



# THE ANTARCTICAN SOCIETY

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HONORARY PRESIDENT — MRS. PAUL A. SIPLE

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## BRASH ICE

As you can readily see, this newsletter is NOT announcing a speaker program, as we have not lined anyone up, nor have any of you stepped forward announcing your availability. So we are just moving out with a newsletter based on some facts, some fiction, some fabrications. It will be up to you to ascertain which ones are which. Good luck!

Two more Byrd men have been struck down -- Al Lindsey, the last of the Byrd scientists to die, and Steve Corey, Supply Officer, both of the 1933-35 Byrd Antarctic Expedition. Al was a handsome man, and he and his wife, Elizabeth, were a stunning couple. Because of his many honors, we have devoted a large part of this newsletter to telling you about an Unsung Antarctic Hero. Steve Corey was a live wire, pepper pot who appeared much younger than his years. And his widow, younger than Steve, was a work of art in herself. If you visit the Navy Museum on the Anacostia River in Washington, D.C. you will see much of Steve's expedition material.

There are only four Byrd men still alive. The indefatigable Norman Vaughan, is the only survivor from the first Byrd expedition, and he and Carolyn have no immediate plans for putting him into the ground. I don't even think they have a long-range plan for it. The three survivors from BAE II are Bill "Whirlybird" McCormick, who cracked up the first helicopter-type aircraft taken to Antarctica, Guy Hutcheson, and Olin Stancliff, who is not in good health.

B15, the large iceberg that broke off the Ross Ice Shelf around March 19th, was big - twice the size of Delaware, being approximately 4250 square miles (170 miles by 25 miles). It probably exceeds the large iceberg sited by the Glacier in November 1956, and may well be the largest berg known by mankind in the polar regions. Stand by for some big rams!

Life is also very fragile. We're all mere mortals here on borrowed time. At least fifteen years ago, the redoubtable Dave Bresnahan said to me. "Why should I join the Antarctic Society? All you have is a bunch of old fossils." At the time I wondered what secret plan lurked in his stomach to prevent himself from soon becoming fossilized. I still wonder, and he must, too, as time is catching up with him. Antarctica is ageless. It may be for the young, but there is still a place for a Buck Wilson; still a place for an Art DeVries; still a place for a Bill Cassidy. We try to make our newsletters for all ages, but this one slipped into Ancient History. Read it. You might even find that you actually enjoy it.

**EDITORIAL ON ADMIRAL BYRD.** PBS recently showed a documentary on Admiral Byrd where Bolling Byrd Clarke, Steve Corey, Joe Hill, Lisle Rose, one of Bernt Balchen's ex-wives, the archivist at Ohio State, and, hic, a biographer of Byrd, were interviewed at some length. This was a much better presentation on Byrd than the British hatchet job of two years ago, but still some things piqued me.

I first want to address the final word in the script on Byrd being a "heavy drinker." I knew a lot of the Byrd men, corresponded with many others, and also talked to some. It is an invalid assertion to say that Byrd was a heavy drinker, as he was strictly a social drinker. I happened to see the battery of questions that the above unnamed biographer sent out to all living Byrd people prior to writing his book, as I was at Henry Harrison's house when it came. Henry was a meteorologist on BAE I. and was the Commander's bridge partner. Henry and I became close as we were both Worcester (Massachusetts) boys; we were both self-proclaimed baseball experts; and we both had worked in Antarctica as meteorologists. The questionnaire was heavily slanted towards trying to prove Byrd was an alcoholic, and that he was an incompetent navigator. Henry was very upset about the questionnaire, as were many other Byrd survivors. Malice before thought. Byrd had his faults like all of us, but drinking was not one of them.

Before I continue, I want to direct your attention to two rather length<sup>y</sup> discourses on life with Byrd that have appeared in these newsletters. First, Charlie Murphy's "Some Vagrant Recollections Of An Elderly Antarcticist" (April 1982). Charlie is long since deceased, but he was a good friend of mine. Now, as an aside, Charlie could really be called a heavy drinker. His funeral service ended with his cronies all assembling at one of his favorite watering places in Washington, D.C.. the Army-Navy Club! Charlie had credibility. He was, without a question of doubt, the most famous writer to ever winter over in Antarctica. Besides being a biographer of the Windsor's, he was an editor of FORTUNE, and was a most distinguished writer on politics and national security. For more about Charlie, see our April 1982 newsletter.

He wrote about "dastardly attempts to blacken Byrd's reputation." and vehemently denied Balchen's claim "that Bennett had himself made

to him a deathbed confession of the fraud." Charlie was with Balchen and Bennett on the flight that ended in Bennett's death. They were flying in a drafty Ford trimotor in 1928, on their way to Labrador to retrieve the crew of the German monoplane BREMEN that had been forced down off the coast. Bennett came down with a raging case of pneumonia, and they took him to a hospital when they landed on the ice of a frozen lake in Quebec to refuel. Balchen and Charlie continued on to Labrador, and while they were gone Bennett died. There was no deathbed confession.

Elsewhere in this newsletter, you will read a lengthy obituary about the last Byrd scientist to die, Al Lindsey. We want all of you to read it, as Al was a most distinguished scientist, and few, if any, of Byrd's compatriots have been so honored in their lifetime as Al was in his career. But he also wrote a long treatise in our newsletter of January 1998, entitled "Inside Byrd's Second Antarctic Expedition." It's a great article, and before he got into his story about BAE II, 193335, he addressed Byrd's flight over the North Pole. It is very interesting, and he referenced mechanic Pete Demas's carefully prepared 15-page typed manuscript "Eyewitness Facts About Byrd's North Pole Flight" that is in the National Archives, but is never referenced in print. On Pete's last trip to Washington, D.C., I know that writer Christine Russell, then of the Washington Star, interviewed Pete at some length. However, the great silver-tongued Antarcticist, Larry Gould, was in town, and he stole all the headlines. Christine never published any-thing about Pete. Then she went into the medical arena, and Lord only knows what happened to her notes on Pete.

Al wrote extensively about Byrd being "widely and highly respected" during his life and afterwards. Since the "higher one gets in the world, the harder the wind blows. (Byrd) he has also been criticized, even vilified, but almost exclusively by those who never visited Byrd's arena of action. The world's leading explorers have long been favorite targets of professional detractors." We beseech you to reread the words of two honored, highly respected men - Murphy and Lindsey, who went to the ice with Byrd, and see how they came back with only the greatest of respect for him.

Byrd had his distracters in the pilots. Pilots are something like relief pitchers in baseball; they

are a bird of another feather. But one of the most ironical things in the history of Antarctica, is that Byrd and his chief antagonist, Bernt Balchen, are buried side -by-side in Arlington! It's truly unbelievable. Here is the great American polar explorer buried with the standard, simple, white cross. Believe all it reads, as I recall, is "R. E. Byrd." It is just like nearly all of the other graves in the famous cemetery. Balchen died some sixteen years later, and, as I wrote above, he even stalked Byrd to his grave, being buried right next to him! Not only that, but a giant monument rises above Bernt! One day I was in the National Archives reading personal letters, and I ran across one from Byrd to Paul Siple, relative to Balchen, saying "always know who your enemies are." Byrd better not look to his right, as he is going to find him!

**ADDENDUM.** A most valuable collection of twenty letters from Charlie Murphy, BAE II, to PCD has been unearthed. They provide much insight into the interpersonal relationships between Byrd and Harold June, Larry Gould and Bernt Balchen. More to follow.

**AL LINDSEY STARTS ON ANOTHER GREAT EXPEDITION.** On Saturday night, December 18, 1999, Elizabeth Lindsey, bride of Antarctic Alton Lindsey for over sixty years, sitting at his bedside, holding his hands, implored him "to not hold back, go ahead and start on another great expedition, and I'll be along soon enough to join you." The following day Al did just that, thus ending his career on this earth as one of the most environmentally conscious ecologists in this country, who used Antarctica as his springboard to an illustrious college career as a biology professor.

He was on Byrd's Second Antarctic Expedition. 1933-35. where he was a colleague of Paul Siple, and served as the expedition's vertebrate zoologist. It was an interesting expedition with several men who went on to fame. But something happened in the past few years that upset Al tremendously. Some Brits came to this country to do a television documentary on Admiral Byrd, and as the most erudite of the living Byrd scientists, they spent over three hours interviewing Lindsey. But they never used a solitary word of Al's, as they weren't interested in anything complimentary on Byrd, they wanted to do a hatchet job on him, the sensational

tabloid-type thing. Al wrote many letters to the media about this, which may have helped in this film not being shown on some major outlets.

We turned our newsletter in January 1998 over to Al, and for ten pages he told us about his life in Antarctica on the Byrd Expedition. Al was sort of a Latter Day Edward Wilson in a lot of ways; both were deeply religious, both were strong naturalists, both were devoted to their leader, both were men with an artistic ability - Wilson with sketch pencils and artist brushes; Lindsey with a poetic flair, which sometime overran its bank with terrible puns. But our issue on Al ended with one of his poems, *The Outward Breed*, in which he addressed things close to his heart. This could very well have been the closing eulogy at his memorial service. We feel that it is very appropriate that he was the last Byrd scientist to die, as if someone much higher predestined him to close the book on their careers. And what a career it was!

The Ecological Society of America named him "eminent ecologist for 1976," saying at the time "few investigators, past or present, have achieved excellence in such varied aspects of ecology." A new genus and species of animal was named after him, the *Lindseyus coastus*, in 1973. The University of Arizona named the oldest dated wood in the American Southwest, The Lindsey Ancient Tree Site. The wood. in El Malpais National Monument, was traced to 190 B.C. through radiocarbon dating. Off the coast of Antarctica, in the Amundsen Sea, lie Lindsey Islands. 73° 37' S, 103° 18'W. And two months before he died, Purdue University dedicated the new Alton Lindsey Field Laboratory at its Ross Biological Reserve which Al founded fifty years earlier!! It was said that Al protected that reserve from encroachment from other departments at Purdue, preserving it strictly for biological research - nine Ph.D. dissertations have resulted.

The Lindsey Fellowship in Environmental Education was established at Goshen College in 1985. The Lindsey Graduate Research Fellowship in Ecology at Purdue University was created in 1992. The Park Service first presented the Alton A. Lindsey Award in Science and Resource Stewardship in 1998. Instigated by his pioneering research, he was influential in the establishment of the El Malpais National Monument of 114,400 acres near Grants, New Mexico. He was the chief scientific consultant

which led to the preservation of the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore for the National Park Service. He also served in the Arctic studying permafrost on research sponsored by both the U.S. and Canadian governments.

Al was a graduate of Allegheny College, preceding Paul Siple by a couple of years. He got his Ph.D. at Cornell University in 1937. He was at the first NSF Tropical Ecology Institute in Costa Rica in the summer of 1961, and the following summer attended the first sessions of the Radiation Ecology Institute at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. He taught at five different universities, but is known primarily as a Boilermaker, being at Purdue from 1947 through his retirement in 1973. Both Allegheny and Purdue granted him Honorary Doctor of Science degrees.

In the late 1940s Al became an early and strong proponent of the natural areas preservation movement. He was a charter member of the Nature Conservancy and its Indiana chapter. He is credited with establishing the Pine Hills Nature Preserve and the Big Walnut Natural Area in Indiana.

Al wrote ten books, fifteen magazine articles, and seventy technical papers, as well as serving as the editor of numerous magazines and journals. The New York Times obituary, a four-column spread on December 23, 1999, was very poignant, saying "Alton A. Lindsey, 92, dies. Ecologist left global imprint." We have given you the whole ball of wax on Al, as first, he was a most distinguished American scientist, he is relatively unknown to modern-day Antarcticans in spite of being our first true naturalist on the ice, he was the last of the Byrd scientists to pass away, and we liked the guy, as we do his wife, a truly lovely person. It may interest the Byrd family to know that the Admiral rushed through a briefing on Capitol Hill just so he could attend their wedding in Alexandria. May your current expedition be as exciting as the one you gave us, Al. Thank you!

#### **SUPER STAR SUSAN SOLOMON SCORES.**

Knighthoods of adventurers are something entirely foreign to Americans, but occasionally, very occasionally, we honor some of our top scientists, even Antarctic scientists, as if going there in itself was not enough of an award. Take

Larry Gould, for instance, he received among many honors, twenty-six honorary doctorate degrees. But recently one of us, Ms. SOS, Susan "Ozone" Solomon, received a most prestigious honor, being the recipient of the National Medal of Science from our president, Bill Clinton, in ceremonies at the White House on March 14, 2000. Susan is in very select company, as only 374 scientists and engineers have been bestowed with this medal. She was honored for her keen insights into explaining the cause of the Antarctic ozone hole that changed the direction of ozone research, and for providing exemplary service to worldwide public policy on ozone research. The evening before, Secretary of Commerce William Daley, Presidential Science Advisor Neal Lane, and NSF Director Rita Colwell honored all attendees with a black-tie banquet.

Susan Solomon is a senior scientist in the Aeronomy Laboratory at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in Boulder, Colorado. In 1986, Susan and her colleagues suggested that chemical reactions occurring on the surface of polar stratospheric clouds could greatly enhance reactive chlorine compounds in the Antarctic stratosphere. This mechanism is now firmly established as the key first step in producing the ozone hole. In 1986 and 1987 Susan led a scientific expedition to the Antarctic where she made measurements not only of ozone, but also of other critical chemicals, particularly chlorine and nitrogen dioxide. She and her colleagues provided the first direct observations pointing towards such chemistry as the cause of the ozone hole.

Susan also demonstrated the important role of volcanoes and chlorine in affecting ozone outside the polar regions. Surface reactions similar to those occurring on polar stratospheric clouds can take place on sulfate aerosols resulting from explosive volcanic eruptions, affecting ozone over mid-latitude locations. Susan also showed how to compare the impacts of proposed substitutes for ozone-depleting gases to one another. She put the research for replacements on a solid scientific footing and clarified the basis for international protocols on substances that deplete the ozone layer.

One personal downer for Susan was that her mother passed away from cancer in December, and wasn't able to celebrate this great honor with her daughter. Susan thoroughly enjoyed the

association with the other eleven medallists who were to a person, remarkably bright, thoughtful, and pleasant to be around." Susan thought President Clinton was an amazing speech-giver, and said to him at her presentation, "You really seem to enjoy this job," to which he replied to her, "Yes, I do." Susan enjoyed the tour of the East Wing, and said, "I particularly like the early paintings of Indians, which were probably presented in the very early days and showing early impressions of the wild frontier."

Susan's presentation coincided with her completion of the draft of a book on Captain Robert Falcon Scott and his victimization by weather, and she was about to sign a contract for its publication as we went to press. Susan has also written an Antarctic novel, so she is a very versatile National Medal of Science honoree. Our Society hereby takes time out not only to congratulate Susan on this most prestigious award, but to also say "Thank you" from all Antarcticans for what she has done to enlighten us, and the rest of the world.

**IT'S SIR WALLY HERBERT** (by John Spletstoesser). Wally Herbert received word of his Knighthood at the end of last year, and what a way to end 1999. Wally got the word on the very day of the funeral of Sir Vivian (Bunny) Fuchs, the only man since Ernest Shackleton to receive the Knighthood 'For services to Polar Exploration.' He received a letter from the Prime Minister's Office to say that he would be honoured with the same citation on the last day of the old Millennium. What does all this mean, considering Wally's life has been a hubbub of traveling in polar regions, and is now sequestered in a rather private part of Scotland to continue writing books and painting? He will find out, when the 'Investiture' will be held on 27 April at Buckingham Palace, and he gets the sword treatment from the Queen. His wife Marie and daughter Kari will be there, of course, to savor the moment. It turns out that Wally's honour is that of Knight Bachelor, the most ancient form of Knighthood and the oldest honour in Britain. The list of famous polar explorers includes every notable British explorer from Frobisher to Shackleton and Fuchs, with only a few exceptions. So what did Wally actually do? Well, for one thing, along with three others, made an historic dog-sledging trip from Alaska to

Spitsbergen, across the ice of the Arctic Ocean on a 16-months journey in 1968-69, which included reaching the Pole of Inaccessibility and the Geographic North Pole along the way, both "firsts" by foot. One of Wally's companions on that trip, Roy (Fritz) Koerner, had just become a father, and his wife and new baby daughter became guests at my house in Columbus, Ohio where my wife tenderly consoled her with the fact that Fritz would be away for only sixteen months, and (hopefully) would return.

But about Wally. On the other side of the world in an earlier part of his career, he was a member of the British FIDS in the late 50s and early 60s, and mapped on foot and dogsled some 46,000 square miles of new country. You might say that he knows the summit plateau of the Antarctic Peninsula like the back of his hand, because he was on the first team to transit the whole thing, from north to south. One of their treks in the Transantarctic Mountains was to duplicate and map the route that Amundsen made on the Axel Heiberg Glacier in 1911, on the famous first arrival at the South Pole. So what hasn't he done in polar regions? Along with others of us, he has also been on the lecture team on tour ships, and has seen the ins and outs of the comfortable way to see the Arctic and Antarctic. We're still not sure what all this means -- is he now Sir Wally, or how do we address him? Probably no change in his life except that he has finally achieved something long deserved and well worth waiting for.

**SOUTH POLE WOMAN BAPTIZER, LOIS JONES, DIES** (by John Spletstoesser). Dr. Lois Jones, leader of the first all-female field party in the U.S. Antarctic Research Program passed away on March 13 after a long illness. Lois was a geologist with a Ph.D. degree from Ohio State University, and happened to be in the right place at the right time when NSF and the U.S. Navy relented from their males-only policy and approved females in Antarctic field projects. Dr. Colin Bull, then Director of the Institute of Polar Studies at Ohio State, was instrumental in providing the proper amount of persuasion to make it happen. Lois went to McMurdo for the 1969-70 field season, along with three other females -- Christine Muller-Schwartz, who worked with her husband, Dietland, at Cape Crozier; Pam Young, a New Zealand biologist who worked with her husband in the New Zealand

program; and a reporter from a Detroit newspaper to cover this historic event. Lois, plus six of the seven women on the ice, were the first females acknowledged to be first at the South Pole, when they were transported there by LC-130 prior to the field season. Christine was already in the field with Dietland and missed the event. I was at McMurdo that season, and also at a helicopter field camp, but remember the reaction of all the males at McMurdo to this sudden influx of womanhood. You can imagine a bunch of guys wintering over, and a plane arriving with seven women on board. All were immediately popular. Lois returned to Antarctica only once, on a cruise ship last year. After her Antarctic season in the Dry Valleys, she taught at the University of Georgia, then worked for sixteen years for Conoco in Oklahoma. She then moved to Kansas State University for a teaching job before retirement back in Ohio.

### **BOOK REVIEW**

**VIEW FROM THE SUMMIT** by Sir Edmund Hillary (Doubleday, 1999, 370 pages). (Reviewed by Paul Dalrymple) This is a very interesting book about the first man to have tripled, standing on top of Mt. Everest, the Geographic South Pole, and the Geographic North Pole; the first apiarist to be a High Commissioner to another country, the first Antarctic to see his own portrait on a five-dollar bill while he was still alive; and probably the first father to have talked by phone to his son on top of Mt. Everest, as well as at the South Pole.

But in many minds his humanitarian efforts on behalf of his friends in the Himalayas will be his greatest legacy of all. As the book went to press Hillary's Himalayan Trust had been responsible for establishing twenty-seven schools, two hospitals, twelve clinics, many, many bridges, piping fresh water into many villages, and assisting in the rebuilding of monasteries. As a humanitarian, it could be said that Hillary was the Nansen of the Southern Hemisphere. Antarcticans like myself will find the book interesting if for no other reason than his account of his tractor journey to the South Pole in 1957-58. Even though I was on the scene when both Hillary and Fuchs arrived at the South Pole, I don't think any of us at the time, realized the true gut feeling that Ed had for Bunny as revealed in the pages of this book. Ed does not miss a chance to belittle Bunny, and

consequently the book has not been very well received by the polar community in the UK, especially since it came out when Fuchs was on his deathbed.

We at the South Pole were very fond of Ed's radio operator, Peter Mulgrew, who was the only member of Hillary's party to stay on at the South Pole. Peter was a very close personal friend of Ed's, and after Hillary lost his wife in a plane crash in the Himalayas, and after Peter lost his life in the ill-fated DC-10 crash on Mt. Erebus, Ed eventually married Peter's widow. But I thought it was a rather low blow, although very truthful, for Ed to bring up the fact that the Mulgrews were having marital problems. Let it not be said that Ed held any punches in his autobiography. He never copped out!

I was at McMurdo when Scott Base was being erected in January 1956, and remember how our chief scientist, Bert Crary liked to tell about visiting the station and seeing this guy hammering away with his mouth full of nails. It was Ed Hillary. As this book will tell you, Ed had a close relationship with Admiral Dufek, a much better one than we IGYers ever had, so he could get any support that he wanted from Dufek. After Ed returned to Scott Base from his trek to the Pole, the next incoming plane brought us a ration of grog from Hillary for services rendered! I was back at McMurdo thirty years later, and was surprised when I visited Scott Base not to find a single picture of Ed on their walls. Fame is fleeting!

Hillary brought his own mountain climbing guru to Scott Base - Harry Ayres. It is interesting to note that both had sons who followed them to Antarctica. And, of course, George Lowe, a boyhood chum from New Zealand, who was on Everest with Ed, was also on the British Commonwealth Transantarctic Expedition. although with Fuchs. On the 40th anniversary of building Scott Base. George and Ed went back to the station. Fuchs's radio operator. Ralph Lenton, had wished to end up at the South Pole, so one of his sons, working for the U.S. contractor, took his Dad's ashes back to the station. A close-knit family, outside of Ed and Bunny!!

I had my own two minutes with Hillary. Being married at the time to a Bermudian, I had a Bermuda flag with me. I got Ed to pose with me

holding the flag in front of his wanigan. - I think it was the first British flag at the South Pole since Capt. Scott's. My other minute with Ed was spent in the aurora tower looking out over the snowscape to see if we could see Fuchs's party coming on in to the station. We could!!

Knowing that he scaled Everest, I think it was totally unrealistic of Bunny to think that Ed would pack up his bags and go back to Scott when the South Pole was in his gun-sight. Our impression of Hillary is that he is a very nice guy, and perhaps it's not inconceivable that a beekeeper and a scientist might not be totally compatible at all times. It's a good book, with a great picture of Ed on the cover. He is leading a life that we mere mortals can only dream about, so best you buy and live his life with him through some very interesting happenings.

**CONGRATULATIONS** are in order for Jerry Marty, Jerry Huffman and Polly Penhale, having been cited by their respective colleges as most distinguished alums.

## PENGUIN PRATTLE

KRISTIN LARSON

Another mid-winter celebration is almost upon us, and, as is usual, much has changed but much remains the same. Antarctica is like that; a glacially slow background tempo overlaid by the frenetic staccato of the breeding (and research) season. It's winter in Antarctica now, and everyone is taking a breather, especially the new support contractor who officially took over the reins on the first of April (more on that below). Antarctic toothfish are also breathing a big sigh of relief as the new CCAMLR conservation measure protecting both species goes into effect early in this month. The Prattler provides an overview of that new development as well as a panoply of other bite-sized updates on all things south.

**EXPLORERS, HURRY!** The Antarctica exhibition, currently running at National Geographic's Explorers Hall in Washington, DC, is on for another month (ending June 4). It's a fabulous expose, of natural history on the Seventh continent, and it is now at the end of its United States sojourn.

By the way, billboards around town and handbills promoting the Nat. Geo. exhibit features a wonderful photo by NSF/OPP -Scripps Institution researcher Jerry Kooyman. The image captures that decisive moment in every emperor penguin chick's life: the grand departure out to sea. In this case, it's a line-up of hundreds of chicks on the top of a high ice cliff waiting to make the 30-foot plunge... the caption reads: *Antarctica, It's A Long Way Down.*

**SPEAKING OF JERRY.** Last month Scripps Institution (with some help from NSF) celebrated the life and times of Dr. Jerry Kooyman, whose Antarctic research career has spanned more than 30 years and inspired countless new research endeavors. Jerry is best known for his work on the diving physiology of emperor penguins but has also examined Weddell seals, tropical turtles, whale sharks and cormorants.

And what a fitting fete it was. After a daylong seminar given by former and current students, colleagues, and mentors from several continents, the guests were treated to a stupendous sunset view of the La Jolla coastline and a genial reception. But don't be fooled, the R-word (as in retirement) had no place in this wonderful event, nor is it a part of Jerry's lexicon. We can all look forward to more terrific research and beautiful pictures!

**DON'T BE ECLIPSED AGAIN.** Those of you lamenting the fact that you stayed home on New Year's to experience the Y2K-bug non-event, and missed the celebrations in Antarctica, will soon have another reason to put Antarctica on your travel itinerary (as if we really need a bonefide excuse). Mark your calendars for the total eclipse of the sun, visible in Antarctica November 23 and 24, 2003!

The swath of total eclipse centers in the southern quadrant of the Indian Ocean (near Kerguelen and Heard Islands), makes landfall near Russian Mirny Station, and will cast shadow over a small arc of the continent. For more information, the Prattler recommends visiting <http://eclipse.span.ch/2003.htm>.

**PROTECTION THAT REALLY BITES.** In a pattern that has become alarmingly familiar, Antarctic toothfish (also known as Chilean Sea Bass in the United States, Mero in Japan, Bacalao in Spain

and Black Hake in some other countries) have joined other embattled fish populations throughout the world threatened with collapse. Appetites for this ugly but tasty fish have risen steadily since it first appeared on restaurant menus three years ago, to the point where it now occupies a solid, yet unsustainable, niche in world trade flows. On May 4, 2000 a new toothfish conservation measure went into force in all CCAMLR nations. It provides protection for two species of Antarctic fish: *Dissostichus mawsonii*, which occur exclusively in the Southern Ocean; and *Dissostichus eleginoides*, whose range includes not only the Southern Ocean but extends slightly north to waters off of Chile and Argentina.

Throughout the latter half of the 1990s efforts were made to limit the toothfish harvest to sustainable levels by the Commission on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (the CCAMLR guiding body). Despite these efforts, researchers and environmental groups continued to predict that the fishery would soon disappear if more effective controls failed to be enacted and enforced. In response to these concerns, the 23-member CCAMLR Commission approved a toothfish conservation measure on November 9, 1999 that has been described as "the most restrictive and detailed scheme ever imposed to protect a high seas fishery." The toothfish measure sets up a comprehensive paper trail specifically targeted at international trade, and is meant to eliminate market access for illegal, unregulated, and unreported IUU toothfish catches.

The embattled toothfish has caught the attention of a broad array of conservation groups (it is listed as one of the World Wildlife Funds key issues for Earth Day 2000), policy makers and even filmmakers. One film, entitled "White Gold," was released by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). For more information surf over to <http://www.isofish.org.au>.

**THE BIG CHANGEROO.** On April first of this year the US Antarctic Program changed support contractors, and has now installed Raytheon Polar Services Company. They have retained the Englewood, Colorado headquarters, formerly occupied by Antarctic Support Associates (ASA), and many of the accomplished and experienced employees have also signed on.

For all intents and purposes, the changeover has hardly caused a ripple, except perhaps for the fresh ideas a new contractor can bring. However, the transition period could better be characterized as a real tempest. For instance, Chemical and Engineering News reports that the contract losers filed a bid protest against NSF with the US General Accounting Office, which eventually ended up in the Court of Federal Claims. There ASA filed a "blizzard of motions" including a restraining order that effectively stopped the flow of information vital to Raytheon's smooth transition into the driver's seat. Ultimately, the judge ruled in NSF's favor and Raytheon is now officially in. They have assumed the distinguished mantle as supporters of this high profile and challenging government program.

**GREAT MINDS ARE GOING TO WASTE.** This year *Mission Antarctica*, an international environmental expedition lead by British Explorer, Robert Swan, visited Bellingshausen Base (Russian) to assist in waste removal and clean-up of abandoned huts and equipment. In all, the five-year expedition expects to remove more than 1,000 tons of material and is comprised, in part, of 44 young people (one from each of the nations, which are signatories to the Antarctic Treaty). The estimated cost (including offsets from recycling in Argentina) is approximately \$12 million, and will assist the Russians in meeting their obligations under the Antarctic Treaty.

Swan is the first man to walk unsupported to both the North and South Poles, and has recently been appointed by the United Nations as an Ambassador to Youth. This cooperative effort between the Russian Antarctic Expedition Service and *Mission Antarctica*, is supported by a 67-foot BT Challenge racing yacht (a Bermudan Cutter) named "2041" after the year in which the Antarctic Treaty expires and will be revised. Their progress can be tracked online at <http://www.missionantarctica.com>.

**TRAILING EDGE.** Julie Palais, OPP Program Manager for Glaciology has been asked to give a presentation at the October meeting of the American Polar Society on the role of women in polar regions. She is looking for photos, anecdotes and interviewees (both genders!). Please drop her a line with any of the above: [jpalais@nsf.gov](mailto:jpalais@nsf.gov).