

EXPEDITION CRUISE SHIP BREAKS ICE TO FREE YACHT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Svalbard, Norway – On June 9, 2004, the M/V Polar Star received a request for help from the Nooderlicht, a three-masted schooner frozen in an inlet of the Greenland Sea.

“When I saw your red ship coming around the corner, the feeling was like when I was a child and first saw Santa,” remarked Maaihe Groeneveld, first mate of the Nooderlicht. But it wasn’t Santa, it was the M/V Polar Star, an expedition cruise ship, operated by Polar Star Expeditions.

The Nooderlicht, built in Germany in 1910 and now Dutch owned, was frozen in ice 600 miles from the North Pole. Nooderlicht’s location was Isfjorden, the largest fjord of Spitsbergen Island, Svalbard, Norway. Svalbard, a group of four pristine mountainous islands, is located 10 degrees north of the Arctic Circle. The Nooderlicht had spent the winter iced-in at Isfjorden, and had functioned as a hotel for dog sledding expeditions. When spring arrived, the ice remained thick; the Nooderlicht was unable to break free.

The M/V Polar Star had begun her journey in Dundee, Scotland; visited the Shetlands and Orkneys; explored the Norwegian coast from Bergen and north, and then traveled on to Bear Island and Svalbard. It was a fortunate day for the Nooderlicht because the M/V Polar Star, under the name of Njord, had for many years served in the Swedish Maritime Administration’s fleet working in the Baltic Sea—as an icebreaker. Previously, four ships had attempted to release the Nooderlicht; none were successful, and now it was M/V Polar Star to the rescue!

The M/V Polar Star’s passengers were entertained by the maneuver. Mary Filbee, from Halifax, who was traveling with her husband, mother, and two sisters remarked,

“Watching from the bridge, it was apparent that she had not forgotten any of her skills!”

Mary explained that the operation had the finesse of a surgical procedure as the M/V Polar Star’s power released and towed the Nooderlicht from the ice, without damage. With the operation a complete success, the M/V Polar Star carried on to conclude its journey having been rewarded with the sightings of polar bears and the natural beauty of Svalbard.

Today, the M/V Polar Star and its one hundred passengers travel to remote destinations around the world with a focus on the Antarctic and Arctic regions. From pole to pole, she travels to exceptional areas of archaeological and cultural interest, and to locations with spectacular nature and wildlife—Antarctica, the Falklands, South Georgia, Central and South America, the UK, Norway and Svalbard, Greenland, and northeast Canada in the north Atlantic waters.

So remember, if there is a sighting of a red object 600 miles from the North Pole, it is not Santa; it is the expedition cruise ship M/V Polar Star.

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