



**History in the making: The *Greg Mortimer*,
the first passenger vessel with X-Bow, hits the water!**
Aurora Expeditions co-founder Greg Mortimer meets his namesake at official ceremony



The *Greg Mortimer* hits the water with co-founder Greg Mortimer giving his seal of approval

On Tuesday 12 March 2019, Aurora Expeditions co-founder and Australian explorer and mountaineer, Greg Mortimer OAM attended the official sea launch of Aurora Expedition's new state-of-the-art expedition ship, the *Greg Mortimer* in Shanghai, China.

The ceremony was attended by guests from SunStone Ships and Aurora Expeditions, including Managing Director Robert Halfpenny, who were present as the *Greg Mortimer* officially launched into its sea testing phase.

Construction of the new ship is progressing ahead of schedule and is now entering the final construction phase, with work commencing on the interior design. Once the interiors are complete, the ship will be loaded with all the equipment required to operate Aurora Expedition's famous adventure activities like Zodiac cruising, kayaking, diving, snow shoeing, snorkeling, snow skiing and climbing.



The *Greg Mortimer* at the Sea Launch ceremony in Shanghai

Robert Halfpenny, Managing Director of Aurora Expeditions, said the sea launch signifies exciting progress for Aurora Expeditions as the company continues to push the boundaries in expedition travel to reach far flung destinations previously unexplored.

“This launch is the culmination of months of hard work from everyone involved and we’re delighted the *Greg Mortimer* has reached its sea testing phase ahead of schedule. Due to set sail in October 2019, the final stage of work includes the interior fit out which is due for completion in the coming months,” he said.

Co-founder of Aurora Expeditions and inspiration for the ship’s name, Greg Mortimer, was thrilled to finally meet his namesake and to see the state-of-the-art ship so close to completion.

“Since founding Aurora Expeditions over 27 years ago, we’ve always worked hard to be at the forefront of adventure and this ship is certainly that. To have a ship named after me is surreal, wondrous and humbling! Was it better than climbing Everest or K2? I would say about the same but just different,” he said.



Greg Mortimer and Robert Halfpenny celebrating the *Greg Mortimer* sea launch together

Built to world class polar standards, the Greg Mortimer is a purpose-built ship featuring the latest innovations in naval technology and is the first passenger expedition ship to use the patented Ulstein X-BOW®, which allows for more gentle sea crossings, faster transit speeds as well as lower fuel consumption and air emissions.

Greg Mortimer's class 1A strengthened hull is purpose built to get through sea ice and pack ice. The ship also carries the latest 'return to port' technology, sonar equipment and satellite communications. Designed in partnership with Aurora Expedition's Expedition team, it features sea-level Zodiac and activity loading platforms streamlining journeys from mud room to activities, black-out blinds to reduce the risk of bird strikes, dedicated observation decks and plenty of outdoor viewing areas, the emphasis of getting up close to nature will be at the core of the ship's experience.

Following Greg Mortimer's maiden sea voyage 'Spirit of Antarctica' in late October 2019, the ship will operate an additional 20 expeditions across the 2019/2020 season with itineraries spanning Antarctica (Antarctic Peninsula, South Georgia and Falkland Islands), the Arctic (Svalbard, Franz Josef Land, East Greenland, Jan Mayen, Iceland and Norway), Costa Rica & Panama, and Patagonia & Chile.

For more information on the ship and its projected voyages please visit:

<https://www.auroraexpeditions.com.au/ship/greg-Mortimer>