750 m high glacier-covered active volcano.

Heard Island was added to the World Heritage list in 1997, joining a significant group of natural and human-made places with characteristics considered to be of outstanding value to humankind. The Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) manages the Territory of Heard Island and McDonald Islands and is responsible for fulfilling the requirements of the World Heritage Convention, which includes presenting the territory's natural values to the rest of the world.

But how do you show off a place that can only be reached via a two-week shipping voyage, through some of the roughest seas in the world? Well, if Mahomet cannot go to the mountain, you must bring the mountain (and the albatross, fur seals...) to Mahomet.

Wade Fairly, a professional film-maker with extensive experience in high latitude and extreme locations, was asked to infuse his cinematic knowledge into members of the 2003–04 Australian Antarctic Program expedition to Heard Island. Expeditioners were supplied with enough slide film, digital cameras and digital video cameras to (almost) sink a ship, and given a wish list of World Heritage values to capture on film.

The resulting images will be used for public exhibitions, such as the Hobart Antarctic Midwinter Festival, publications such as this magazine, and a new Heard Island website <<http://www.heardisland.aq>>. Wade has also turned his director's eye to creating a DVD of the 2003–04 expedition, which shows how expeditioners live and work.

So now you've heard of it, take a look at it. Check out the Image Bank on the Heard Island website and be thankful you didn't need to spend big dollars and four weeks throwing up over the side of a ship for the experience!

—EWAN McIVOR

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Heard Island: a distant Australian outpost, dominated by Big Ben and home to an abundance of wildlife.