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### Lessons from Antarctica

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When **Lisa Sidebotham** imagined vacation spots, Antarctica was as far down on her list as it is on a globe.

"The thought of sailing to Antarctica was a stretch in every possible way. I'm a city girl, afraid of drowning and I don't like the cold. Plus, I get really terrible motion sickness," says the New York-based Head of Knowledge for Global Tax.

But she had already agreed to join her mother on a quest to visit every continent – and the southernmost one remained. So Sidebotham packed the essential three layers of clothing, brought along a 'Flat Stanley' doll for a rural Kentucky elementary school literacy project, grabbed her trusty KPMG hat and set off on a potentially terrifying 9,000-mile journey

What she *didn't* bring was a true appreciation for the transformative power of the bottom of the earth.

"This trip," Sidebotham now says, "profoundly changed me."

#### Shackleton's slog

The [Quark Expeditions](#) cruise and its passengers retraced Ernest Shackleton's perilous 1914 - 1917 polar trek, right down to his arduous hike the explorer and his bedraggled team took over the South Georgia mountains to the whaling station where they were ultimately rescued.

"My fellow passengers and I crossed truly rugged terrain and it was rough going," recalls Sidebotham. "There were a few times I wasn't sure if we would make it. During one particularly grueling incline I wondered a helicopter would come rescue me if I just gave up and sat down."

She pressed on, and ultimately the entire group's perseverance was rewarded with the same breathtaking views that had greeted Shackleton a century earlier. The Quark team's final goal was achieved when they set foot on the Antarctic continent - with Flat Stanley and KPMG headgear in tow.

"If I had a KPMG flag, I would've planted it there and claimed a small piece of land for KPMG but, without being able to reach the Tax team back home, I wasn't sure if that might create a tax liability," she jokes.

#### Back home

Her 'Flat Stanley' will return to the U.S soon, to join Sidebotham at the rural Kentucky school where she is scheduled to recount her adventures. The KPMG hat remains at the bottom of the earth, serving as a permanent tribute – and a reminder that its owner left some of her *old* self behind.

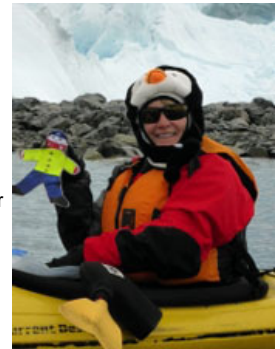
"After the hike, I was reminded of what great teamwork can accomplish. And that helped me to relax about all the KPMG work I left behind. I knew I left it in the hands of an amazing team," says Sidebotham, admitting that the 'stretch' paid off.

"I have an appreciation for nature's beauty in a part of the world I would never have otherwise experienced, a renewed appreciation what teamwork can accomplish and a willingness to try things I never thought I would dare. And, I never thought I'd say it, but I *miss* Antarctica."

*Written by Sue Treiman*



Click above to watch a video on KVN.



Lisa Sidebotham and her 'Flat Stanley'



Approved By Bruce Pfau