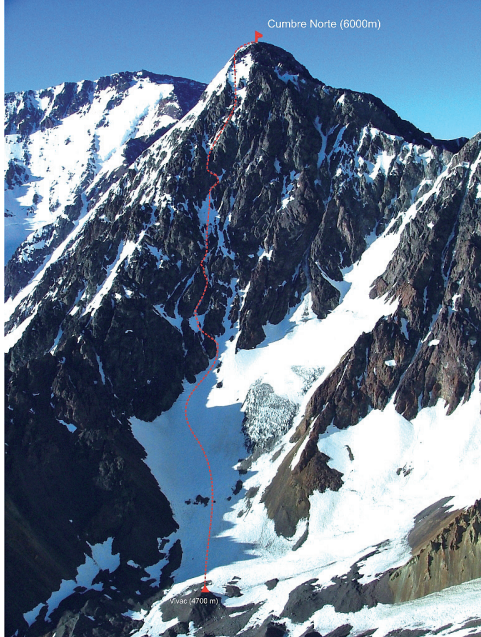


climb at 6.15am, taking easy rock to reach an ice line through rock towers to a very steep 30m icefall with hard ice at 5400m, which they avoided on the left via 55m of poorly protected 4th class rock. They continued up a series of ice and snow couloirs steepening to 55/60°, with up to 4+ rock in between, to eventually reach the summit ridge. They finally ascended



192. The north summit of Pico Polaco (c6000m), showing the line of *Cheto Alpino* (1000m, D+, 75°, 4+). (Gabriel Fava)

some rotten but easy rocky steps to reach the N summit (Cumbre Norte) at 6pm. They named the route *Cheto Alpino* (1000m, D+, 75°, 4+). For the descent they took a couloir that falls directly east, with some steps of 60°, beside the 1958 route, to a bivouac at 4800m on the moraine. Unfortunately, Rocamora died on Mercedarios South Wall some days after. With Fava, he was trying to enchain the 6000ers of the range.

#### TIERRA DEL FUEGO

Activity near Ushuaia: **Torres del Río Chico** are rocky towers at the end of el Valle del Río Chico at 54° 43' 1.81" S, 68° 19' 5.02" W. Nacho González, Martin Steinhaus and Federico Ruffini made a new route, the third route and the third overall ascent to the Torre Inferior del Río Chico on 11 March 2009. They named it *Prefiero ser flogger*, 6b, 380m. It was snowing a little with a temperature of -7°C. On the Domo Blanco (White Dome, 1200m), Mariano Rodriguez and Ibai opened a new route that they called *Piedra, papel o tijera*, 250m on 90° ice. We don't have the exact date of the climb.

PHIL WICKENS

## Antarctica 2009-10



193. The Three Pigs (Antarctic Peninsula) - the new line '*42 Balais et Toujours pas Calmé*' is the snow/ice gully on the left (Phil Wickens)

Despite an increase in the number of yachts visiting the Antarctic Peninsula, very few climbing parties have attempted new routes or unclimbed peaks. The major achievements of the 2009-10 season were by two French parties, led by Ludovic Challeat, aboard the yacht *Podorange*, and Patrick Wagnon, aboard Isabelle Autissier's *Ada II*. After unsuccessfully trying to reach Mt Francais (2822m) from the north via the Iliad Glacier, Challeat's team moved to Brabant Island, where they made the third ascent, on skis and over two days, of **Mt Parry** (2522m) from the south and east on 13 January. They then moved to the Antarctic Peninsula proper, where they climbed Scheimpflug Nunatak (1150m), and attempted Pulfrich Peak, from Andvord Bay. They then moved to the Penola Strait where, in addition to ascents of the frequently climbed Mt Demaria, Mt Scott, and Mt Shackleton, they ascended the Wiggins Glacier to make the fourth ascent of **Mt Peary**, which at 2080m was more than 200m higher



194. Wandel Peak (980m) on Booth Island showing the line of *La Mystique des Corniches*. (Phil Wickens)

than the official height.

Meanwhile, Wagon, together with Lionel Daudet and Mathieu Cortial, aboard *Ada II*, successfully climbed the dramatic 1600m west ridge of **Mt Foster** (2105m) on Smith Island in 15 hours, a route they named *Vol du Serac* (ED+). Notorious for its bad weather, the main summit had been reached, after various attempts, via the south-east face in 1996 by Greg Landreth's New Zealand team. The French headed for the unclimbed and slightly lower north summit. The upper section of the 1600m route proved to be the crux, where Cortial took a roped fall, a sérac collapse left Daudet hanging on his rope, and the summit mushrooms provided some entertaining tunnelling to surmount. After a 15-hour descent, the group then headed to Brabant Island where they started up the equally impressive and unclimbed north-west ridge of **Mt Parry** (2522m). After sitting out a storm partway up the route, they were successful in making the fourth ascent of Mt Parry, with the upper section and summit mushrooms again providing a precarious crux. After a 19-hour descent of the same line a large wave hit their landing site and washed away most of the food and gear, prompting them to name the 2500m route *Nouvelle Vague* (New Wave: ED).

Behind Port Lockroy towers the west face of **Savoia Peak** (1415m), the highest mountain on Wiencke Island that was first climbed in 1905 by Charcot's expedition. Although the summit has been reached numerous times since, no attempt had been made of the west face. The French headed for an obvious and striking gully on the left side of the face, which gave 800m



195. Savoia Peak (1415m) on Wiencke Island showing the line climbed by Wagon/Daudet (ascent on left, descent on right). (Phil Wickens)

of water ice, finishing through cornices and rime-mushrooms to reach the final 300m ridge, from where they descended the easier south side of the mountain. They named their route *Bon Anniversaire Tristan*, ED+.

Further to the south, at the entrance to the Lemaire Channel, lies False Cape Renard and the towers commonly known as **The Three Pigs**, up which the Pou brothers created their route *Azken Paradizua* in 2007. A strikingly straight snow and ice gully splits the western side of the western-most tower and this was climbed by Cortial, Daudet, and Wagon to give *42 Balais et Toujours pas Calmé* (ED-). Wagon's team then turned their sights to the peaks on Booth Island that line the western shore of the Lemaire Channel, climbing the attractive gully, which they named *La Mystique des Corniches.....ons* (TD+), that drops almost directly from the summit of **Wandel Peak** (980m).

*Ada II* continued southwards, beyond the Antarctic Circle and into Marguerite Bay, where they finished their very productive expedition by making the probable first ascent, via a gully on the west-north-west face, of **Statham Peak** (1120m), which lies on the western side of Pourquoi Pas Island. Heavy sea-ice and poor weather prevented them from reaching Alexander Island, far to the south, and so they sailed south-west to the rarely visited Peter I Island. After landing, they were unable to reach the summit of the highest point, **Lars Christensen Peak** (1640m), due to bad weather and large crevasses. They returned to *Ada II* and two weeks later, after 75 days away, were back in Argentina.



196. Mount Ashley (1145m) from the northeast, looking across the Lucas Glacier. The rightmost summit is the highest. The 2009 route reached the col left of the summit from behind, and continued along the skyline ridge. (Crag Jones)

#### SOUTH GEORGIA

In late October 2009, Skip Novak and Crag Jones sailed on *Pelagic Australis* to Salisbury Plain on the north-west coast of South Georgia. Although most of South Georgia's significant summits have been climbed, **Mount Ashley** (1145m), which lies between Salisbury Plain and King Haakon Bay, remained unclimbed since it is outside of the main Allardyce and Salvesen ranges. On 30 October, from the Grace Glacier to the north-west they ascended on skis to the headwall, which they climbed to reach the main south-east ridge, reaching the summit after 9 hours.

## Mount Everest Foundation Expedition Reports

SUMMARISED BY BILL RUTHVEN

The Mount Everest Foundation ([www.mef.org.uk](http://www.mef.org.uk)) was set up as a registered charity following the first successful ascent of Everest in 1953 and was initially financed from the surplus funds and subsequent royalties of that expedition. It is a continuing initiative between the Alpine Club and the Royal Geographical Society (*with the Institute of British Geographers*).

The main object of the Foundation is the support of expeditions planning the exploration of mountain regions of the earth.

The MEF has now distributed more than £950,000 to some 1600 British and New Zealand expeditions planning such exploration. Most of the grants have been awarded to ambitious young climbers who help to maintain Britain's reputation as one of the world's leading exploratory nations, but some have also been awarded to teams planning scientific research in a mountain environment.

All that is asked in return is a comprehensive report. These reports are eventually lodged in the Alpine Club Library, the Royal Geographical Society, the British Mountaineering Council and the Climbing and Mountaineering collection in Sheffield Central Library established in memory of Alan Rouse.

Each year the Foundation holds a fund-raising lecture at the Royal Geographical Society, but donations to assist in its work are always welcome, particularly from those who have benefited from MEF grants in the past, so why not include a bequest to the Foundation in your will?

The following notes summarise reports from the expeditions supported during 2009 and 2010, and are divided into geographical areas.

#### REPORTS FROM EXPEDITIONS IN 2009

##### AMERICA – NORTH & CENTRAL

**British Ruth Gorge** Gavin Pike with James Clapham; April-June 2009

Although the spectacular glacial rift known as Ruth Gorge is well explored, there are still plenty of opportunities for new routes in the surrounding area. This was proved by this duo who, after warming up on the classic *Shaken, not Stirred* (V A15) on the south face of Moose's Tooth, headed for the unclimbed east face of Peak 11,300 (3444m). Climbing mostly by night to minimise the risk from an overhanging sérac, they put up *Night of the*