



# THE ANTARCTIC SOCIETY

905 NORTH JACKSONVILLE STREET  
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22205

HONORARY PRESIDENT — MRS. PAUL A. SIPLE

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## BRASH ICE

This is a Newsletter without a meeting announcement, because December is a lethal month to do anything in Washington. The few December meetings we have held bombed out in attendance.

The year is almost over, and we give thanks for that. It ended somewhat ingloriously when a tall, majestic spruce broke off ten feet above the ground and crashed onto the hood of my car parked beside my new garage in Maine. My advice to all is to check your insurance to make sure it covers acts of God like trees being hurled earthward. This innocent soul was not covered, and he cried all the way to the bank.

Another piece of hard-earned advice — when you drive an out-of-state car in the northeast, you are fair game for getting a speeding ticket. I have speeding tickets for driving a Maine car in Massachusetts, and another for a Massachusetts car in Maine. So, to play it safe, have a set of plates for each state you drive in.

And have you ever seen so darn many unmarked state troopers on the highways as there are now? Driving from Boston to Washington after Thanksgiving was like tiptoeing through a mine field during the war. But there is some good news — most of those people from Florida who were given licenses are now back down south. Floridians seem to take great delight at getting in the passing lane on the Jersey Turnpike and driving below the speed limit, not pulling over for love or money.

I'm already overflowing with that great Christmas spirit, and it's only November! I will be totally destructed by mid-December, a basket case by Christmas. If only Christmas could be declared a religious holiday one year, a love-thy-neighbor holiday the next year, and then a commercial holiday for merchants the third year, all could become somewhat tolerable ... maybe ... perhaps ... unlikely. Merry Christmas and Bah Humbug! Choose one!

- This Newsletter is being mailed on 3 December 1990 -

**75th NEWSLETTER OF SIPLE AND DALRYMPLE - THOUGHTS AND MEMORIES.** This is the 75th so-called, but misnamed, Newsletter of the team of Siple and Dalrymple, thrown together somewhat indiscriminately over the past thirteen years. We have published a total of 850 pages, and it is really time to turn this all over to someone young and charitable. But where is that person or team??

Some say we should bury the Newsletters; others say we should bind them. The old geology professor and Robert Falcon Scott lover, Bob Nichols, once offered a substantial contribution to bind them in a leather cover. Then John Twiss offered a couple of years ago to personally pay for binding a complete set. This week Peter Wilkniss suggested that we should get a set bound, but he never opened his wallet! We just drop these big names to show that we do have some supporters.

The fun part about writing the Newsletter is the total lack of censorship. Once Ruth used to gasp and say she couldn't type this or that paragraph, but she has apparently given up in recent years, or else the writer has mellowed. There is self-satisfaction in writing tongue-in-cheek material, where more is implied between the lines than is typed on the lines.

What do we do best? Hard to tell, although what we prefer to do is write humorously about Antarcticans and about things going on down south. We think we do a good job on reviewing new Antarctic books. We are especially happy with those who review books for us. In this issue we are particularly proud and happy to have a rather lengthy but more worthy review of an old masterpiece (The Worst Journey in the World) by another masterpiece, Mildred Crary. Be sure to read it. If you think Mildred is wordy, this is the abridged edition - the original is some sixty pages in length!

The most touching writing in the whole thirteen years was the fabulous story of the doctor who saved Jerry Huffman's life when his car caught on fire in a trial run at a West Virginia race track. It was a whole issue of a Newsletter, a fantastic story, and I thought there would be an outpouring of letters to Jerry from the story, but it resulted in hardly a trickle. I could not believe it. Here was a nice guy who was well liked in the Antarctic, who had served many PIs (Principal Investigators) well throughout the years. It was a classic example of "What have you done for me lately?"

The most tragic story during our thirteen years had to be the DC-10 crash on Mt. Erebus, and I think we did a fairly good job of covering it, as we had almost immediate access to the New Zealand papers on that one. The most timely piece was the Antarctic Treaty Act which we published in the last Newsletter a week before President Bush signed it into law!

It is always good to write about young people on the way up. Because of the late Paul Siple, we have followed the Scouts who have gone to Antarctica with a great deal of interest, even some of the Scouts who were runners, like Scott Miller, who is a very distinguished scientist at the famed Bishop Museum in Honolulu. The enthusiastic Louis Sugarman is a very special person, and we have enjoyed watching his life's progress since he returned from the ice. Scout Douglas Barnhart is a most unusual person who is so entwined with the benefit of mankind (personkind). And Scout Julie Hagelin at Pomona College has a most promising future ahead of her.

Anyway, we have walked down many a path over the past thirteen years. We feel enriched by those who have blessed our lives by their presence, particularly remembering the cluster of old Antarcticans from the Second Byrd Antarctic Expedition of 1933-35, who at their 50th reunion in Washington in 1983, gathered at Ruth's home after laying a wreath at the foot of the monument of the late Admiral Richard E. Byrd on the Avenue of Heroes at Arlington Cemetery, to tell stories and anecdotes about the old days. It doesn't get any better than that, fans, and we are so thankful that we have been a part of so much of it.

**MEMBERSHIPS AND DUES.** Our membership has more or less stabilized in the past year, with attrition and new members cancelling one another. As of now, we total 641 members, and 84% have renewed for this year. We are sending out a third and final notice to the ninety-nine delinquents, and that will be our last mass-begging for dues. One member last year jumped on us for welcoming those who wished to drop their memberships. That guy probably never spent a perfectly beautiful day stuffing envelopes for a large organization where there was no compensation. Don't knock anything until you have tried it! Fourteen members from last year have gone inactive, and we do appreciate their letting us know early and up front that they were dropping out, as it does help us. So, if you aren't renewing, please return the form with that box checked - it will help us out a lot.

**MANAGING WASTE AT MCMURDO** (Guy G. Guthridge). McMurdo's function as the logistics hub of the U.S. Antarctic Program is well-known. McMurdo also is the waste management hub.

Camps supported from McMurdo send their waste—all of it, including human waste—back to McMurdo for disposal or recycling. How many camps? This austral summer, 67 of America's 111 research projects in Antarctica are operating through McMurdo, and McMurdo handles their trash.

Handling of the waste at McMurdo is undergoing a minor revolution. A good bit of the activity you see is in fact devoted to that task: most obvious are the recycling bins. In the old days these were called trash cans. Now they are labeled and color-coded for glass, metal, plastic, recyclable paper, and—yes—plain old trash.

Then you see the hazardous waste yard, where a crew toils daily to identify drums of used lube oil and other chemicals, puts the old drums in new and slightly larger salvage drums (also called overpacks), and inventories them. Old batteries are handled here, too. In February, when the cargo ship comes (there's just one a year), the drums and batteries are carried down to the ice wharf and put aboard for the long trip to final disposal or reclamation in — where else? — California.

Marching up the hill from the hazardous waste yard, you come to the famous McMurdo dump. "Dump" is a word that the EPA says can mean "waste management facility," and that's what the McMurdo dump is. There's a big shiny pile of empty number-ten tin cans, another pile of ferrous metals, one of aluminum, one of cardboard, and, finally, the trash trash—unsorted materials, but none hazardous. As in the hazardous waste yard, all this stuff in the dump piles up over the course of the year until the ship comes in. Then the sorted materials are taken down to the wharf and sent back to the good old USA. Greenpeace is fond of taking pictures of the dump in December or January, just before the ship comes: then the dump is good and full and of course shows how we're "polluting" Antarctica.

The unrecyclable, non-hazardous trash at McMurdo's dump is what gets burned every six weeks or so. It consists mainly of cardboard, paper, and kitchen waste. The sorting and recycling program is going so well that the 3 November burn comprised a volume of about a third of what you would have seen in years past. But a lot of people would like the burning to be stopped altogether, so we have a team of garbologists from Argonne National Laboratory examining McMurdo's waste stream from cradle to grave. One possible result will be to bale the stuff that now is burned and either incinerate it at McMurdo or send it out of Antarctica.

**DEJA VU.** Charlie Bentley, who, we believe, is the first American since the late Paul Siple to spend parts of five consecutive decades in Antarctica, was talking to Peter Wilkniss recently about his need for explosives on the Ross Ice Shelf where Charlie is still trying to get it done right. Peter told Charlie not to worry, he

was going to send a D-8 tractor out there with a 20-ton sled carrying explosives. When old Charlie heard that, he really did start to worry, and he fairly yelled back to Peter, "Hey, man, we did that back in 1957 and the damn D-8 went into a crevasse. Put the explosives in a plane and fly them out." But the die had been cast, and the next today as the powers-that-be wonder how to get the explosives out of the crevasse and then retrieve the D-8. Fortunately no lives were lost, but the Antarctic has struck again!

**MALCOLM MELLOR NOT A SAINT ... YET.** In the last Newsletter we were all excited about a C-141 landing at Pegasus airstrip eight miles out from Hut Point. Well, they never got to fly the C-141 there, but they did land a ski-equipped Herc. Then they put the Herc onto wheels, and it sunk deeply into the snow. So there are a few bugs to be worked out. When in doubt, you are supposed to punt, but in this case Malcolm supposedly got into another plane and flew over to the Russian station at Molodezhnaya to see how they were doing it. The Russians evidently do it with ease, landing wheel aircraft on blue ice, but according to a U.S. transportation expert, the Russians can do it because their planes have much lower tire pressures than ours. Meanwhile, the Russians flew one of their geophysical research aircraft into McMurdo, and a half dozen Americans joined the twenty-three Russians aboard to make two long calibration flights, one of some ten hours into Marie Byrd Land, and the other of about five-hours duration. Herman Zimmerman of the Division of Polar Programs was one of the Americans aboard, and he expressed general satisfaction with the aircraft's performance. It wasn't exactly a new plane, but it could fly.

**ALL ABOARD FOR TAKEOFF.** As we go to press, battle lines are drawn up at the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings in Chile, but when they conclude, Peter Wilkniss is going to take fifteen of the Heads of Delegations to Palmer Station for a three-day visit in mid-December. They will fly to King George Island on a C-109, where the EREBUS will pick them up and carry them on to Palmer. Incidentally, the Chileans wrecked a C-130 this austral summer on the gravel airstrip on King George. Wouldn't you like to own a concession stand in Antarctica that dealt with C-130s, both new ones and rebuilds? You'd make a fortune in no time at all. Guy Guthridge, our illustrious new president, told the Society at its 27 November meeting that there were aircrafts from five different nations on the airstrip at McMurdo in mid-November. There is a relatively large scientific program working out of the old Beardmore Camp, which is totally supported by a couple of New Zealand helos. There are seven principal investigators, so presumably there must be seven different satellite field camps. David Elliot is the chief scientist. We strongly feel that all personnel who work in the Trans-Antarctic Mountains should forfeit their salaries while working in such majestic scenery. Do we hear a second? So moved.

**YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHING YET.** Filmmaker John Weiley and three cameramen, an audio technician, and a safety specialist are in Antarctica right now filming the greatest Antarctic film ever to be produced. It's going to be a 38-minute, \$3.5 million Omnimax film which will be shown around the world in 75 giant-screen theaters, starting this fall. The film title - what else? - "Antarctica." Because of the giant size of the screen (76-foot diameter), Weiley was quoted "because it's 10 times bigger than an average movie, you're getting as much shoved into your eyes as if you were watching a 380-minute movie." We don't exactly understand that, but this fellow Weiley is an Australian, and they sort of live in their own dream world, so perhaps size does translate into time when you've had enough beers. So right now they are hauling around a 100-pound, 70-millimeter camera shooting the ultimate in Antarctic movies. This should be fantastic.

**GLACIER STATUS** (Capt. Brian Shoemaker). In November 1988 the Congress of the United States awarded the USCGC GLACIER to the State of Oregon. The intent of the Congress was that it be turned over to the HERO Foundation and that the foundation was to preserve it as a National Icebreaker Memorial dedicated to the thousands of scientists, officers and enlisted personnel that have served on all U.S. icebreakers in the Arctic and Antarctic and to eulogize all of the ships that were used to map the coastline and seas surrounding Antarctica. Things were on track for two years in this respect, but today the ship is in jeopardy of being sunk for Navy target practice as was reported in the last issue of the Antarctic Society Newsletter.

Of all the U.S. icebreakers that have sailed to Antarctica since the 1930s only GLACIER and NORTHWIND are left. NORTHWIND, destined for the city of Biloxi, Mississippi, is to be sunk for a reef to attract fish. GLACIER is in limbo because the state of Oregon, in an about-face, refuses to accept the vessel, citing it as a liability due to contaminants aboard. We have argued this point; however, the State still refuses to accept the vessel and has been actively campaigning to have the Coast Guard turn the ship over to the Navy to use as a target vessel.

The battle with the State has been ongoing for about a year and is stalemated. We have jointly asked the Coast Guard to delay transfer to the Navy and have established a Joint Glacier Board with the State to recommend the disposition of the vessel. The State has said that the decision of the joint board is not binding and the HERO Foundation anticipates that after the board reports, the State will once again pursue a course to have the ship sunk as a missile target. The Joint Glacier Board could, however, recommend that the ship be preserved in lieu of sinking it with missiles, and that the National Park Service endorse the project as part of their National Maritime Initiative. This option would create a national initiative to save the GLACIER, but would leave its final resting place open for question. Although the HERO Foundation has worked long and hard to bring GLACIER to Reedsport, it would support this initiative. The goal is to SAVE GLACIER, and then determine her final berthing.

To this end we need the help of all Antarcticans. Please write your Congressman, Senators and the Secretary of the Interior, Manuel Lujan. Ask that the ship be preserved under Sec 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Inform them of the intent of Congress under Public Law 100-629 of 7th of November 1988 that directs the Secretary of Transportation to transfer the GLACIER to the State of Oregon to be converted into a national maritime museum. The intent today is as succinct as it was in 1988 - SAVE GLACIER as part of our national heritage of polar exploration. Destroy GLACIER and we destroy an important link to our past.

The HERO Foundation is most appreciative of your support for this most important project, but advises that this is only the beginning of a number of crusades which we will have to face in the not-too-distant future if we are to preserve our Antarctic Heritage. There are planes to be saved, equipment to be salvaged, records to be preserved, money to be raised, etc. We cannot do it by ourselves - we old Antarcticans must be proactive on these issues in order to preserve our past, and to inspire our nation to continue to scientifically explore Antarctica in the future.

**THE WORST JOURNEY IN THE WORLD, ANTARCTIC, 1910-1913**, by Apsley Cherry-Garrard (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc., 1989) (Review by Mildred Rodgers Crary). With hard-cover editions of this classic book out of print, the availability of a quality soft-cover edition for \$13.95 should be welcomed by readers whose curiosity has been stirred by the recent controversy over Robert Falcon Scott's explorations. Sober criticism of Scott by historians like the late L.B. Quartermain, for many years president of the New Zealand Antarctic Society, and the impassioned but scholarly analysis by Roland Huntford have allowed readers to see behind the hero's mask; but

Dennis Drabelle, in The Washington Post, and others have dismissed the real-life Scott that Quarter-main and Huntford presented to us and have preferred to cling to the illusory heroic image, regardless of the facts.

Why does Scott live on as a hero when we now know so many disillusioning things about him? Because of Cherry-Garrard's magnificent book, more than any other reason: it is "one of the great works of literature to issue from Polar exploration" (Huntford); "one of the classics of polar travel... one of the great travel-books of all time" (Quartermain); "as descriptive narrative... without a doubt a literary achievement that will always stand high in the annals of exploration..." (Seaver). The book is not only a travel book but a creative work, complete with plot, hero (or heroes), heroic deeds and actions – in short, what is now called a non-fiction novel – but not a history book.

In his account of the DISCOVERY expedition Scott himself began – in what Huntford calls "a sustained reworking of reality" – the process of "prettifying" his own image by careful deletions and rewriting. Kathleen Scott continued the censorship "with the connivance of Sir Clements Markham, and Reginald Smith, the publisher...." Huntford goes on, "For publication [of Scott's Last Expedition], his diaries were purged of all passages detracting from a perfect image; particularly those revealing bitterness over Amundsen, criticism of his companions and, above all, signs of incompetence. ..."

At the time Cherry-Garrard began writing his masterpiece, England hungered for a hero. The circumstances of the deaths of the five men of the Pole party inspired their countrymen to view the episode as romantic, heroic tragedy notwithstanding Scott's loss of the race to Amundsen. Cherry-Garrard was commissioned to write the Official Narrative and had access to expedition documents as well as some diaries. But the limits of this commission threatened his personal view (i.e., the facts interfered with the fiction), and so he took the book over as his own and, in 1923, published it himself.

With the help of George Bernard Shaw, his neighbor and close friend, he wrote a heroic work of fiction. Of his closest neighbors, the Shaws, Cherry-Garrard said, "they taught me to write." The rumor persists among Antarcticans that a manuscript in Shaw's handwriting exists. I am indebted to Paul Dalrymple for a copy of a handwritten letter by Shaw that clearly establishes his assistance but modestly downplays its importance.

How could the firsthand knowledge, information, and material available to Cherry-Garrard be shaped into a convincing story of heroism? Cherry-Garrard did not merely assemble diary notes and historic data; he used literary means to create the story. He attributed heroic – and only heroic – qualities to his hero, placed him in difficult situations and exaggerated the difficulties he faced, depicted heroic actions to overcome these difficulties, surrounded him with heroic companions and supporters, avoided or suppressed negative aspects of the hero and the story, and attributed unworthy motivations or villainy to potential competitive heroes, such as Amundsen and Shackleton.

Cherry-Garrard began with the brilliant sentence, "Scott used to say that the worst part of an expedition was over when the preparation was finished," He did not say "Captain Robert Falcon Scott"; he did not in any way identify Scott; he did not use the sentence to define Scott's role but instead made it invoke Scott's authority. With absolute assurance, he assumed Scott's name was universally known and thus required no introduction. This rhetorical device raised Scott to the hero level; the information ostensibly conveyed (what was said about an expedition) was actually of minor significance in comparison with the subject, Scott. The sentence's position at the first of the book gave it importance far exceeding that of a similar sentence

buried somewhere in the text. By means of many such subtle literary devices he re-inforced this initial assumption.

Cherry-Garrard's hero encountered well-nigh insuperable difficulties, never seen before or since. Not only were Scott's difficulties exceptional; they were supernatural - "bad luck," an "unknown factor" which went beyond considerations of weather, weakness, shortages of supplies. Scott's party faced the horrors of the pack ice and killer whales, the cold, the ferocious blizzards and disastrous thaws. Yet Amundsen crossed the same ice shelf and went up a wholly uncharted glacier at almost the same time; and Shackleton, earlier on the same route taken by Scott, came within 100 miles of the Pole and turned back, losing not a single man. If Shackleton had been as foolhardy as Scott, he might have reached the Pole, died on the way back, and earned unequivocally the honor of being the first at the Pole, leaving flags for Amundsen - in that case, second at the Pole - to find. And as a dead hero, he would also have gained the tragic hero status that Scott later attained.

Cherry-Garrard surrounded the hero with heroic companions. Bowers and Wilson receive the highest praise; even Gates is elevated to heroic status by Scott's description of his death in the final notes though Gates's mother accused Scott of being her son's murderer. Cherry-Garrard not only suppressed the negative aspects but in many places directly turned Scott's faults into virtues. To exalt Scott, Gerry-Garrard resorted to denigrating, both explicitly and by implication, the accomplishments of other explorers, especially those who led expeditions in competition for the South Pole; he furthered Scott's claim for glory with inglorious references to Amundsen and Shackleton. There is no mistaking the deprecatory intent of his choice of words in the midst of a passage ostensibly doing "full justice to Amundsen": "feint," "the secret of Amundsen's slick success," "Quite commonplace choice [use of skis and dogs]," "very ease of the exploit," "single business of getting to the Pole and back...." Shackleton, then holder of the "Furthest South" record, also aroused Scott's competitive feeling; Scott measured his progress against Shackleton's. Cherry-Garrard turned these comparisons to Scott's advantage: "We did not go quite so close to the land as Shackleton did, and therefore, as had been the case with us all the way up the glacier, found less difficulties than he met with. Scott is quite wonderful in his selections of route...."

Sheer reiteration of praise of Scott wears down even a skeptical reader's resistance until, after the loss of the Pole party, he reads, "the Empire - almost the civilized world - [was] in mourning... Scott's reputation is not founded upon the conquest of the South Pole. He came to a new continent, found out how to travel there, and gave knowledge of it to the world: he discovered the Antarctic, and founded a school. He is the last of the great geographical explorers...." These exaggerated - even untrue - claims, coming at the end of the book, slipped from Cherry-Garrard's pen with a fluency and ease bearing no relationship to the facts; in his mind Scott had become the fictional hero that he had created.

"Then Atkinson read the lesson from the Burial Service from Corinthians. Perhaps it has never been read in a more magnificent cathedral and under more impressive circumstances - for it is a grave which kings must envy...." A lyrical passage, no longer realistic but heavily literary, follows: "I do not know how long we were there, but when all was finished, and the chapter of Corinthians had been read, it was midnight of some day. The sun was dipping low above the Pole, the Barrier was almost in shadow. And the sky was blazing - sheets and sheets of iridescent clouds. The cairn and Cross stood dark against a glory of burnished gold...." Cherry-Garrard recorded it all in his diary and knew well what day it was, but "I do not know how long we were there" and "midnight of some day" take the moment into timelessness. Then, in much more than simple description, his language soared as he evoked the sun dipping low above the Pole of Scott's obsession and, against a blazing, iri-

descent sky of burnished gold, the cairn marking the tent-tomb and the Cross marking the godlike hero's sacrifice. Cherry-Garrard imbued the scene with symbolic meaning far transcending the literal words of a mere historic account. Knowing what we now know about Scott, we read the book for its literary, rather than factual, value.

**EMBARRASSING ERRATA.** Many copies of our last Newsletter went out with a grave mistake relative to the title of a book being reviewed by this writer. The correct title of the fine book by Tony Fogg and David Smith is *The Explorations of Antarctica, The Last Unspoiled Continent*. Some of you have Newsletters with *Exploitations* instead of *Explorations*, so please make the change if you keep these Newsletters. Our humble apologies to the authors and the publisher!

**CALL FOR HELP ON THE HERO** (Capt. Brian Shoemaker). The HERO Foundation has a grant from the Goettel Trust to equip the R.V. HERO as an educational display for school groups to tour. The ship is in very good shape, having received a new coat of paint topside and throughout most of the interior this past summer. There is a new pier for the vessel, and sewer and water have been attached to the ship by the city of Reedsport. We have a small cadre of local Antarctic enthusiasts trained to handle tour groups and demonstrate equipment. Most who visit are impressed with their 'Antarctic Experience'.

To accommodate the student groups, we have teamed up with the Children's Television Workshop which has provided us with their five-part TV series on Antarctica and their workbooks that complement the TV program. These are distributed to each school before their visit to the R.V. HERO so that the children are well schooled on Antarctic affairs by the time they visit the ship. Aboard the HERO we reinforce what the kids have already learned and give them a hands-on experience of what it's like to conduct research aboard a scientific vessel.

The tours, thus far, have gone extremely well, and we have high hopes of being able to provide the weeklong TV series to all schools in Oregon together with a visit to HERO.

However, we do need some help from some old HERO scientists and sailors. We need to equip the labs on the ship with scientific displays that are genuine - we have some, but they are not very representative of what took place on the ship while it was in service. If any of you old HERO scientists have any old specimens of plankton, krill, penguins, seals, etc. that are gathering dust, we could sure use them. We also need action photographs of people conducting science in the labs, operating the trawls, fishing, working with seals, etc. We are also open to suggestions.

Please write HERO Foundation, Box 73, Reedsport, OR 97467, or call (503)271-2605/4704.

**VETERAN ANTARCTICAN SUCCUMBS AND GETS MARRIED.** Ken Moulton, who holds the not-so-dubious honor of having gone to Antarctica in more different years than any other American in history, finally married Mary Ann Messier. The event was in keeping with Ken's profile, being very low-key, honorable, and most official. Mary Ann, originally from Olympia, Washington, works at the National Science Foundation, and promised in her vows that she would never disturb Ken when he is watching his beloved Red Sox on the tube. Ken made even a greater sacrifice when he vowed not to be obnoxious during the Christmas season. Right now the bridegroom is recovering from a hernia operation, and looking forward to another season of senior league softball next year. With his gimpy knees, he is the Bill Buckner of an Annandale, Virginia team. Congratulations, you two! Ken and Mary Ann are living at 4419 Chase Park Court, Annandale, VA 22003.

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