



The Antarctic Society

"By and For All Antarcticans"

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BRASH ICE. This is a transition period Newsletter, written as people on the ice are getting ready to celebrate another Mid-Winter Day. Back here in the States, a lot of people are waiting with baited breath to see who will win the upcoming contract award this fall for supporting research in Antarctica. The recent International Polar Year closed out this past spring, the 50th anniversary celebration of the Antarctic Treaty is now history, and we await the most recent satellite imagery of calving ice shelves.

We try to put something of interest to all of you people in each Newsletter. The hardest part is to find things of interest to the current generation of Antarcticans. It has been speculated of late that there is a generational gap in the type of people going to the ice, that to many of the current generation, Antarctica is a basically a job. Is the excitement and glamor of going to the ice fading away? We hope not.

Our own Society has changed a lot. In many ways, the Newsletter is only a fill-in for our flourishing web site under the web mastermind, Tom Henderson. You should look at our web-site regularly, as it is a very active web-site, with Tom continually adding and upgrading its content. Be sure to read in this Newsletter Tom's passages about what is new on the web-site. And Chips Lagerbom is performing an unbelievable service to you Antarcticans who may have an interest in seeing your own photography preserved. Read what Chips is offering to you people.

Dr Ed Williams, a retired surgeon in Roanoke, Virginia, caught a severe case of Antarctic fever on a cruise ship to Antarctica, and hasn't been the same man since. His wife is a soft-spoken, charming Southern belle who lets Ed play with his toys. Since his initial trip to Antarctica, Dr. Ed has made repetitive trips back to the Ice, and produced for his family and friends a special DVD on Antarctic penguins. So, we prevailed upon Dr. Ed to make our Golden Anniversary Antarctic album, **ANTARCTICA CALLING**, which features the historical remembrances of thirty of the most prominent Antarcticans in the past sixty years. Over a hundred of you members have already bought copies of these archival DVDs. John Splettstoesser writes herein why they are so important to our history and why you all should have copies of them.

Have a nice summer, enjoy the Newsletter, keep abreast of ongoing additions to our web-site, and order your calendars NOW.

HAPPY MID-WINTER DAY!

ANTARCTIC CALENDARS

(HEDGEHOG), 2010. We have received an advanced copy of the photographs which will adorn the Antarctic calendars published in New Zealand by Hedgehog. It is my candid opinion, for whatever it is worth, that this is one of their better ones, free of kayakers, free of vehicles, free of planes. It's pristine Antarctica at its best. In spite of increased mailing costs, we are offering the new calendar at the same price as last year's, \$15.00. It would help us a lot if you ordered now, as it is no fun getting orders from you people in mid-December when we may or may not have any left. We will mail them as soon as we get a shipment from down under, probably in late summer. But please order now, please.

WEBSITE UPDATE (by Tom Henderson, Webmaster) There never seems to be enough time to get done everything that I want to do with the website! My "day job" is increasingly interfering with what I really enjoy doing. Nevertheless, there has been some progress to report.

First, the long-awaited Google Earth API version of Time Trek is almost ready for prime time. Amos Alubala has completed the coding, but there remains some testing to do before going "live." It will be worth the wait because this enhancement will accomplish two major things: (1) It will allow Mac users to use the Google Earth version of Time Trek and (2) It will eliminate the need to load two separate software modules to run GE Time Trek (Google Earth and the Googleearthairlines plugin). The former is a big deal according to the results of the website survey (discussed further below). As to the latter, users will download a single plugin for their browser and that's it. Google Earth is already built-in so when an update to Google Earth comes out, it will automatically be updated in the plugin. Look for the new API version on the website within the next month. It will be prominently announced when it finally arrives.

As of late May, there is a significant enhancement to the way images are searched for and displayed in Time Trek. The old method was admittedly a bit clunky, so we have now moved to a "lightbox" type of image handling. This is commonly used in many online photo galleries to provide an easy and aesthetically pleasing interaction with images. We think it is a big improvement – try it yourself. By the way, even Mac users can try it in the Static Map version of Time Trek [right now](#). It has the same search and browse functions for stations, features, images and events that the Google Earth version does.

We also have changed the way that members' information is displayed and used in the Members area. A new page called "Members Info" lists the member names in the left-hand column. When any name is clicked, more information about the member is shown in the right-hand side of the page. By default, only the member's address is displayed, unless they have contacted me and requested that it not be displayed. Members have full control over how much of their information – other than their names - they show or don't show. When you initially enter the page, a form appears on the right side that shows all of the information we have on you in our database, such as address, phone number, email, etc. [No one else sees this form except you](#). The form allows you to correct mistakes or update information that has changed. It also allows you to pick what parts of your information you want other members to see or don't see. It will be very helpful if members will check this page from time to time to update any incorrect information that might be there. Remember, since this page is in the members-only area, the general public never sees it.

We have a survey on the website posted online that so far has had 26 responses. [The survey will remain available until the end of June, so if you have not taken the time to offer your opinions on the website, please do](#)

so. It only takes a few minutes. The results are of great value to me in pointing out what you like and don't like so I can improve the website going forward. I will post the detailed summary of the survey results in July on the website, but here are a few general results: (1) Users go to the website primarily to learn what is happening in Antarctica and to explore historical information, (2) Those who use Time Trek (about half of the respondents) find it very useful and (3) Most people visit the website on a monthly basis.

Finally, I know that I am way behind on adding content to the website and especially to Time Trek. I am as frustrated as probably some of you are. The backlog of good material is growing fast, so I have every incentive to get it uploaded. You will definitely like what is coming. If you will bear with me, you will not be disappointed!

SAVE THE SLIDES CAMPAIGN (by Charles H. Lagerbom) The Antarctic Society has embarked on an ambitious project to locate, catalog and digitize the slide collections of its members. This project is geared towards getting these historic and important images onto a more modern digital format. The members then receive their original slides back (if they want them) as well as a cd of their images newly digitized. The Society bought a top of the line scanner, the NIKON Super Coolscan 5000 and began the project over the winter. It has special software that can remove scratches and dust particles from the images. What emerges is a digital scanned image of the slide, preserved and burned onto a cd. First up was Bob Dale's almost two thousand polar slide collection spanning more than a decade from his career as pilot and aboard the research ship HERO. Since then we have digitized Paul Dalrymple's almost 500 slides of his two years with the IGY, Calvin Larsen's almost 300 slides from the same period, as well as my own slides from my two field seasons in the Dry Valleys in the early 1990s. All slides were scanned at a resolution of 4000 dpi which

makes for producing sizable photo print enlargements. We have also begun cataloging the images collected by Charles Swithinbank from his multi-decade polar career.

Q. Do you really want all of my slides from my time in Antarctica?

A. Our policy is that all images contain historic relevance to your polar experience and should be included for a total picture.

Q. I only have a few slides, is it worth your time?

A. From our point of view, the size of the collection is irrelevant; the preservation of the images is what is important.

Q. What if my slides are in pretty bad condition?

A. We will do what we can to preserve what we can.

Q. What if many of my images have yellowed with age?

A. Our first step is to digitize the image. Then software such as Photoshop can be used to clean up the saved image.

The process so far has yielded several thousand images that have been historically preserved. More importantly, a catalog system has been developed to aid in the maintenance and accessibility of so many images. A catalog number is assigned to each slide and corresponds with the slide owner's name. For instance, Paul Dalrymple's slides were designated PCD1 - PCD488. Then they were categorized with date (as specific as possible) and three different location designations (each getting more specific). One heading was for what type of image it was such as Science, Animal, Aviation, Structure, People, Scenic etc. Along with the original slides and the cd of images, the slide owner also receives a hard copy printout of the catalog as well as an electronic form of it burned onto the cd with the images. It is understood that members retain all copyrights to the original image and that the Antarctic Society be

granted non-exclusive use of the scanned images for its website and publications. The images will not be used by the Society for any commercial purpose. Comparable scanning services can charge up to or over \$1 per slide. This service is offered FREE for members of the Antarctic Society. It would be helpful if slides were already labeled with date, location, names, etc but we can work around that if necessary. The important thing is for these fragile (and deteriorating) slides be transferred to a more reliable and better preserved digital format. See the Society's website for more information about the service or contact me at clagerbom@sad34.net if you have any questions. So whether you have a few slides from your Antarctic days or several thousand, the slide scanning service of the Antarctic Society stands ready to help you save these great memories.

ANTARCTICA IS STILL CALLING.

You have read in this Newsletter previously about this remarkable DVD set that Dr. Ed Williams filmed and produced recently, most of the content resulting from the Antarctic Gathering held at Port Clyde, Maine, in 2008. It is called **ANTARCTICA CALLING, Antarctic Society Golden Anniversary Album**, and with sales continuing to be active, there eventually will be a close-out for sales in the future. Nevertheless, **Antarctica is still calling.** This is the time and in your interest to revive the subject before you miss out on something as equally historic as your collection of polar books (assuming you collect some, as most of us do). Just to review what is included, it is possible that some are turned off because they don't know all the names, but once begun, as John Splettstoesser mentioned, "I found it difficult to stop looking at the faces and hearing more of the interviews until I had downloaded all of the content in the three discs, although I took parts of several days to do it." Sure, it's long (each DVD is just a bit longer than 2 hours), but it's an archive that will never be repeated, and some of the members might not see it that way because it

appeals to mostly an audience of the same era (IGY, a bit before, and a bit after), but these names are familiar in one way or another to all of us. John has a tape recording of speeches by Peary and Shackleton, and playing it brings them to life as though they were still with us.

Disc one includes interviews of 10 IGY veterans, Disc two has eight more spanning some years following IGY, and Disc three has 12 more. Pre-IGY veterans interviewed were Charles Swwithinbank (began Antarctic work in 1949), and Bob Dodson (Ronne Expedition, 1947-48). A bit of frosting that Dr. Ed included on the DVDs is the admixture of oils and watercolors by Lucia deLeiris, and photographs by Ann Hawthorne. The DVD set of three is dedicated to Bert Crary, whose name is known to all of us, a respected scientist and pioneer of Antarctic research.

I would encourage members to buy the DVD set, enjoy, see history that many never knew and never will otherwise, and from those who were there. Be an Antarctic historian, like we all are and should be. After viewing and hearing an individual once, you might never return to the same DVD, but when you have a reference book on your polar bookshelf you don't discard it.... you refer to it from time to time when you recall something you missed earlier, and the DVDs will forever be the primary and unique source. When you read news that someone interviewed on these DVDs might no longer be with us, you can return to the DVD and review once again that documentary. You will regret not knowing that part of important history, as told first-hand by those who experienced it. Antarcticans are not immortal (although some might appear ancient), and as the years pass, a refresher will be welcome as we have another look at a DVD that brings back memories. Because of the way that Dr. Ed set up the interviews on the DVDs (most interviews were done in Paul Dalrymple's back yard), access to individual presenters can be made by selecting their chapters on

the DVD menu.

There is a cost involved, but the Antarctic Society has blessed the product with a subsidy. An actual cost of \$50 for the set of three DVDs has been made more comfortable at \$35, with a check for that amount mailed to Dr. Ed Williams, MD, 4536 Greenlee Road SW, Roanoke, VA 24018.

ATCM AND IPY EVENTS (by Ray Arnaudo) The State Department marked the 50th anniversary of the Antarctic Treaty last month by hosting a special high-level diplomatic session in the Dean Acheson Auditorium on April 6th. The meeting was a Joint Meeting with the Arctic Council, a first-time ever event, which highlighted the conclusion of the 2007-09 International Polar Year (IPY) as well, demonstrating the continued potential for science in Antarctica to improve our practical understanding of the global environment while contributing to international understanding in general. Secretary Clinton opened the meeting (<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/04/121314.htm>), followed by a speech from the current Arctic Council Chair, Norwegian Foreign Minister Store, and finally, an address by the President's new Science Advisor, John Holdren. The event drew a pretty good response: over a dozen Foreign Ministers and the Prince of Monaco attended. Sec. Clinton then hosted a high-level lunch for all in the State Department's 8th floor Ben Franklin Room.

In the afternoon, the National Science Foundation and the National Academy of Sciences held a celebration of IPY at the National Academy building across the street. Academy President Ralph Cicerone and Polar Research Board Chair James White spoke, followed by several panels discussing the significance of IPY research.

The location was particularly important because, as we Antarctic Society regulars know, the Treaty negotiations took place in

the NAS building at the conclusion of the IGY, in 1959. It was also announced at the meeting that a commemorative plaque will be installed in the Academy building, once the imminent two-year renovation is completed, to highlight the building's role in the creation of the Treaty. Later that evening, a reception for all was held at the Smithsonian's Ocean Hall in the Natural History Museum.

These events kicked off the regular annual session of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting, held in Baltimore, April 6-17. There are now 47 countries in the Treaty, including 28 Consultative Parties which both maintain a scientific presence on the Continent and oversee the governance of the Treaty. The ATCM adopted a mandatory 500 passenger limit on tour ships. Additionally, the Parties supported a U.S. initiative to engage the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in promoting vessel safety in the Treaty area, including work toward adopting a mandatory polar shipping code and stronger lifeboat protections. Finally, the Meeting began work on a U.S. proposal to extend the IMO limitations on vessel discharges in the Special Area of the Southern Ocean up to the Antarctic Convergence, instead of stopping at 60 degrees south. The meeting brought back a couple of old ATCM hands: Tucker Scully was asked to chair the meeting, and Ray Arnaudo served as the head of the US Secretariat. Evan Bloom of the State Department led the US delegation.

ANTARCTIC ICE SHELVES ARE IN THE NEWS! (by Jane Ferrigno)

Justifiably so! Whether an Antarctic ice shelf is calving a gigantic iceberg, or partially or completely breaking up, large areas of real estate are involved, areas the size of some U.S. states or small European countries.

The Wilkins Ice Shelf is the most recent area where dramatic events are happening. The ice shelf is centered about 70°15'S., 73°00'W., on the western side at the base of

the Antarctic Peninsula. In recent years it filled Wilkins Sound in the area between the western side of Alexander Island and Charcot and Latady Islands and was about 13,680 km² in area. Although Wilkins Ice Shelf has been in place for several hundred years, if not longer, its extent was only recognized in 1960 from aerial photographs acquired in 1947-48 by the Ronne Antarctic Research Expedition (RARE) and the shelf was named in 1971.

On April 2, 2009, the ice bridge collapsed that connected the ice shelf to Charcot Island on the northwest and to Latady Island on the southwest, and that stabilized the western side of the ice shelf. As a result about 330 km² of ice was lost. Following that event, large pieces of the ice shelf fractured from the north and west sides of the shelf with an additional area of almost 700 km², possibly leading to a comprehensive breakup of the ice shelf. This dramatic event followed several large break-offs in 2008 that totaled about 2,000 km². Although the recent changes are dramatic, they are not unexpected. In 1993, David Vaughan, a glaciologist with the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), predicted the northern part of the ice shelf would be lost within 30 years, considering the climate warming that was taking place – temperatures in this part of Antarctica have risen by 2.5 degrees Celsius since the 1950s. His predictions have turned out to be too conservative. In 1998, a US Geological Survey (USGS) geologist Baerbel Lucchitta measured a retreat of up to 20 km of the northern margins of Wilkins Ice Shelf using time-lapse Landsat imagery.

Wilkins is the most southerly of the nine Antarctic Peninsula Ice Shelves that have either disappeared or been substantially reduced in the last 30 years. The ice shelves of Prince Gustav Channel, Larsen Inlet, Wordie Bay, and Jones Channel have disappeared, and Larsen A, Larsen B, Müller, and George VI Ice Shelves have lost considerable amounts of ice. Larsen B lost 3,250 km² of its ice in thirty-five days in

2002 and a total of more than 7,850 km² between 1986 and 2005.

The changes in the ice fronts of the Antarctic coastline have been mapped and analyzed in a USGS Project “Coastal-Change and Glaciological Maps of Antarctica”. USGS scientists, realizing measurement of change in area and mass balance of the Antarctic ice sheet is critically important during this interval of global warming, because of implications to rise in global sea level, utilized their extensive archive of satellite images to document changes in the coastline of Antarctica. Although changes in the areal extent of the Antarctic Ice Sheet are not directly related to changes in mass balance, the two are related, and the analysis of the changing coastline can yield important data. The data used for the coastal-change project were Landsat 1, 2, and 3 Multispectral Scanner (MSS), Landsat 4 and 5 MSS and Thematic Mapper (TM) and RADARSAT images and available maps. In some areas, aerial photography, NOAA AVHRR, MODIS, Landsat 7 Enhanced Thematic Mapper Plus (ETM+) data were used to compare changes that occurred during a 20- to 25- or 30-year time interval or longer. A combination of manual and digital annotation of glaciological features was used, and interpretation and analysis was done by those familiar with Antarctic ice features, such as Charles Swinbank. A noteworthy result of the project is the determination that a large percentage of the smaller, less obvious ice fronts are also showing signs of retreat, in addition to the noticeable, dramatic changes of the ice shelves.

The results of the analysis are being used to produce a digital database and a series of Geologic Investigations Maps (I-2600). The maps already completed are available online at <http://www.glaciers.er.usgs.gov>. As of June 2009, seven maps have been printed (I-2600 A and B that cover the northern two thirds of the Antarctic Peninsula and show changes in the Larsen, Wordie, Müller, and

northern George VI and Wilkins Ice Shelves prior to 2005, and I-2600 D-H, that portray changes in the coast from Ronne Ice Shelf westward to the Ross Ice Shelf). The map that covers the Wilkins Ice Shelf is in production and should be available later in 2009.

JERRY MARTY (MR. SOUTH POLE) RETIRES.

This August will mark 40 years ago that I made my first trip to Antarctica. I'm also celebrating my retirement from the National Science Foundation – Office of Polar Programs on June 30, 2009. I have spent over five years of my life actually living “on the ice” with most of that time at the actual geographic South Pole. The rewards have been beyond my expectations, among which are having an Antarctic geographic feature named after myself – Marty Nunataks, being featured in a National Geographic documentary “Man Made Structures , ” seeing the completion of the new South Pole elevated station, and the never ending support of my wife Elena who has allowed me to live the South Pole dream. My life’s journey has not only allowed for the Antarctic career but also project management assignments to other remote locations in Saudi Arabia and the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands (Palau and Truk). Now it’s time for Elena and I to enjoy more time together, with the kids & grandkids – telling them the stories, experiences, and about the very special people we met along the way, especially those within the USARP/USAP. I am of a Swiss heritage therefore we never say good-bye, only Auf Wiedersehen (until we meet again). Keep in touch and stop in at the Jerry & Elena “90 South” B&B.

AN E-MAIL FROM DALE ANDERSON.

Dale Anderson, whose work on limnology in the Dry Valleys starting in the 1970s and continuing thereafter, sent an e-mail message to Paul Dalrymple and Charles Swithinbank in May, which is modified and edited slightly below. He worked at Lake Untersee (U.S. Board on Antarctic Names

uses Unter-See), last Antarctic season (71° 20'S, 13°27'E, Gruber Mountains, Queen Maud Land), followed by work in Axel Heiberg Island in the Canadian Arctic.

Dale is located at the Carl Sagan Center for the Study of Life in the Universe, Mountain View, California. In Dale's words,

"I am now getting ready to head back to McMurdo for work in the Dry Valleys at Lakes Joyce and Vanda. It will be nice to get back to my old stomping grounds, its been 12 years since I was there last. This time I go as the PI, which will be a nice change of pace. The work will center on the benthic ecology of lakes, primarily some carbonate structures (microbialites) I discovered in Lake Joyce in 1986 while diving beneath the 6m ice-cover there. Neat place and I am looking forward to seeing it again.

I have posted a few images from my trip to Lake Unter-See online at my website. I will get some video up soon too, including some underwater video of this absolutely stunning lake ecosystem. Lake Unter-See likely has the most transparent water of any lake in the world, with Vanda a close second. But the microbial mats form large pillars in Unter-See, something we have never seen before in any other lake. Pretty cool!

Charles, I re-visited your old home at Novo[lazarevskaya]. You may recognize some of the shots looking down the boardwalks between your old hut, and the others that were down below (which are now refurbished and are used by ALCI for housing folks like us).

The images can be found if you go to my website and hit the link to Lake Unter-See in the column on the left side of the screen: <http://daleandersen.seti.org>."

CHINOOK MAY BE HONORED. The first Byrd Antarctic Expedition (1928-30) had a husky from a kennel in the state of New Hampshire, and the dog was named

Chinook. Supposedly the dog was the strongest, the bravest, and best sled dog that they had. But evidently he wasn't cut out for the city life of Little America and he wandered off on an expedition of his own, never to be seen again. Now there is a campaign in the state of New Hampshire to make Chinook the State Dog. And the New Hampshire Historical Society now has a bobble-head version of Chinook to publicize the campaign to immortalize said husky. Antarctic Paul Adams graciously sent us one to guard our boudoir.

THE FABULOUS JULES MADEY, K2KGJ The unsung hero to all Antarcticans during the IGY was a young high school boy from Clark, New Jersey, who somehow stayed up all night running phone patches as a ham radio operator for Antarcticans, while going to school in the daytime. His younger brother, John, K2KGH, also ably assisted him at times, but it seems that Jules was always up on frequency with a strong signal waiting to serve us so elegantly. According to Jules, he and his brother ran something on the order of 10,000 phone patches. WOW! His service continued into the 1960s, when he was invited to attend the Antarctic orientation session at Skyland, Virginia, as a means of promoting what he volunteered to do for those on the Ice.

Jules was one of the first amateur radio men to pick up the signal from Sputnik. If you have a copy of LIFE magazine at the time of Sputnik, you probably read about Jules and saw a picture of his antenna in his backyard. He has been recognized by the feature known as Madey Ridge (83°28'S, 55°50'W) in the Neptune Range of the Pensacola Mountains. He also can wear a medal presented to him by the Department of the Army for his services supporting science in Antarctica. But probably what meant the most for him was a free ride to the Antarctic, McMurdo. Boy, did he ever deserve that trip.

What ever happened to him, the boy wonder? Well it seems his chosen field turned out to be electronic engineering. Jules got married in 1967 just before moving to San Francisco where he worked for ten years at a research institute for vision and visual neurophysiology. Then the Madeys, now with three kids, moved back east and for the last 24 years he has worked for the New York State Thruway Authority. He is still in electronics, transportation related, and was involved in the deployment of the EZPass electronic toll tag system. He lives in Hillsdale, NY, between Hudson, NY and Great Barrington, MA. Another kid appeared on the scene, so he and Gertrude now lay claim to four (boy, girl, girl, boy). Meanwhile, brother John is a professor at the University of Hawaii, parents of one.

PIECE OF ANTARCTIC HISTORY GOES UP IN FLAMES (Margaret Lanyon). Part of the original U.S. base at McMurdo, ceded over to the Kiwis at Scott Base, an A-frame hut dear to Ed Hillary, was destroyed by fire on May 24th. The fire started during a routine changeover of diesel fuel tanks used to heat the timber and bitumen hut. When the heater was reignited, priming fuel flashed over and set fire to the hut.. Three Scott Base staff were outside the hut, while one staff member poured priming fuel into the heater. Staff tried to fight the blaze but the hut burnt quickly in minus 35 C temperatures.

It was known as the Scott Base bach (as in 'bachelor' hut) for its seclusion and basic comforts. It was a favorite of Ed Hillary and he asked to spend his last night in Antarctica there after the official Scott Base 50th birthday celebration in 2007.

A. FORD ON THE ROCKS! ANOTHER ANTARCTIC CRUISE SHIP AGROUND (by Art Ford, in his own words.) It was some dimly recalled time around 1:30 early the morning of last February 17. At 68°08'S by 67°06'W in historic and scenic Marguerite Bay, we were far south of points normally reached by

cruise ships to the Antarctic Peninsula. We were at anchor, we thought. My head was being battered, working that bashing against my bed's headboard into some really weird and vivid beer-inspired dreams. I was Geologist lecturer on board Quark Expeditions' ship M/V *Ocean Nova* and rooming with an Irishman, Jonathan Shackleton, our Historian and relative (second cousin twice removed, he said) of Sir Ernest. It had been one of those rare, clear and windless days that made our afternoon visit to the decaying 1939 East Base (R.E. Byrd, U.S.) and 1946 FIDS (British) buildings on Stonington Island a stunningly euphoric experience, followed by a short evening visit with hospitable Argentines at nearby San Martin Base. Back on board our Danish Captain, Per Gravesen, announced we were anchored and undergoing engine maintenance to prepare for our trip back north early next morning. Our EL (expedition leader), South African Conrad Henning, told us of plans for raising anchor before dawn and a landing at Horseshoe Island before breakfast.

An idyllic day, the beautiful calm seas under a setting sun, and 5 Irish on board made a memorable celebration mandatory for Crossing the Circle and reaching our Farthest South. Most participants headed for bed about midnight as an early morning EL's rooster call was expected. Little notice was taken of rising gusts of wind across the sea. We were ill-prepared for the jolt over the intercom an hour or so later when Capt. Per announced that the anchor had dragged and our ship was blown aground on rocks. "But we are safe, and no need to become alarmed," he assured us several times. Jonathan ("Shack") was out of his bunk and announced "We are at a strange angle," as he lurched from the head. Walking was strange at an angle of 15 or more degrees. Gale force winds were howling outside at more than 50 knots. The sea was a frenzy of white foam and froth.

A rocky islet loomed closely beyond our window and a submerged ledge of gneiss

and granite could be seen vaguely just beneath our window. Sobering up was prompt. Most passengers followed Capt. Per's advice and stayed in bed, as there was really no need to assemble for an emergency. By the time most arose, images on laptops vividly portrayed our situation as seen from the nearby Argentine base. Digital camera-equipped Argentines had watched the entire episode under light of the midnight sky. Images bearing the label "San Martin Base" spread with the speed of light through the internet worldwide. The world knew of our plight within moments, before even most passengers did, and long before word reached Quark Expeditions' Toronto headquarters or London insurance companies.

Our sturdy little 230-foot ship with a 12-ft draft was carrying 64 passengers plus 41 crew and staff. Registered in the Bahamas, it was built in 1992 in Denmark for coastal Greenland ferry traffic. She and M/V *Polar Star* have the best observation lounges of any polar cruise ship I've sailed. Her 2000 HP diesel engine gives a speed of 12 knots in good conditions but not enough strength to take us off those rocks. Later, in mid-day, with higher tide and engine at full power and stern thruster at full blast, we pushed off and the ship was afloat. Applause roared from passengers, immediately silenced at the jolt we felt as the ship was blown back onto new rocks close by.

The winds that arose so suddenly, reaching full gale force or stronger and catching the ship crew off guard, were undoubtedly katabatic in origin - a gravitationally unstable, dense and heavy cold-air mass draining off a large glacier front near the ship. Even with a watch on duty, there was little time to restart a cold engine, warm it up and develop power to stop an anchor dragging under such force. Years before, in our tent camps in the Thiel and Pensacola Mountains, such unpredictable blizzard winds off the polar plateau were not uncommon and could last several days or more. They are much less frequent on the

Antarctic Peninsula, of course, where ice masses are far smaller.

A distress signal was issued and by late afternoon the Spanish naval ship *Hesperides* was coming into view through the mist. Eventually the wind lessened so that a small boat could be launched to inspect our hull, but I did not hear of any damage found. That ship was ready to assist if needed, but two other Quark ships with passenger space were standing by. The *Clipper Adventurer*, the nearer, about a day away near Deception Island headed south for the rescue. Several aircraft flew over for aerial views and imagery that also spread around the internet. That evening, our bartender Sam's ingenuity produced his daily house-special, this time a \$4 one called "Ocean Nova on the Rocks": a marvelous concoction of tequila, contreau, and lime juice, rimmed with rock salt.

The winds raged on, then dropped quite rapidly by late morning for arrival of the *Adventurer*. By afternoon seas were again calm and passengers and luggage were transferred by Zodiac without incident, along with three Quark staff, the geologist, historian, and EL. This *Nova* group was somehow squeezed into the *Adventurer* where new friendships were soon made. Luckily, neither ship had been at full capacity.

A direct sea route was taken back to the Argentine port of Ushuaia, during which the *Nova* followed closely in event of problems. At the time, no penetration of the hull was known and there had been no evidence of fluid leakage. Back at dock, however, a detailed inspection by divers found that at least the outer of the two hulls had indeed been penetrated. A steel patch was welded onto the hull for *Nova's* return to Europe for drydock repairs. Her return to Antarctica for 2009-2010 is expected.

Incidents like this, the sinkings of the Argentine *Bahia Paraíso* (1989) and *Lindblad Explorer* (2007), and the advent of

huge new tour ships carrying thousands raise concerns at Antarctic Treaty meetings about potential impacts on the environment and research programs at bases. Such matters are addressed at meetings of the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators to attempt management of this growing industry that by 2007-2008 reached approximately 45,000 passengers carried by about 60 vessels. Antarctic Tourism is even available for university degrees (e.g., Canterbury University, Christchurch, New Zealand).

In summary, there was no evidence of environmental impact, as no leakage from the hull was seen; and there was no impact on research activities at the nearby San Martin Base, as all personnel were transferred directly to a rescue vessel. This was a very successful rescue operation that shows the value of IAATO's recommendation for pairing of cruise ships operating in these waters. In the present situation, a multi-engine ship would have had much better chance to hold that anchor. Without doubt this incident would have been far more severe had *Nova* not had a full double hull. The ship also has an unusual, special steel plate along its keel, which protected the hull during the incredible pounding it took on those rocks.

Passengers on both ships felt well treated by the tour company, Quark Expeditions, in its prompt response to the incident, the EL's keeping them well informed, and especially a generous refund offer of 50 percent of ticket price. Those on the *Adventurer* crossed the Antarctic Circle, which hadn't been scheduled, and those on both ships had visited more than half their planned sites -- and all had great tales of adventure on a polar sea to take back home.