

# 100 years of Shackleton's expedition

By Peter Mulvany - Special for [The Southern Cross - Buenos Aires - December 2014](#)

Republished by kind Permission of Dr. Guillermo MacLoughlin Editor [TSC](#).



*Sir Ernest Shackleton* (Photo Courtesy [www.shackleton-endurance.com](http://www.shackleton-endurance.com) )

2014 marks the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Sir Ernest Henry Shackleton's expedition to the Antarctica, mostly to Argentina's most southern territory. Shackleton an Irish explorer and one of the principal figures of Antarctic exploration was born on the February 15<sup>th</sup>, 1874, in Co. Kildare, second of ten children and son of Henry Shackleton and Henrietta Gavan.

In 1914-16 Shackleton led the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition, also known as the Endurance expedition. His party of 28 left Great Britain in August 1914 aboard the *Endurance*, captained by Frank Worsley. Following a short stop in South Georgia, the expedition headed for the Weddell Sea. The plan was to cross the Antarctic from the Weddell Sea to the Ross Sea. After 6 weeks of sailing, *Endurance* became frozen fast in an ice floe, just 100 miles off the coast and due to extreme pressure on the hull which severally damaged the ship, *Endurance* sank on October 27<sup>th</sup>. Her crew undertook the immense effort to reach solid ground by pulling three lifeboats to the edge of the floe.

After five days at sea, the 28 men reached Elephant Island in the Argentine South Shetland Islands Archipelago, where they set up a camp. Most of the crew remained at camp, while Shackleton, accompanied by five men, managed to navigate the most storm-ridden seas on Earth in an attempt to reach the 800-nautical-mile-distant South Georgia in an open boat.

After reaching shore, he was forced to leave three men at the landing point, Shackleton and the two remaining men travelled across mountainous terrain to the whaling station at Stromness on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1916. By the end of September 1916 all members of the expedition were recovered and accounted for. Everyone had survived more than 18 months of Antarctic exile.

In 1921–1922 Shackleton led a new venture to circumnavigate the Antarctic continent. After reaching Grytviken on South Georgia aboard the small whaling vessel *Quest*, he suffered a fatal heart attack at the age of 47 and is buried there.

To recall this expedition a Polish yacht S/Y “Polonus” is making a memorial expedition which is under the honorary auspices of Piotr Krzystek, the President of Szczecin in Poland, and the Irish and British embassies in Warsaw have also declared support. Although the expedition is supported by various authorities and governments, it is a private undertaking by Polish seafarers to commemorate Irish born explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death at his burial place in Grytviken cemetery on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015.



(Photos Courtesy [www.shackleton-endurance.com](http://www.shackleton-endurance.com))

### **In Remembrance of Félix Artuso**

While in South Georgia, the Polonus crew will also honour the memory of Suboficial Primero Félix Artuso formerly of ARA Santa Fe, and a Prisoner of War, who was killed by the British during the 1982 Malvinas war. Félix is buried in the same cemetery as Sir Ernest. As the wreath is being placed on Artuso’s grave in Grytviken on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015, a laurel wreath with an Irish tricolour ribbon on behalf of the [Irish Seamen’s Relatives Association \(1939-46\)](#) will be placed in his memory at the Admiral Brown memorial statue located in Dublin.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> November last while on route from Punta del Este to the Malvinas, and at our request, S/Y Polonus diverted to Mar del Plata port, where the crew met the Artuso family. A special commemorative plaque was presented to the crew by the family and this will be placed on their father’s grave along with our wreath in remembrance. The meeting in Mar del Plata between the family of Suboficial Primero Félix Artuso and the

crew of Polonus was organised at very short notice and thanks are due to Captain Zawirski of S/Y Polonus [www.shackleton2014.com](http://www.shackleton2014.com), Professor Daniel Alberto Mesa Director [www.elsnorkel.com](http://www.elsnorkel.com), Sergio Campagnoli, VGM (Veteran Malvinas War) Submariner Presidente Instituto Nacional Browniano Filial Mar del Plata [www.inbarmardelplata.com.ar](http://www.inbarmardelplata.com.ar), Argentine, Polish, British and Uruguayan friends for their support in making this visit possible.



*Carolina Artuso (Hija), Karina Artuso (Hija).*



*Daniel Alberto Mesa, Director, Comunidad Submarinos Latinoamericanos [www.elsnorkel.com](http://www.elsnorkel.com), Sergio Campagnoli, VGM (Veterano de la Guerra de las Malvinas) Submarinista Presidente Instituto Nacional Browniano Filial Mar del Plata [www.inbarmardelplata.com.ar](http://www.inbarmardelplata.com.ar), Captain Zawirski SY Polonus [www.shackleton2014.com](http://www.shackleton2014.com) .*

*(Photos Courtesy Professor Daniel Aberto Mesa [www.elsnorkel.com](http://www.elsnorkel.com) )*

Peter Mulvany BCL, HDip, Arts Admin,  
Chairperson

Irish Seamen's Relatives Association (1939-46)

<http://www.irishseamensrelativesassociation.com>

Email: [mulvanypeterie@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mulvanypeterie@yahoo.co.uk) - Mobile: 00353872769707