



The Antarctic Society

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“BY AND FOR ALL ANTARCTICANS”

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CHANGING A LEG, CHARGING AHEAD

The Society’s newsletter has three legs: reader, writer, editor. Absent any one leg, it’s not a newsletter. After 6½ years, we’re changing the editor leg. Jeff Rubin and Dick Wolak, both longtime Society members, are taking over. Jeff is the author of the 375-page *Antarctica* volume in the Lonely Planet series. Dick’s 10 years with the U.S. Antarctic Program included wintering as leader of Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station; more recently, he has taught an Antarctic course at the University of Connecticut.

Jeff and Dick need the other two legs to get any newsletter out, much less a good one. It’s beyond necessity. My pleasure after sending a completed issue to the printer and to webmaster Tom Henderson has been to hear from readers: especially readers who suggest improvements or who are willing to share their Antarctic experiences with other Society members in the form of an article.

Why give it up, then? The project has been a delight, and I shaped the newsletter to meet what I thought to be the desires of readers. But it was my way. The newsletter needs a new perspective once in a while.

But members also set the tone. More than three-quarters of the July 2016 issue, for example, was written by members. Topics ranged from an experience in the U.S. Antarctic Program in the 1950s to a moment 111 years ago when American Robert Peary almost pulled off an expedition to the South Pole. You don’t read about such things just anywhere; the shared knowledge of members makes the newsletter unique.

I also liked *writing* for the newsletter: about aspects of the Antarctic Treaty that I thought were underappreciated (example: “Antarctic Treaty nations aren’t all big and rich” in the April 2015 issue) or unexpected (for me) explorations such as “David Ferguson, Scottish Antarctic geologist” in the July 2016 issue. Maybe you haven’t seen the last of me.

Tax exempt status regained, virtual lectures, a Gathering in 2022! Read on for some of the dramatic ways your Society is charging ahead on behalf of members.

Guy G. Guthridge

Meet in Burlington in August 2022!

by Tom Henderson



Burlington Harbor

The next Gathering of the Antarctic Society will be held in Burlington, Vermont, August 12-14, 2022. Make plans now to join us for our first in-person Gathering since 2018. Let's reconnect and remember the past camaraderie we shared at Port Clyde, Maine, while looking forward to new connections in a reinvigorated Antarctic Society.

Located on the eastern shore of Lake Champlain, Burlington is the largest city in Vermont (50,000) but has a small-town New England feel. It has a vibrant downtown centered on Church Street Marketplace, a pedestrian mall with stores and restaurants with outdoor seating. Our venue is Main Street Landing on the extensively renovated waterfront. Four hotels are within an easy walk, with others a short drive or city bus trip away. The Church Street Marketplace is only three blocks away. Ample parking is available near Main Street Landing. To see a video history of Burlington and the waterfront, go to

<https://www.mainstreetlanding.com/about/history-of-burlingtons-waterfront/>.

For those who prefer to camp or RV, the North Beach Park is only 1.3 miles from the venue. It features tent and RV sites with facilities in a wooded area very near North Beach on the lake. It is connected to downtown by road and by a scenic paved bike and walking trail which follows along

the lakeshore. The trail actually extends 10 miles and is great for bicycling. North Beach will also be the venue for our picnic on the last day of the Gathering.



Church Street Marketplace

Transportation options include Burlington International Airport and the nearest larger airports at Montreal, a two-hour drive to the north; Albany, NY a three-hour drive to the west; and Manchester, NH, a two-and-a-half-hour drive to the east; Amtrak's daily Vermonter, which stops at Essex Junction (7 miles from Burlington); and bus service including through buses from Boston or New York.

The Gathering schedule allows ample time for socializing, presentations and other activities. We are planning for an informal day on Thursday, August 11, including an optional visit to the Shelburne Museum south of town followed by a no-host dinner at a local restaurant. Day programs Friday and Saturday will be devoted to a combination of memorials, presentations, an auction and an open forum for members.

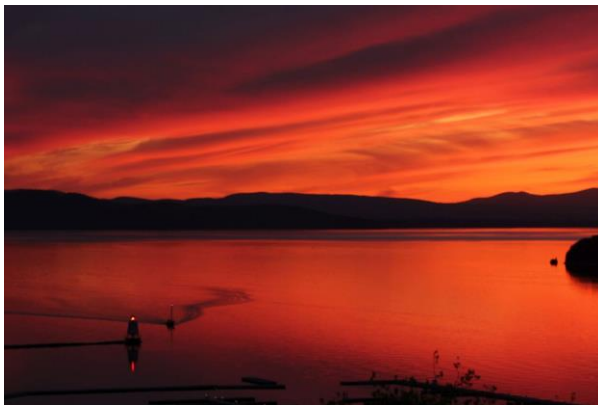
Look for speaker information in coming newsletters and on the website. If you would like to make a presentation at the Gathering, please contact Tom Henderson at webmaster@antarctican.org. Friday night's reception will be held at the ECHO Science and Nature Museum on the waterfront, a modern interactive museum devoted to the understanding of the history and ecology of Lake Champlain and to STEM education (see <https://www.echovermont.org/>).

Our Saturday evening event is a not-to-be-missed 2.5-hour sunset boat cruise on Lake Champlain aboard the *Spirit of Ethan Allen*. The cruise will include a full dinner and a cash bar. See <https://www.soea.com>. Sunday will feature a hosted picnic at a pavilion in the North Beach Park and a Society Board meeting open to all members.



***Spirit of Ethan Allen* Tour Boat**

The registration cost for the Gathering is \$175.00 per person before January 1, 2022, which includes the day programs, the Friday evening reception with light food and a cash bar, the Saturday evening sunset cruise on Lake Champlain with plated dinner and the picnic on Sunday. From January 1, 2022 to the date of the Gathering, the cost will be \$225.00. Family and friends may attend the Friday evening reception and the Saturday evening sunset cruise and dinner, with a guest ticket; the cost will be \$90.00 per person. Members may pay by check or by credit card through the website.



We hope you'll join us for a great time with old and new friends. See the Antarctic Society website for more details. A

registration form is at the end of this newsletter as well as on the website. For further information, please contact Tom Henderson, the Webmaster. See you in 2022!

Virtual Lecture on 23 August 2021

Thank you to all who attended our first Virtual Lecture by historian Joan Boothe. If you missed it, see our website under Pack Ice > Webinars & Podcasts.

The Society will host a new Virtual Lecture via Zoom, August 23, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. EDT. Dale T. Andersen, a scientist with dozens of Antarctic expeditions above and beneath the ice, conducts research in extreme and remote places. Lake Untersee, Queen Maud Land, is a world that resembles Earth's earliest biosphere. It can help us understand how early ecosystems thrived on a planet with an atmosphere nearly devoid of oxygen. His research also helps guide the search for evidence of life on distant worlds such as Mars or the outer moons of Jupiter. Dale knows what it is like to traverse Antarctica's inland mountains, camp atop a frozen lake for months, drill a hole in meters of ice, and dive. He is a limnologist, aquatic ecologist, and Senior Research Scientist with the Carl Sagan Center at the SETI Institute. Additional info is on our website. Join us August 23 to learn more! To join: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83974841146?pwd=VThzNG5ubVZLYVFIKy9nY1JyZ3poZz09> Meeting ID: 839 7484 1146, Passcode: 920269

Society regains nonprofit status

by Tom Henderson

The Antarctic Society lost its 501(c)(3) nonprofit status in 2013 as a result of failure to submit required annual reporting to the IRS. After a couple of false starts, we have finally re-established our nonprofit status, incorporating in Vermont as The Antarctic Society Ltd. thanks to our attorney and Society member Michael Russell. This means

that all of your dues and donations paid in 2021 and going forward will be tax deductible. It also means that the Society can more easily apply for grants and engage institutional sponsors. A copy of the IRS determination letter is on our website in the Society Documents area under Members.

Website Update

by Tom Henderson

The Society website has been active since the last newsletter. The biggest change is the addition of a Webinars & Podcasts page under Pack Ice. The pandemic has resulted in an explosion of these alternatives to face-to-face meetings and there has been a number of excellent programs dealing with Antarctica. We have tried to collect links to the best of these on this new page. Going forward, even as the pandemic ebbs, we expect webinars and podcasts to continue to grow, so check the website and our Facebook page for updates!

On a related topic, the Society's own Virtual Lectures Series (see above) was initiated in May. Each lecture will be recorded and posted on the website, both under Webinars & Podcasts and on a special page under Members. Don't miss them!

SouthPole-sium v.4.5

by Rob Stephenson

The SouthPole-sium v.4.5 got underway at Noon on June 26 San Francisco time and proceeded virtually via Zoom for a bit over two hours. The 56 participants, including some Antarctic Society members, hailed from Canada, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, the United States, and the UK.

The program included an illustrated summary of the past four gatherings starting in Jaffrey, New Hampshire, in 2012, Scotland (2015), Norway (2017) and Ireland (2019), presented by Rob Stephenson.

Michael Rosove spoke on Antarctic bibliographies. Dave Hirzel whetted

appetites by highlighting the expected venues and the attractions of the Bay Area where SouthPole-sium v.5 will be held June 22-24, 2022, this time in actuality.

The gathering dispersed twice into Break-Out Groups.

Rick Dehmel, Joan Boothe, and Alice Cochran of the organizing committee also kept things going well.

The SouthPole-sium is directed at "those who collect, write, publish, buy, sell & love books relating to Antarctica and the South Polar Regions."

You can see more about SouthPole-sium v.4.5 and next year's SouthPole-sium v.5 at <http://www.antarctic-circle.org/gathering4.5.htm> and <http://www.antarctic-circle.org/gathering5.htm>

Antarctic Treaty 60th anniversary

by Guy G. Guthridge

On June 23, 1961 the Antarctic Treaty entered into force. As of that day, all 12 national governments had ratified the document that their representatives had signed in Washington, D.C., on December 1, 1959.

The United States had ratified the Treaty on August 10, 1960 with a Senate vote of 66-21. President Dwight D. Eisenhower had sent it to the Senate "recommending early and favorable consideration." The Constitution gives the President the power to make treaties if two-thirds of the Senate present concur.

The 60th anniversary of that entry into force came during the 43rd consultative meeting of the now 54 Antarctic Treaty parties. (Our Society's web page has a graph showing growth over time in number of member nations.) The June 2021 meeting was virtual, because of the pandemic. France, the host, posted the parties' 60th anniversary declaration, reaffirming "their strong and unwavering commitment to the

objectives of the Antarctic Treaty, its Environmental Protocol, and other instruments of the Antarctic Treaty system.”

It’s tricky, reserving a continent for peace, as Ana Daniels explained in the April newsletter. Her grandfather Paul C. Daniels was central to guiding the treaty into existence. Others since have emphasized its value. The State Department historian, Warren Reynolds, was one. His 1963 talk to observers headed off to inspect other nations’ activities on the Ice became a 19-page single-spaced typescript that we’ve put on the web site. “This Treaty is a great instrument for peace,” he wrote.

A decade later James E. Heg, NSF, wrote a 15-page memo summing up the National Antarctic opportunity, explaining that holding on to the range of our Nation’s Antarctic interests meant observing all of the Treaty’s provisions.

Deborah Shapley’s 1985 *Antarctica in a Resource Age* helped to keep science as the focus of human activity when many were agitating for resource exploitation there. The Treaty’s 1991 Protocol on Environmental Protection now protects science by shutting off the option to extract minerals.

Many other Americans have articulated the value of the Antarctic Treaty. Thinkers in other Treaty parties also have created a wealth of support for it. Nations the world over, Treaty members or not, have benefitted from the far-sighted document, now with 60 years of experience, that reserves a continent for peace and science.

The unintentional Antarctic

by Peter Barrett

Dr. Peter Barrett has had a long and distinguished career in Antarctic science and is a Patron of the New Zealand Antarctic Society. He recently joined The Antarctic Society.



Dr. Peter Barrett, 2020

On 5 October 1962, after the flight from Christchurch, I stepped onto the sea ice runway as the only Kiwi member of the University of Minnesota’s Ellsworth Mountains 8-man geological expedition, led by Professor Cam Craddock.

My new master’s degree in geology from the University of Auckland had nothing to do with the Antarctic. Fellow geologist Vic McGregor had spent the previous year with a NZ party in the Transantarctic Mountains and had been invited by the University of Minnesota to join in the following season. He had a thesis to complete and persuaded them to take me instead.

Our team at McMurdo got food, tents, toboggans, and fuel together. We then were flown by LC-130 Hercules to explore and map Gondwana geology as we travelled the length of the northern Ellsworths for 3 months.

When I returned to New Zealand, Vic had plans for us to map the foothills of the Transantarctic Mountains to complete the work he had done in 1961-62. A US Navy R4D (DC3) left our 4-man NZARP 1963-64 Southern Party, the oldest being 23, with supplies for 2 months at 85°S. We surveyed and mapped around 2,000 square miles from the Ross Ice Shelf coast inland, reaching the

lower Beacon Sandstone at about 10,000 feet elevation.

These two seasons led to my acceptance in 1964 as a PhD student at Ohio State. As important was NSF support for two graduate students (Australian room-mate John Lindsay and me) for two seasons of field work (1966-68) in the Beardmore Glacier area on its superb Gondwana sequence, with postdoctoral fellow David Elliot for the Ferrar Dolerite sills and related basalts. We completed the first major study and maps of the Gondwana sequence in the Antarctic. A newsworthy find was the first tetrapod fossil, reported in *Science*, *Time*, and *Newsweek*. This led to further discoveries, including dinosaurs, by expeditions led by David Elliot confirming plate tectonics when it was in its infancy.



Peter Barrett (left) at Beardmore Glacier Camp, 1966

I was hired in 1970 by Bob Clark, Victoria University of Wellington, to continue the geology they had been doing since 1957. This work led to a half-time permanent position in 1972 as Director, Antarctic Research Centre, the other half being Senior Lecturer in Geology. The expeditions included study of glaciers and volcanoes of the region.

That focus broadened when I was invited, with Peter Webb, then paleontologist at the NZ Geological Survey, to be sedimentologist on the first Antarctic drilling leg of the US-funded Deep Sea Drilling Project. My interest was Gondwana strata beneath the

Ross Sea. Instead, we cored glacial strata dating back 25 million years, establishing the antiquity of Antarctic glaciation.

The 10 weeks on *Glomar Challenger* shifted my focus from the Gondwana period to the geological history of the Antarctic ice sheet, now accessible through its wonderful coring system and scientific protocols. Soon after, Peter Webb moved to Northern Illinois University to take part in the Dry Valley Drilling Project (1970-74) involving the US, NZ and Japan. We persuaded the project to move the rig onto the sea ice for the final hole.

It was just a start. After two more attempts in 1979 and 1984, we had our first big success in 1986 coring over 700 m into the sea floor back to the earliest Antarctic glaciations. By this time John Mercer's 1978 *Nature* paper on the threat of rising CO₂ emissions to the West Antarctic Ice Sheet was getting recognition. We now had a compelling social purpose for coring Antarctic offshore strata for a continuous record of a cooling Antarctic climate since peak warmth 50 million years ago.

This work provided context for an impending human catastrophe, and it might help improve projections with development of modelling and paleotemperature proxies. It led to other major projects including the six-nation Cape Roberts Project (1997-99), revealing Antarctic ice sheet history from 34 to 17 million years ago, and ANDRILL (2006-08) covering the last 20 million years.

Growth of the Antarctic geological drilling community has been critical for integrating data from geological and ice sheet drilling, along with studies of earth-ice-ocean-atmosphere interactions. I feel privileged to have worked in both the US and NZ Antarctic programs and taken part in that memorable Antarctic voyage of *Glomar Challenger*.

Eulogy to Graeme Claridge, 1938-2021

by Iain Campbell

Graeme Claridge, who died on 12 May 2021, had a long career studying Antarctic soils. Society member Jerry Brown, who studies Arctic soils and permafrost, obtained this reminiscence. Graeme was one of the few elected to Life Membership of the New Zealand Antarctic Society.

My relationship with Graeme for over 40 years goes back to 1962, when I was asked to review a paper he had written. Our Antarctic relationship began in 1964, when I joined Graeme on the Second New Zealand Soil Bureau Antarctic Expedition.



**Graeme Claridge (left) and John McCraw
Taylor Valley, 1959**

Graeme had first gone to Antarctica in 1959 with John McCraw. They produced a soil map of Taylor Valley. Little soil development was observed.

The question Graeme formulated to get back to the Antarctic was, would more signs of soil formation be in northern areas and less in southern areas? He put together an investigation that covered five locations over 2,000-km of the Transantarctic Mountains.

Results were not as expected. Strangely, we found salty soils in some high-altitude southern, inland areas, which we concluded to be extremely old. (These soils recently have been confirmed to be around 14 million years old.) Results led to seven further expeditions over the following 23 years. Our results enabled us to show how soils in Antarctica were formed and how Antarctic ice sheets had behaved over millions of years.

During the 31 years in which Graeme and I undertook expeditions to Antarctica, we shared a polar tent over about 1½ years of our lives. We complemented each other's skills. Graeme was a skilled chemist, while my understanding was rudimentary. Graeme was more skilled on snow and ice than I, while the reverse was the case on rock. This dual confidence took us to high altitudes in search of old soils.



John McCraw and Graeme Claridge, 2009

Our domestic arrangements were established the first time we pitched a tent. I went in and arranged the bedding and the kitchen. Outside, Graeme organized snow blocks for water, filled the primus, and made sure the tent was weighted down. Graeme prepared the breakfasts: porridge with bacon and scrambled egg, the egg made from powder. I prepared the evening meal, invariably soup and dehydrated stew.

Graeme had an easy temperament and seldom became irate, but his patience was tested when the lunch sledge-biscuits he was

buttering broke, and he carefully fitted the pieces together then glued them in place with peanut butter or honey.

The radio schedules caused Graeme some annoyance. On our early expeditions, all that was required was one radio communication per week with Scott Base. Later, radio checks were daily at a fixed time. This requirement annoyed Graeme as it restricted our freedom to work when we chose. He maintained that the only radio sked we needed was the one advising us of the date and time of our pickup by plane or helicopter.

Over the years, we shared heart-stopping as well as exhilarating moments. On our first trip together, we spent two days stuck inside the tent in a storm. We could hardly hear each other speak and wondered if the tent might be ripped to shreds. When the storm abated, our fears were unfounded; the tent was half-buried in snow. On another occasion, a helicopter crash was narrowly averted when in high wind an engine failed on take-off. At times we questioned our sanity for wanting to be in this awful place, but these moments were outweighed by sunny days, tranquility, and the euphoria of attaining a vista from a mountain peak, sometimes around midnight. Insights were gained into how the forces of nature had shaped this miraculous landscape.

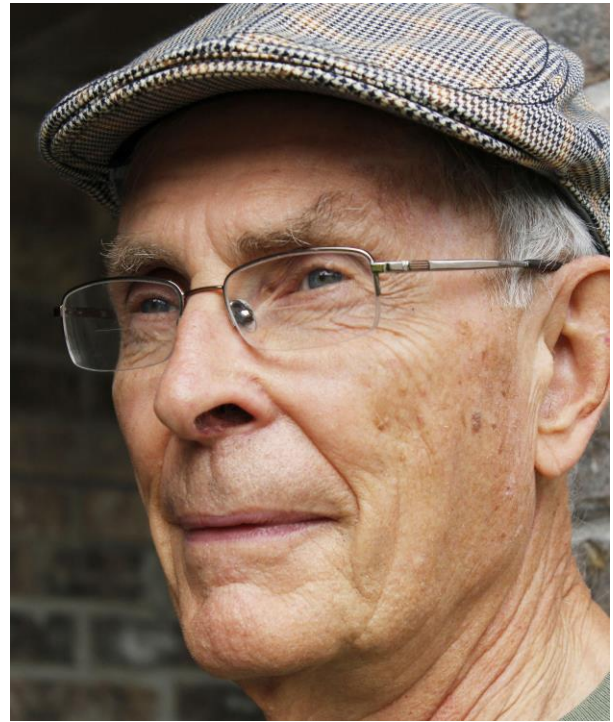
Our collaboration extended beyond Antarctica. I worked with Graeme in the Auckland Islands and soil surveying on New Zealand's West Coast. Graeme did chemical and clay mineral analyses for our Antarctic work as well as the other.

Through the Antarctic we met, and through it we part. We shared a philosophy for a land wrought by powerful forces, silent, ghostly, where earth's heartbeat and even time appear to be frozen; an unforgiving place that reveals the puniness and futility of human endeavor; a place where present and eternity seem to meet; a welcoming place, for those who know it as their spiritual home.

Rev. Bruce Jerome Lieske 1934-2021

by Barbara Hillerman Lieske

Bruce Lieske, long-time Antarctic Society member, died on January 17, 2021. He wintered in Antarctica as a meteorologist at Little America V during IGY (1957).



Rev. Bruce Lieske

Husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, scientist, adventurer, Air Force officer, scholar, missionary and servant of God, Rev. Bruce Lieske was called home to eternal life with the Lord on January 17, 2021.

The son of Harold and Theodosia Lieske, Bruce was born on March 20, 1935 in La Crosse, Wisconsin. He graduated from Penn State University in 1956 in meteorology. He was then selected for a group of elite international scientists to participate in the International Geophysical Year 1957-58. At the age of 21, Bruce wintered in Antarctica.

Following his return from Antarctica, Bruce entered the U.S. Air Force as a Second Lieutenant stationed at Bolling Air Force Base and Andrews Air Force Base, where he provided aviation weather forecasts including occasionally for Air Force One. He met his

wife Ann Ruesler at Christ Lutheran Church in Washington, D.C. Together Ann and Bruce had three children.

After completing his Air Force service, Bruce, Ann and their son, Stephen, traveled to Seattle, where Bruce continued working on a master's degree in meteorology at the University of Washington and their daughter Rebecca was born. In January 1963, to acquire a nest egg to finance a return to school, the family traveled to Point Barrow, Alaska, where they lived for nearly two years, with Bruce working as a research scientist for the Naval Arctic Research Laboratory.

After Bruce completed his master's degree in Seattle, the family traveled to Springfield, Illinois, where he attended Concordia Lutheran Seminary and Daniel was born. He completed his vicarage year at St Paul's Lutheran Church in Apopka, Florida, where he was involved with establishment of the church. Following his ordination, the young pastor and his family moved to Philadelphia, where Bruce assumed duties as pastor at St. Luke's Lutheran Church. In 1975 the family moved to North Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and finally in 1983 to Perryville, New Jersey. In these two locations, Bruce established new congregations – Divine Savior Lutheran Church and Our Savior Lutheran Church.

Bruce prepared mission resource materials, wrote articles for Lutheran publications, and published three books – *Frozen Memories* about his experience in Antarctica, *My Father's Pen*, a discussion of the influence of the written word, and *Cornerstones of Character*, a reflection on life experiences that influenced his development.

He was interred at Bushnell National Cemetery with full military honors.

Robert J. “Bob” Haehnle, 1943-2020

by Steve Dibbern

Robert J. "Bob" Haehnle died December 21, 2020 after suffering from Covid. He was 77. Bob had been married to Diane for 53 years, and they had two children. Born at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, he graduated from Lehigh University in 1968 with a degree in civil engineering, later earning a master's in ocean engineering from University of Miami, and a Master of Public Administration from GWU. He worked for other government organizations before joining the National Science Foundation

He became the Engineering Project Manager for the Office of Polar Programs during the 1980's. His job took him many times to the Antarctic, and he counted McMurdo as a second home. As the civilian "post" engineer (remember that the Navy was still there in those days) he oversaw such projects as the new Crary Science Lab, the new vehicle shop, the big dorms, and projects at the South Pole. One thing that drove him nuts as an engineer was the unrelenting following of normal building codes in an abnormal place. He once fumed at a requirement for construction of a fireproof wall on a buried building that had 40 feet of snow separating it from another. He also was strict about real safety issues, once finding lead based solder at McMurdo and saying angrily, "I don't want ever to see this on the continent again." ... typical Bob

He later left OPP to join NOAA from which he retired. He and Diane moved to Lititz, Pennsylvania.

A personal note: Bob was amused that he had inadvertently invited an Antarctic history "nut" to visit McMurdo, the crossroads of Antarctic history. On Thanksgiving Day of 1985, he and Pete Check, his Navy counterpart, "commandeered" a Sprite for a demonstration ride...I was looking at transport systems around the station. They drove me to Cape Evans to spend a couple of

hours at Scott's hut which as the reader might imagine was truly a dream come true for me. Bob was a nice guy and I miss him. A final anecdote: as a history buff, I was trying to persuade him/NSF to preserve one of the few original IGY orange plywood box buildings, at that point the NCO Club, I believe. The historian wants to preserve...the engineer is practical... his answer: "firewood!"

Sad ending for a *Hero*

by Charles Lagerbom

In 1968, the Harvey Gamage shipyard in South Bristol built and launched the National Science Foundation Research Vessel *Hero*. The idea was to utilize a sturdy wooden trawler as a scientific platform along the shallow bays and passages of far-south South America and the ice-choked Antarctic Peninsula.



Hero before launch at Harvey Gamage shipyard in South Bristol, Maine, 1968 (photo by Bob Dale)

The vessel was to operate in conjunction with the appropriately named shore-based U.S. Antarctic Program station Palmer, named after seal hunter Nathaniel Palmer, Stonington, Connecticut, one of the first (in 1820) to sight the Antarctic Peninsula from his sturdy little ship named *Hero*.

Arctic mariner and Maine resident Jack Crowell was the NSF point-man for the job; he led the charge for the vessel to be constructed of wood by shipbuilder Harvey Gamage. Crowell carried enough clout with NSF to make it happen. He and his wife Alice rented a small house in South Bristol near the shipyard, and Crowell and Gamage oversaw construction of the vessel.

Hero was 125 feet long and 300 tons, but drew only a dozen feet of water, crucial to explore inner bays and harbors of the Antarctic Peninsula. Contemporary icebreakers and research ships drew over twice that depth.

Hero was diesel-driven by two 380-horsepower engines. Her frame was native-oak timbers sheathed in tough green-heart wood from South America. The mast was Oregon fir. *Hero* was ketch-rigged so it could carry a decent amount of sail yet still maneuver around ice-choked inlets; she carried 1,700 square feet of high-visibility orange sails.

When launched into the Damariscotta River March 28, 1968, *Hero* generated fanfare. NSF dignitaries and Washington, D.C., bigwigs attended, including military officers in dress uniform

According to one account, as *Hero* began to slide out of Gamage's large construction shed, part of the vessel's superstructure nicked the opening. While the band played and the assembled crowd cheered, the shed shook from the impact, and 100 years' worth of pigeon poop in the rafters wafted down onto the officers' dress blue uniforms and the dignitaries, in their finest clothes.

In June that year, when NSF took *Hero* north for a shakedown, Crowell accompanied the vessel. By early summer, she had made

four cruises while ship and systems were tested and calibrated, including one sojourn to Arctic waters. They reached the Grand Banks and Davis Straits in August, where they came upon icebergs officials wanted to photograph alongside *Hero*.

By fall 1968, *Hero* was headed south for her first Antarctic visit. What followed were several seasons of yeoman-like work and science along the Antarctic Peninsula, Drake Passage, southern Atlantic Ocean, and far-south regions of South America.



Shakedown cruise for *Hero* in the Arctic, 1968 (photo by Jack Crowell)

The ship proved reliable, if not speedy. She occasionally grounded and bumped her way through the ice and rocks of the region. Season after season, *Hero* became a fixture and symbol of the U.S. Antarctic Program in that part of the world.

Hero worked in conjunction with Jacques Cousteau and his research ship *Calypso* during the 1973-74 austral summer season and hosted the famous outdoor photographer, Eliot Porter, who prominently featured the vessel in his photography book entitled *Antarctica*.

By end of 1975, *Hero* had made 36 voyages for scientific research, spanning the peninsula, South Shetland Islands, and coasts of South America. A major overhaul was conducted, parts not completed until 1977.

Another refit followed in 1980, but by 1983 NSF officials were looking beyond the wooden vessel. A surveyor's report in 1984 forced the decision: "*Hero's* main timbers are

infected with a progressing dry rot condition. Under the circumstances, further operation in Antarctic waters is not considered prudent." When the next-generation research vessel *Polar Duke*, built in Norway, came on-line in the mid-1980s, *Hero* was decommissioned in 1986 and sailed to Port Hueneme, California.

The port of Umpqua in Reedsport, Oregon, next purchased the vessel through the Federal Surplus Property Program. Plans for it to be a museum fell through. A *Hero* Foundation was formed but proved ineffectual. *Hero* sold at auction for \$5,000 and was moved to Reindeer, Oregon. In 2000, it was sold once again and moved to Portland, where attempts were made to repaint and re-caulk.

By 2005, *Hero* was used for storage. In 2007 it was in Newport, Oregon, deteriorating. Her final owner bought it in 2008, once again enthused with plans. Nothing came of it.

The polar community tried to entice Maine maritime museums into making a home for *Hero*, if it could be brought back to the state. Possible transportation arrangements included ship or railway. When museum officials balked, all efforts faded.



***Hero*, Long Beach, WA, 2020 (photo by the Chinook Observer)**

Meantime, *Hero* sat idle in an estuary of the Palix River in Willapa Bay, State of Washington. And sat. The once proud vessel became a local eyesore.

The vessel eventually rotted, was holed, and sank at her mooring following a storm on March 4, 2017. *Hero* became an environmental and navigational hazard. Costly oil-spill mitigation became an ongoing effort, due to nearby oyster farming.

The Washington State Attorney General's office filed misdemeanor criminal charges against *Hero*'s owner for pollution and for allowing it to become derelict. U.S. Coast Guard personnel pumped 1,000 gallons of oily water from it and hired Global Diving and Salvage to clean-up and remove the ship. Estimated costs could exceed \$2 million.

At latest reports, the vessel is still in the mud, rotting and breaking up. *Hero* would have been an example for future generations to see one of the last wooden trawlers built from the Harvey Gamage shipyard and an example of Antarctic history and science. Truly a tragic ending for Maine maritime and shipbuilding history.

Efforts are underway to locate and return *Hero*'s brass name plate to the state. Perhaps, if successful, that will create a way to help remember and celebrate this historically important vessel.

Coast Guard polar icebreaker status



**Artist's Rendering of a Polar Security Cutter
(image by VT Halter Marine)**

The Coast Guard Polar Security Cutter (PSC) program is a program to acquire three new PSCs (i.e., heavy polar icebreakers), to be followed years from now by the acquisition of up to three new Arctic Security Cutters (ASCs) (i.e., medium polar icebreakers). The PSC program has received a total of \$1,754.6

million (i.e., about \$1.8 billion) in procurement funding through FY2021, including \$300 million that was provided through the Navy's shipbuilding account in FY2017 and FY2018. With the funding the program has received through FY2021, the first two PSCs are now fully funded.

The Coast Guard's proposed FY2022 budget requests \$170.0 million in procurement funding for the PSC program, which would be used for, among other things, procuring long lead time materials (LLTM) for the third PSC.

The Coast Guard in 2019 estimated the total procurement costs of the three PSCs as \$1,039 million (i.e., about \$1.0 billion) for the first ship, \$792 million for the second ship, and \$788 million for the third ship, for a combined estimated cost of \$2,619 million (i.e., about \$2.6 billion). Within those figures, the shipbuilder's portion of the total procurement cost is \$746 million for the first ship, \$544 million for the second ship, and \$535 million for the third ship, for a combined estimated shipbuilder's cost of \$1,825 million (i.e., about \$1.8 billion).

On April 23, 2019, the Coast Guard-Navy Integrated Program Office for the PSC program awarded a \$745.9 million fixed-price, incentive-firm contract for the detail design and construction (DD&C) of the first PSC to VT Halter Marine of Pascagoula, MS, a shipyard owned by Singapore Technologies (ST) Engineering. VT Halter was the leader of one of three industry teams that competed for the DD&C contract. The first PSC is scheduled to begin construction in 2021 and be delivered in 2024, though the DD&C contract includes financial incentives for earlier delivery.

The DD&C contract includes options for building the second and third PSCs. If these options are exercised, the total value of the contract would increase to \$1,942.8 million (i.e., about \$1.9 billion). The figures of \$745.9 million and \$1,942.8 million cover only the shipbuilder's costs; they do not

include the cost of government-furnished equipment (GFE), which is equipment for the ships that the government purchases and then provides to the shipbuilder for incorporation management costs.

The operational U.S. polar icebreaking fleet currently consists of one heavy polar icebreaker, *Polar Star*, and one medium polar icebreaker, *Healy*. In addition to *Polar Star*, the Coast Guard has a second heavy polar icebreaker, *Polar Sea*. *Polar Sea*, however, suffered an engine casualty in June 2010 and has been nonoperational since then. *Polar Star* and *Polar Sea* entered service in 1976 and 1978, respectively, and are now well

beyond their originally intended 30-year service lives. The Coast Guard plans to extend the service life of *Polar Star* until the delivery of at least the second PSC. The Coast Guard is using *Polar Sea* as a source of spare parts for keeping *Polar Star* operational.

Note: Society member Bruce Dewald has been our eyes and ears for DoD-related information on Antarctica. Thanks to Bruce for his leads on the information used to compile this article, and for his continued diligence in reporting on this important aspect of Antarctic developments.



www.antarctican.org

August 12-14, 2022, Burlington, VT Gathering Registration

Name (s) _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Qty.

_____ Full Registration(s) - includes day programs, Reception on Friday evening, *Spirit of Ethan Allen* sunset dinner cruise on Lake Champlain on Saturday evening and the picnic on Sunday (\$175.00 per person **before** January 1, 2022, \$225.00 per person **after** December 31, 2021)

_____ Guest ticket(s) for Friday Reception and Saturday *Spirit of Ethan Allen* (\$90.00)

Guest(s): _____

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____

Refund policy: 100% prior to March 31, 2022; 50% during April 1 – June 30, 2022.

Mail your check and this form to: The Antarctic Society
35 Cherry Street Unit 701
Burlington, VT 05401

Would you like to visit the Shelburne Museum at 1:00 p.m. on Thurs, Aug. 11? ____ Yes ____ No

Would you like to attend no-host dinner on Thursday evening in Burlington? ____ Yes ____ No

Do you or another of your registrants require handicapped access? ____ Yes ____ No

Do you or another of your registrants have a special dietary need? ____ Yes ____ No