



THE ANTARCTICAN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

P. O. Box 40122

Washington, D. C. 20016

Volume 2, Number 3

March, 1977

MEETING NOTICE

Lecture

PALMER STATION: WHAT IT DOES AND WHY IT'S THERE

By

Guy G. Guthridge

Head of Polar Information Service
Division of Polar Programs
National Science Foundation

8:00 p. m., Tuesday

March 29, 1977

Room 543, National Science Foundation

1800 G Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

Arrangements are being made to have, if possible at the time of the meeting, live voice communication, via satellite, between Palmer Station and the meeting room. If connections are successfully made, members of the audience will be able to ask questions of personnel stationed at Palmer.

* * * * *

NOTICE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Due to illness, Peter J. Anderson, Assistant Director, Institute of Polar Studies, Ohio State University, Columbus, had to postpone his lecture on "Exploration of Antarctica by Air," scheduled for March 23. Hopefully, this can be rescheduled in April or May.

The annual business meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, May 3. Following the annual reports and the election of officers, Dr. William J. L. Sladen

of Johns Hopkins University will deliver the annual memorial lecture. He will speak on his recent experiences in Siberia. A notice of the definite time and place will appear in the next number of the Newsletter.

WITH REGRET

We have belatedly received word of the deaths of two members and a former member of the Antarctic Society. Mr. Barrett N. Coates, 1007 Cragmont Avenue, Berkeley, California, died in September, 1976. Mr. Arnold H. Clark died at his home in Pleasantville, New York, in March, 1976. To their families and friends we offer sincere condolences. A former member, Admiral George J. Dufek died February 10, of this year.

* * * *

Arnold H. Clark, then a 21-year old engineer from Greenfield, Massachusetts, was a member of the winter party at Little America in 1929 on the First Byrd Antarctic Expedition. He was the strong silent type, a quiet man with an excellent and well developed physique. He was always pleasant and ready to help, however, and was one of the best-liked men in the party. Although he was the assistant to Frank T. Davies, physicist of the expedition, more of his time was spent as a jack-of-all-trades, a commentary on his wide-ranging ability and general amicability. He was praised by Commander Byrd for the manner in which he worked the Ford snowmobile during the difficult unloading operations in February 1929. In addition to assisting Davies in the geomagnetic research, he helped Davies and Larry Gould in an investigation of the crevasses in the vicinity of Little America. He earned the gratitude of his camp fellows by volunteering to serve as assistant cook, a job in which he was very successful. In his spare time he did secretarial work for Commander Byrd.

The same versatility and industry characterized Clark's later life. After working for the General Electric Corporation, he joined the staff of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. In that capacity he participated in "Operation Crossroads," the atomic bomb test program on Bikini Atoll from 1946 to 1958. After retiring from Woods Hole he bought an old farm house on six wooded acres near Pleasantville in Westchester County, New York, to which he devoted many long days of labor in restoration. Mrs. Clark, the sister of Leland L. Barter, a member of both the First and Second Byrd Antarctic Expeditions, continues to reside there, 380 Hardscrabble Road.

* * * *

Rear Admiral George J. Dufek, U.S.N. retired, first commandant of "Operation Deep Freeze," 1955-1959, died of cancer in the Bethesda Naval Hospital, February 10, 1977, at the age of 70. A native of Rockford, Illinois, Dufek was a 1925 graduate of the U. S. Naval Academy. His first Antarctic experience was as navigator on the U.S.S. barkentine Bear during the first year of the U. S. Antarctic Service Expedition, 1939-40. With Admiral Byrd aboard, the Bear first cruised eastward from the Bay of Whales beyond Cape Colbeck to the coast of Marie Byrd Land in the latter part of January. Three flights were made by seaplane from the Bear. Enroute from the Bay of Whales to establish East Base on Stonington Island, off the Antarctic Peninsula, three more flights were made from the Bear in the latter part of February, resulting in the first sighting of Thurston Island and portions of the Walgren and Eights Coasts.

During "Operation Highjump," 1946-47, then Captain Dufek, returned to the same area as commander of the Eastern Task Group, consisting of the seaplane tender Pine Island, the tanker Canisteo, and the destroyer Brownson. Three Martin Mariner flying boats were aboard the tender, which also carried a small seaplane and two helicopters. Operations extended from the Ross Sea to the Veddell Sea. In late December and early January, on flights from the Pine Island, the coast was photographed from the Getz

Ice Shelf to the eastern end of Thurston Island (127° 30' W. to 95° 30' W.). During a "white-out" in this area on December 30, one of the flying boats crashed on Thurston Island, killing three of the nine-man crew. The survivors were rescued on January 12, 1947. Later photographic operations by the Task Group in the Bellingshausen Sea, in Marguerite Bay, and in the Weddell Sea were obstructed by either weather unsuitable for flying or by low-lying clouds over the coast.

Beginning in September, 1954, Dufek was in charge of planning for Operation Deep Freeze I to establish bases and provide logistical support for the United States scientific programs during the International Geophysical Year, scheduled for July 1, 1957, to December 31, 1958. This was to involve field operations on an unprecedented scale. A preliminary reconnaissance cruise was carried out by the icebreaker Atka in 1954-55. Operation Deep Freeze I followed in 1955-56. An air facility was constructed at McMurdo Sound, and a staging base was set up at Kainan Bay from which a tractor train was to proceed to 80° S., 120° W. the following season to construct Byrd Station. On December 20, 1955, four naval aircraft flew from New Zealand to McMurdo, an historic first. Later in January, nine long distance flights were made from McMurdo, including flights to the Budd Coast and to the Weddell Sea, both via the pole. Seven ships were involved. In 1956-57 the operations were designated Deep Freeze II. On October 31, 1956, Admiral Dufek commanded the first airplane to land at the South Pole. This was part of the program to establish a base at the South Pole which was to be supported entirely by aircraft. Other scientific stations were built at Cape Hallett, Filchner Ice Shelf on the Weddell Sea, and Windmill Islands, off the Budd Coast of Wilkes Land, and the projected tractor trek to build the proposed Byrd Station was also carried out. Although there were some tragic accidents, the surprise is that there were not more with 12 ships and some 3,000 men engaged in the unprecedented and ultimately highly successful project. The success of the scientific program depended on a successful logistical program. In addition to the naval aircraft used in Deep Freeze I, Deep Freeze II was provided with eight C-121 Globemasters from the Air Force, ultimately making long distance supply missions from New Zealand to McMurdo and from McMurdo to the outlying stations almost routine.

Admiral Dufek commanded successive Operations Deep Freeze until 1959. After he retired in 1960 he became Director of the Mariners Museum at Newport News, Virginia, from which he retired in 1973. He continued to make his home there. He is survived by his wife, Muriel, two sons and a daughter. To them we offer our condolences.

BOOK NOTE

The Arctic Diary of Russell Williams Porter, Herman R. Friis, editor, University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville, 1976. Published under the auspices of the National Archives Trust Fund. Quarto, xii and 172 pp. Illus. \$20.

Russell Williams Porter (1871-1909), trained as an architect at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is one of the lesser-known Arctic explorers in spite of the fact that between 1890 and 1912 he accompanied 10 Arctic expeditions. He served variously as artist, photographer, surveyor, cartographer, scientist and astronomer. It was in this last capacity, studying the heavens through a vertical transit on the Fiala-Ziegler Polar Expedition of 1903-05 in Franz Josef Land, that he began to appreciate the challenge of astronomy, and more particularly the properties of light and optics. This led to his major life work in astrophysics and optics, culminating at the California Institute of Technology in his part in the design and construction of the 200-inch telescope on Mount Palomar.

Porter prepared the manuscript for the present book in 1930-31 in Pasadena from his journals, notebooks, sketches, and photographs from the 10 arctic expeditions in which he participated. All this material is now in the Center for Polar Archives of the National Archives in Washington, the gift of Porter's daughter, Mrs. Caroline Porter Kier. Porter's Arctic Diary is a delightful, non-technical account of his experiences in the Arctic which began with Dr. Frederick A. Cook's ill-fated expedition to Greenland in the Miranda in 1894. In 1896 and 1897 he sailed north on Robert E. Peary's Hope to carry out special scientific missions and in 1899 he was on the Diana of the Peary Arctic Club's relief expedition. He was a member of two expeditions to Franz Josef Land, and he mounted three small expeditions of his own. While with Dr. Frederick A. Cook in Alaska in 1906 he surveyed the area of the southern approach to Mount McKinley, resulting in a reconnaissance map of the area on a scale of 1:250,000, with a contour interval of 200 feet, published by the U. S. Geological Survey.

Friis has included some 80 illustrations in the Diary as published. Four are maps by Porter, and four are color reproductions of water colors or oil paintings. The remainder are pencil sketches, many of them full-page reproductions. Recalling Porter's training as an architect, it is perhaps not surprising that these illustrations are truly works of art. They alone make the volume worth having. The polar historian's appetite is whetted by the mass of manuscript material in the Center for Polar Archives relating to Porter, to Peary, and to Cook that Friis calls attention in his footnotes.

K.J.B.

TRAVELING EXHIBIT ON ANTARCTICA

In the last number of the Newsletter the schedule of the exhibition Antarctica, of photographs by Eliot Porter and paintings by Daniel Lang was given. For those who may have missed that notice, we call attention to the coming dates:

February 26 to March 25	Florida Center for the Arts, University of South Florida, Tampa.
April 15 to May 14	University Art Collection, University of Maine, Orono.
June 3 to July 2	School of Arts, Boston University, Boston.

The Treasurer of the Antarctic Society, Mr. William B. Cooke, reports that there are still some members who have not paid their dues for this year. If you are one, won't you please use the form at the bottom of this page? Your \$3.00 is tax deductible.

THE ANTARCTICAN SOCIETY

P. O. Box 40122

Washington, D. C. 20016

Enclosed is my check for \$3.00 to cover my dues for 1976-77.

Name: _____

Street: _____ Apt.: _____

City: _____, State: _____ Zip Code: _____