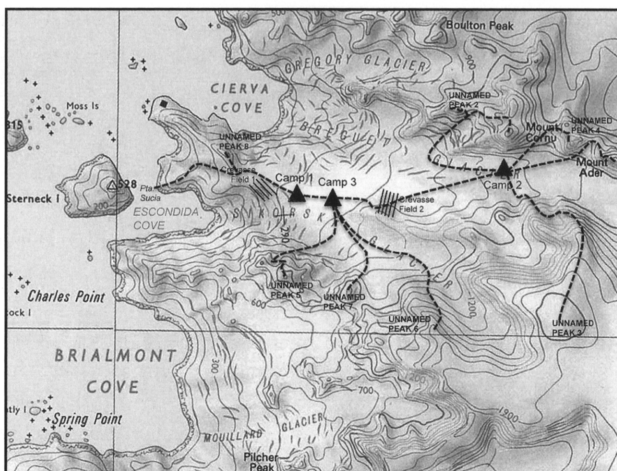


Cierva Cove, various ascents. During previous trips to the Peninsula I had noticed a number of steep and distinct mountains east of Cierva Cove, 80km north of the areas visited by most climbing teams. In 1999 Australians climbed several peaks overlooking Brialmont Cove, but the mountains of Cierva Cove, immediately to the north, remained untouched. Lacking suitable anchorages the cove is rarely visited by yachts, and its fast currents and large amounts of ice can make it a harrowing place to spend the night at anchor.

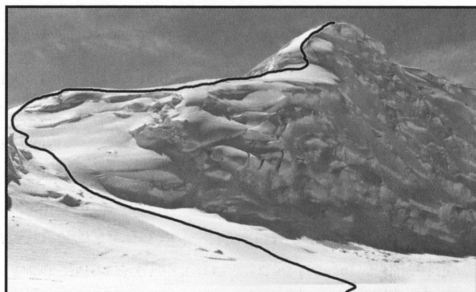


Annotated by Phil Wickens

Our Eagle Ski Club expedition took place from December 28, 2011, to February 1, 2012. Members were Lucy Bound, Andy Collins, Steve Gould, Toby Johnson, Dave Smith, Roger Upton, David Williams, and me as leader, transported to the Peninsula by *Spirit of Sydney*. Before proceeding to Cierva Cove we made a warm-up ascent of popular Jabet Peak, and were then dropped off at the southern tip of Anvers Island and hauled sleds for three days to the base of the northwest (Menelaus) ridge of Agamemnon (2,594m). All but Gould made the ascent, summiting in the early hours of January 9 during a brief period of clear weather. There was only one recorded ascent of this mountain, in 1982 by Chileans, though it is possible it was traversed in 1955 during the first ascent of Mt. Francais.

Prevented from sailing farther south by unusually heavy sea-ice, we climbed the frequently ascended Mt. Banck (710m) and made a possible first ascent of Bruce Island (324m, north face, F, January 15), then headed north to Cierva Cove.

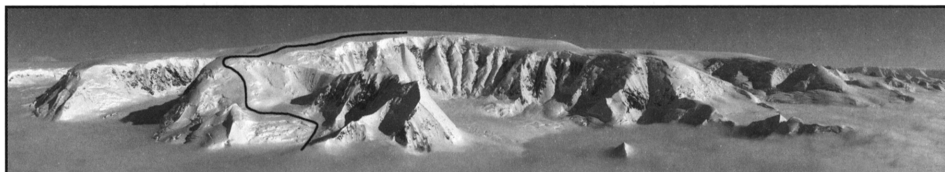
Landing at Cierva Point is prohibited because it is part of an Antarctic Specially Protected Area (ASP No. 134), so we put ashore immediately to the south at Punta Sucia on the north side of Escondida Cove. A slightly crevassed glacial ramp gave access to the snowfield that borders the ASPA. While our yacht returned to Enterprise Island, we made our way along the south bank of the Breguet Glacier and after two days established base camp



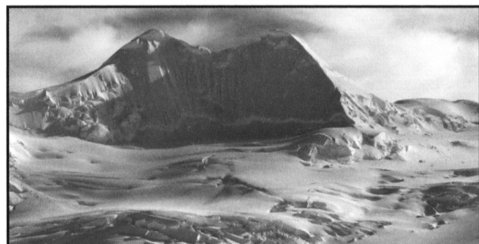
West ridge of Ader. Peak named in 1960 after Clement Ader (1841-1925), French pioneering aviator. Phil Wickens



Cornu from south, showing route on west-southwest face. Peak was named in 1960 after French engineer Paul Cornu. Phil Wickens



Eagle Dome from north. *Phil Wickens*



Madonna's Peaks from south. Ascent followed east ridge (right skyline) to higher east summit. *Phil Wickens*

Madonna's Peaks (ca 1,500m).

Next day, making the most of clear weather, Collins, Johnson, Smith, Williams, and I headed in a bitterly cold north wind to the end of the west ridge of Mt. Ader (ca 1,600m), which we climbed past one steeper section of 45°, and several ice blocks and crevasses, to the summit (PD).

After a day of bad weather, all but Williams and I climbed the unnamed fin-shaped peak between Cornu and Ader. Easy snow slopes on the west side led to a broad pass on the north side of the main peak. A short, steep step led through a small icefall onto the steep upper slope, which they followed to the summit (AD). They named it Spirit Peak (ca 1,503m). Meanwhile Williams and I attempted the broad, domed, unnamed summit to the south, marked at a little over 2,000m on the map. We reached the north spur by following a small subsidiary glacier that flows into the Breguet Glacier. This glacier led to the base of a long 45° slope, which we climbed on foot to the crest of the spur. We followed the crest south on skis for six km to reach the summit, which we named Eagle Dome and found to be 300m higher than marked on the map (ca 2,300m).

We then moved base camp west to where the Sikorsky and Breguet Glaciers join. Bound, Gould, Johnson, and Upton returned to the yacht, on the 23rd climbing from the southwest over both summits of the unnamed peak that lies at the eastern edge of the ASPA and overlooks the south side of Cierva Cove. They called it Cierva Nunatak (543m).

Collins, Smith, Williams, and I stayed for three more days to attempt unclimbed mountains that flank the southern side of the Sikorsky Glacier. The westernmost of these was climbed on December 14, 2011, by the Amundsen Antarctic Expedition. This mountain has two very separate summits, so we climbed the southeastern peak, via its northwest slopes, from the large glacial bowl that separates the two summits; We called it Amundsen East (ca 1,200m, F).

On the 24th we followed the Sikorsky east, to attempt a high, pointed summit near the head of the glacier. We found a safe, reasonably easy line by snaking around crevasse fields and serac bands to reach the 1,700m summit, naming it Missing Peak (F). Although shown on the map only as part of a spur of the Antarctic Peninsula, we found it to be a distinct and worthwhile summit.

Next day an early start allowed us to climb the last virgin summit in the area, directly south of camp. Its north face gave a fairly steep and serious route, due to the large number of sizeable

below the striking south face of Mt. Cornu (ca 1,705m).

All the team climbed this peak on the 19th, via glaciated southwest slopes (F). During the ski descent Smith, Williams, and I traversed to a distinct double-peaked mountain to the west, where we climbed the east, slightly higher summit, initially on skis and then on foot, via the prominent east ridge (F). We unofficially dubbed this mountain

crevasses. This one we named Central Peak (ca 1,300m, PD). After a superb ski descent to camp, we headed back toward the coast as the weather started to turn and arrived in thick cloud and driving snow. We were collected by *Spirit of Sydney* and spent two days on Deception Island, preparing the yacht before heading for South America.

PHIL WICKENS, *Eagle Ski Club, U.K.*

QUEEN MAUD LAND

Overview. Experienced Antarctic climber Patrick Degerman made his second visit to the area, climbing several minor peaks in the Wohlthat Massif with a fellow Finnish partner. The most well-known figure of Queen Maud Land climbing, Ivar Tollefsen, returned again with a Norwegian team to the iconic spire of Ulvetanna. Their flight was delayed by a week, and the remaining two weeks of unstable weather allowed no success on the east face, the steepest, coldest side of the mountain. Unsurprisingly, he plans to return.

DAMIEN GILDEA, *Australia*

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RANGE

Mount Sidley (4,285m), fifth ascent and correction. The highest peak in the range got its fifth ascent, by veteran guide Mike Roberts and party. It seems that in addition to previous reported ascents in 1990 (Bill Atkinson) and 2011 (ALE guided team, see *AAJ 2011*), there were two ascents in the early 1990s, by Bill McIntosh and partners.

DAMIEN GILDEA, *Australia*

BOUVETOYA

Olavtoppen (774m), first true ascent. The sub-Antarctic island of Bouvetoya is the most isolated piece of land on the planet, 1,740km from Antarctica and 2,600km from South Africa. Surrounded by rough seas and subject to severe weather, the island is 92% glaciated, rising to a high point named Olavtoppen. First sighted in 1739, set foot upon in 1822, and annexed by Norway in 1928, the island was visited numerous times during the 20th Century, though landings were rare. A meteorological station was installed in the 1970s and visited during the 1980s and 1990s by South African and Norwegian scientists, who mapped the island, often using helicopters, sometimes landing on the high point.

In February 2012 an international team approached from the west, using an inflatable to land on a small beach giving access to the plateau, which is otherwise guarded by steep ice cliffs. On February 20th William Allen, Bruno Rodi, and Jason Rodi, led by New Zealand guide Aaron Halstead, negotiated extensively crevassed, but technically straightforward, ground to make the first ascent of Olavtoppen, returning to the main ship after a round trip of nine hours. The next day Halstead led a second team of Sarto Blouin, Chakib Bouayed, Akos Hivekovics, Cindy Sampson, and Seth Sherman to the top. There is no previous record or evidence of Olavtoppen being climbed from the coast.

DAMIEN GILDEA, *Australia*