

ANTARCTIC

Highlights of a life-changing adventure to the largest wilderness on earth were related to Kyrle Probus Club members on Thursday (February 19).

Sue Edwards, whose late husband John was a Kyrle Probus stalwart, and a former Mayor of Ross, among numerous community activities, has just returned from a “wonderful” three-week cruise to the Antarctic.

Sue and her son Patrick joined a multi-national group of 139 fellow travellers for the unforgettable voyage to the still-untamed bottom of the world.

The expedition began with a 14-hour direct flight to Buenos Aires and a further big hop to Ushuaia in remote Tierra del Fuego off the southern tip of Argentina. From there they embarked on the Ocean Diamond cruise ship, escorted by petrels and albatrosses; glimpses of dolphins, orcas and minke whales en route to the ‘resolutely British’ Port Stanley on the Falkland Islands, with its unique Victorian villas, post office, church, pub, museum and war memorial

Further exploration revealed a myriad of wildlife on South Georgia – burial place of the legendary explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton – and a base for a research station where just four people live during the summer months. Among the whales, fierce sea lions, birds and seals were spotted rookeries with a hundred thousand pairs of King Penguins...and creches for their newly-born young.

Sue said they had no guarantee they would actually land on their final scheduled stop, the Antarctic Peninsular. ‘It was entirely dependent on the weather, but we were very fortunate. It cleared and although about 1 degree C, it was sunny and bright the rest of our stay....We were at 65 degrees south.

‘They say that Antarctica changes you for life, and I think that is true. When you see the majestic scenery you realise how insignificant we are.’

A video of Patrick’s kayaking experiences ended the fascinating talk.