



# The Antarctic Society

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**BRASH ICE.** Normally we do not start off Brash Ice with comments about the passing of one of our members, But in this case, Dr. Ed Williams of Roanoke, Virginia, retired surgeon, latter day videographer, had done so much for not only our Society but for many of its individual members that he merits upfront coverage.

Gracie and I were on our way to Spitsbergen when Dr. Ed checked out, although we were well aware that he was on his death bed at the time. His family requested that our own Dr. Edwin Robinson play the bagpipes at his service, which he did as a special favor for his friend. Within one year cancer claimed the lives of the love of his life, his wife Jean, and that of his devoted black coon dog, Willie Earl. Being a deeply religious man, I am sure Dr. Ed is now rejoicing in being back together with them.

Most of you will recognize Dr. Ed for producing our Society's Golden Anniversary Album, *ANTARCTICA CALLING*, a three-disc DVD in which he captured thirty of our most prominent Antarctic scientists. Truly a wealth of Antarctic archival history, all supplemented with the artistry of Lucia deLeiris and the beautiful photography of Ann Hawthorne. One prominent member of our Society, Guy Guthridge, said that this splendid album gave his immediate family the first real understanding of what he did in real life when he walked out of their front door and went to work each morning.

At the time of his death this past spring he was collaborating with Ed Robinson, geophysicist, on another Antarctic DVD, this one on the Ross Ice Shelf Traverse of 1957-58. Dr. Ed's grandson, Leon Davis, will be working this fall with Ed on its completion. Another DVD by Dr Ed, with which our Ed Robinson collaborated, in on our web- site: the first US traverse from McMurdo to the South Pole in 1960-61.

Dr. Ed has produced many other DVDs of the Antarctic, all produced for his family and friends. They included a two part series *ANTARCTICA 1995: WILD, WET, AND WONDERFUL 2002*; *PATAGONIA TO 80 SOUTH*, 1999; the *SEVENTH EMPEROR*, 2001; *PATAGONIA SUR*, 2004; The *SUBANTARCTIC ISLANDS OF NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA*, 2004. He also collaborated with John Spletstoesser on *EXPEDITION TO ELLSWORTH MOUNTAINS* *ANTARCTICA 1961-62*, and did a special DVD for Hugh Bennett on his involvement on Antarctic traverses.

For any of you who for one reason or another did not avail yourself of the opportunity to buy the three pronged *ANTARCTIC CALLING*, Leon Davis has assured us that a limited number will be available to Society members. If interested in this limited edition, please let us know at the Society's address and we will let you know when they are available. Price, \$35, includes shipping.

Another one of our very best friends, Bess Urbahn, died this past summer at the age of 90. She was the widow of perhaps the best-known polar pilot of all time, Bernt Balchen, the very first pilot to ever fly over the South Pole. She herself never went to Antarctica until she was 76. Bess was born and grew up in Oslo, Norway, but her final years were spent in Maine near her son Lauritz Balchen. It was indeed both a privilege and an honor to have known this lovely Norwegian lady in the twilight years of her life. If you go to our Society's website, you will find a very personal write-up she did on her husband's polar flying career. Wouldn't it be just great if some knowledgeable aviation historian would write a book evaluating the flying careers of pilots like Bernt, Giles Kershaw, Gus Shinn, and others.

Rob Flint recently visited with Alex Zaitsev, who wintered over at the South Pole in 1977, who he had met during the 1976-77 season. Previously Rob had been to his place in suburban Moscow a couple of times, but this was the first time he had visited him at his summer home (dacha) about an hour outside of Moscow, where Alex has a beautiful garden. It seems they live outdoors during the summer – in fact there is no sink in the house- dishes are washed in the yard! It was a rainy day, but they still managed to barbecue in the garden and ate sitting on his bed! One of Alex's neighbors is a Russian orthodox priest and a nuclear physicist!

Frank Wild, is going to become a neighbor of Ernest Shackleton at the Grytviken cemetery on South Georgia. Frank was one of the most experienced polar explorers of the heroic age, taking part in five major Antarctic expeditions. He was second-in-command on the ENDURANCE expedition when he was left in charge of the shipwrecked men at Elephant Island, and led the Quest expedition after Shackleton died aboard the vessel in King Edward Cove. An author, Angie Butler, researching a book on Wild, discovered that his ashes had been left in a chapel near Johannesburg in South Africa. It seems that Frank had once expressed a desire to be buried at Grytviken, so on November 20<sup>th</sup> of this year Frank will go on his last journey, at long last reunited with the Boss.

Tom Henderson, our illustrious and devoted web master has partially retired. In late August he said good bye to his paying job, grabbed the hands of his wife and daughter, and took off on a non-polar cruise to the Baltic. By the time you get this, he will be back working for you and me as our over-achieving web master. He will remain an active baseball player in a senior baseball league in Albany where he had a great season. No doubt he will be voted The Comeback Player of the Year.

Dr. Will Silva writes: "Retired from the Ice, true; but with the economy in the cellar and me having exchanged my dirtball mountaineer persona for that of an airplane motor-head, I'm still working to support my habit. I'm presently in Ketchikan, AK (~55N, 132W; very south end of the southeast Alaskan panhandle, couple hundred KM northwest of Prince Rupert, BC) where I work for about a month approximately quarterly. Just finished my week on the inpatient service. The rest is outpatient clinic and night & weekend hospital call.

Next adventure will be getting my right shoulder fixed. Guess I wore it out... and hurt it a couple times over the years... Got a rotator cuff tear and the damned thing wakes me up at night. As you well know, getting old sucks but it beats the hell out of the alternative. Or, it does so to a point, at least."

This is a Head's Up on our joint meeting with the Explorer's Club- Washington Group who graciously allows us, the Antarctic Society, and the Society of Woman Geographers to meet with them in early December. This year's program will be of particular interest to our membership as the speaker will be The Builder of the Elevated Station at the South Pole, Jerry Marty. As we go to press, his topic has not been announced, neither has the date of the joint meeting, but we do want you to know that Jerry has been confirmed as the speaker. Our next Newsletter will give you all the details which we do not have at this time.

**CENTENNIAL MEDALLION HONORING AMUNDSEN AND SCOTT.** We are still offering the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Medallion of Roald Amundsen and Robert Scott arriving at the South Pole a century ago. The cost to our members is only \$30.00 including shipping. The last Newsletter,

plus a special mailing, showed the design featuring Amundsen's tent in the central core of a stainless steel snow flake. We think it is attractive, and have had good comments from over a hundred of you who have already bought. If interested, order now before the anniversary, and state whether you want the medallion with a pin or a necklace. Place order to the Society at P.O. Box 325, Port Clyde, ME 04855

**CALENDARS.** By the time you receive this NEWSLETTER, we hope to have in hand enough of the New Zealand Hedgehog Antarctic calendars for 2012 to satisfy all buyers. In our opinion, this is by far the greatest calendar that Hedgehog has produced in the last twenty years. Beautiful pictures, stunning ones. The price will be \$16.00. Send your check to the Antarctic Society, Box 325, Port Clyde, ME 04855

**WEBSITE UPDATE** (Tom Henderson). By the time you get this, the website will be adding a considerable amount of new material. The expansion will start with films, followed by additional events and photos in Time Trek. As I have mentioned before, the backlog of material is considerable. This summer I attended an Operation Deep Freeze Association reunion where I met Dave Grisez, the Association's archivist. Through Dave's generosity 60 CDs and DVDs chocked full of historical movies, photos and documents. Some of this material will eventually be posted on our website, with the permission of Dave Grisez and the Operation Deep Freeze Association, and credited to the authors. As with much of what we have posted now, a great deal of the new postings will be found no other place on the web.

Woven in with films and photos will be new documents as well. This will include a roster of science participants in the IGY. The "yearbook" published by Paul Siple from the first winterover at Pole, the first "welcome" manual from McMurdo Station, created by the 1956-57 construction and winterover crew for the crew replacing them, and more.

There might even be a few "musical selections" from slightly more modern times.

So visit frequently: I am sure you won't be disappointed

**PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE** (Charles Lagerbom). Well, spring and summer seem to have flown by and I can feel the twinge in the air indicating that the season has turned. But it has been a busy and productive year thus far. In June, I had the opportunity to give a presentation about Henry "Birdie" Bowers, the fifth man taken to the South Pole by Captain Robert F. Scott in 1911-1912. The talk was part of Scott 100, the centennial celebration of reaching the south pole. It was held at Plymouth, England the first week in June. While in the British Isles, I also had the opportunity to meet up with our society's Honorary President Charles Swithinbank. We received a five-star tour of the college of Cambridge and the Scott Polar Research Institute. I was especially moved after visiting the World War II U.S. military cemetery just outside Cambridge. Plymouth was delightful, with its history such as the Mayflower steps and prominent lighthouse, and the presentations went well. Another bonus was the numerous direct descendants of Scott and his expedition available to meet. Several people commented favorably on our society's centennial medallion which I proudly wore during the conference.

This summer, the slide-scanning project completed cataloging and scanning its twenty-fifth collection. We are closing in on 20,000 slides/images that have found their way to the society. Thank you to everyone who has participated. If you would like to have your images and other materials digitized and preserved for future generations, please contact me.

Finally, it is exciting to announce that the Antarctic Society has joined ranks with the Explorers Club and the American Polar Society to help host the APS 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeting and Symposium on: "The Polar Regions in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Globalization, Climate Change, and Geopolitics." It is scheduled to take place at The Union Club and the Explorers Club in New York City 2-4 May 2012 and will bring together top authorities in the world, both as speakers and symposium participants, to discuss the geopolitical, environmental and scientific future of the Arctic and Antarctic. A top-notch list of speakers has been

assembled, with some of our own society members included such as Paul Mayewski of the University of Maine Climate Change Institute. It should be a great time and we hope many Antarctic Society members will attend. Check out more upcoming information about it at the APS website at: (<http://www.americanpolar.org/>).

### **UPDATE ON THE ANTARCTIC SUPPORT CONTRACT** (Katy Jensen).

In his report to the National Science Board on July 28<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Erb confirmed that NSF is on track to award the Antarctic Support Contract (ASC) in November.

Last summer NSF down-selected the competitors from seven teams to three: CH2M Hill, KBR, and Lockheed Martin. These three teams are expecting final instructions from NSF later this month, with responses due in September, followed by contract award no later than mid-November. Transition from Raytheon Polar Services Company to the new contractor will take place between award and April 1, 2012, when the new contract officially begins.

For the longer view, NSF and the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) have enlisted two committees to review the Antarctic program for potential improvements. Phase One, which is currently underway, involves a National Research Council team who is charged with identifying "blue sky" science drivers for the next 10-20 years of the USAP. During Phase Two, a blue ribbon panel chaired by Norman Augustine will investigate USAP logistics and infrastructure requirements to support the science drivers.

**LETTER FROM CHRISTCHURCH** (Margaret Lanyon). A week ago, life throughout much of the country came to a standstill following a second polar blast bringing snow, hail, rain, thunder and lightning pretty much at the same time. To remind us that we're still a seismic city, Mother Nature continued with her aftershock games. For the past few weeks, these have subsided a little which is a vast relief. We have accepted that the 'shakes' will continue for quite some time yet.

There are some really sad stories regarding suburban homes; however, today we'll talk about the central

business district (cbd), since most of you know the area.

### Proposed Plan for Central City

As we all know, four significant earthquakes plus thousands of aftershocks have hit our city during the past 10 months. As a result, 181 lives were lost, buildings were destroyed or badly damaged and many job losses resulted in the forced closure of businesses. Fifty percent of the central city buildings need to be demolished along with much of our heritage.

The Christchurch City Council has come up with a draft Central City Plan to be used as a guideline for redevelopment purposes. The general concept is a cosmopolitan community which "cherishes the past and embraces the future"; a city within a garden, with a distinct, modern urban identity.

The Avon River will be widened, complete with broadwalks, pedestrian and cycle friendly areas. Shops and offices will be encouraged to relocate in a smaller, more concentrated area. A light rail system is planned, a new metro sports hub and a new central library, a world class convention center, Hospital redevelopment and a network of parks and gardens spread throughout the central city are some of the proposals. Lower rise buildings will be encouraged.

Cathedral Square will continue to be the civic heart of the city, but greener. Implementation for the work involved will be a 10 - 20 year program.

### Christ Church Cathedral

Plans for a 'cardboard' cathedral have been revealed. World renowned Japanese architect, Shigeru Ban has designed a "temporary" cathedral for Christchurch. The structure will be built with locally produced cardboard tubes in a "A" shape, with shipping containers used as foundations. The building will cost NZ\$4 million, take three months to build and could seat 700 people. The cardboard cathedral could be relocated and used for other purposes once a new permanent cathedral is constructed in the center of the city.

### Christchurch International Airport Terminal

Over the past year, good progress has been made on terminal redevelopment work. Stage 1 (check-in hall, first floor retail precinct and construction of the regional lounge) has been completed.

Approximately 70% of Stage 2 is complete with a finishing date of September 2012. In an integrated approach, the new airport terminal shares facilities between domestic and international travellers, offering efficiencies. There are 58 check-in counters plus numerous self-service kiosks. There's also a state-of-the-art 750 meter long single baggage handling system and lots of space for retail and food outlets. There are plans to build a backpacker hostel at the airport in the future.

### **JAPAN TSUNAMI BATTERED ICE SHELF IN ANTARCTIC** (Paul Rincon, BBC News Website).

The tsunami caused by the 11 March Tohoku earthquake in Japan crossed the Pacific and broke off large chunks of ice from Antarctica, a study has shown. Satellite photos show huge icebergs were created when the tsunami hit West Antarctica's Sulzberger Ice Shelf. This caused 125 sq km of ice to break off - or calve - from a shelf front that has remained stable for the past 46 years.

The work, by a US team, is published in the *Journal of Glaciology*. The waves generated by the 9.0 Magnitude earthquake in Japan travelled about 13,000 km across the Pacific Ocean before reaching the Sulzenberger Ice Shelf, causing ice to break off and float into the sea. The largest of the icebergs measured 6.5km by 9.5km, (almost the size of Manhattan) and 80m in thickness.

The swell was estimated to have been just 30 cm high when it reached the Sulzberger shelf. But the researchers say that over a period of hours to days, the dispersed waves caused repeated flexing of the ice, "fatiguing" the shelf and causing it to fracture.

Kelly Brunt from NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland, US, and colleagues studied a series of synthetic aperture radar images from the European Space Agency's Envisat satellite taken between 11 and the 13 March. This allowed the team to constrain the calving event to a period consistent

with the arrival of the tsunami. "The impact of the tsunami and its train of following dispersed waves... in combination with the ice-shelf and sea-ice conditions provided the fracture mechanism needed to trigger the first calving event from the ice shelf in 46 years," they write in the *Journal of Glaciology*.

### **ANTARCTIC SUPPLIES ASSURED** (Paul Gorman, *Christchurch Press*).

A deal between the United States and Russia will ensure vital supplies can reach Antarctic bases this summer and keep research programs running. The US National Science Foundation (NSF) announced it had resolved its protracted search for an icebreaker to carve through the sea ice of McMurdo Sound.

The Murmansk Shipping Company in Russia has signed a one-year contract with the foundation to provide the icebreaker Vladimir Ignatyuk, with an option for additional years of work. The unavailability this summer of the Swedish icebreaker *Oden* cast a doubt on the ability of three Antarctic bases to continue as normal. Unless a vessel could be found to clear a channel, fuel that was essential to power generation and water plants at Scott Base, McMurdo Station and the Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station could have run out, affecting flights, field camps and support of international research programs.

An NSF spokeswoman said close to 20 million liters of fuel needed to be delivered to the ice every year to keep the US Antarctic Program running. Foundation staff had worked with officials in the White House's office of science and technology policy, the State Department and the US Coast Guard to fund a solution, she said. Antarctica New Zealand chief executive Lou Sanson hailed the announcement but said there was still a need to conserve fuel.

"Antarctica NZ is extremely pleased with this decision, fully recognizing the difficulty of operating in the southernmost frozen sea in the world," he said.

"We are still working with the National Science Foundation on further contingency plans to conserve fuel at McMurdo-Scott Base this season and hope to be able to communicate with all our New Zealand science events over the next two weeks as to the

final shape of this season's New Zealand Antarctic program."

The US Antarctic Program icebreaker support is a critical part of the shared US-NZ logistics system which we are entirely dependent on for annual ship resupply to Ross Island." The Vladimir Ignatyuk is also used by the Indian Antarctic Program. The US Coast Guard's icebreaker Polar Star is undergoing a refit and will not be back in active service until 2014.

**A PERSPECTIVE, by Liesl Schernthanner and Michael D Powell** (FYI Liesl worked for USAP 1995-present, intermittently and the UKAHT 2010-11; Michael worked for BAS 1986-2002, the NZ AHT 2004, USAP 2005-6, UK AHT 2010-present).

In recent months, Antarctic history has focused much on the upcoming 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Amundsen and Scott getting to the geographic South Pole. In previous years, one could easily argue that Shackleton has been the poster child of the Antarctic as his story has gained much attention and admiration amongst both the actual and armchair adventurers of the southern continent. *March of the Penguins* and *Happy Feet*, too, have garnered much attention, and it is difficult for anyone who has been to the Antarctic to not give credit to its fantastic wildlife, in particular penguins, which grace the continent.

Antarctica, while an amazing and pristine environment for discovery, science, and enjoyment, would not be what it is today without the dedicated and passionate individuals during the last century who established early outposts and science bases. These early pioneers continued to build on the Heroic Age groundwork towards cooperative and peaceful management and exploration of the continent as well as set precedence for high-caliber scientific studies in multiple disciplines. On a global timeline, Antarctica's history is relatively brief. However, if efforts are not made today to preserve such history, it will be lost forever. Hence the Antarctic Heritage Trust (AHT) exists to conserve evidence of Antarctica's history now and for the future. Sister organizations based in New Zealand and the United Kingdom share the mission of

preserving Antarctic history (see [www.heritage-antarctica.org](http://www.heritage-antarctica.org)).

Husband and wife team, Michael Powell (British) and Liesl Schernthanner (American), spent the last austral summer doing maintenance and repairs for the UK AHT on historic huts located on the peninsula at Port Lockroy, Damoy Refuge on Wiencke Island, Wordie House in the Argentine Islands, and Dettie Island. They also did a brief survey of the historic sites at Horseshoe and Stonington Islands. At the latter site, the British Stonington base sits on the southern side of the island, while just 500 yards away, East Base holds the American first permanent foothold on the continent (1939-41). The first two women to winter-over in Antarctica, Edith "Jackie" Ronne and Jennie Darlington, spent their seasons here in 1947-48, apparently not talking to each other because their husbands did not get along. Sadly, the buildings of East Base are well deteriorated and falling into dereliction with much debris and some artifacts spread around.

Coming from Science-support backgrounds, both Powell and Schernthanner, with a combined total of over 154 months on ice, were awestruck by the volume of tourism and attention to these historic areas on the peninsula. It is a whole different world above the circle! Almost daily, ships stopped at Port Lockroy where the UK AHT manages a living museum, post office and shop. Through proceeds and donations collected at the site, the not-for-profit Trust gains funding for future projects. In 2010-11 austral summer alone, Port Lockroy entertained some 13,700 individuals from all around the world. For the most part, these visitors were respectful of the environment and wildlife, knowledgeable about the Antarctic Treaty, eager to learn about the continent and work that goes on there, curious about living conditions, and hugely interested in both history and science. These people may potentially donate funding, influence politicians, educate a new generation, or otherwise affect the future of Antarctica.

While there is no question that Antarctica is the largest scientific laboratory in the world, tourism/adventure tourism brings more people to the continent. Treating visitors to the Antarctic as

ambassadors of the continent and focusing on educational outreach may do more for preservation of the continent and potentially bolster science more than any single government organization can do, particularly in the current financial climate of the world. Powell and Scherthanner have come to think that it is a mistake for our Scientific Bases to quasi “turn a blind eye” to this new era of Antarctic interest. They are well impressed by efforts of the Antarctic Heritage Trust and the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators (IAATO) to incorporate this new resource into Life on the Ice.

***AN EMPIRE OF ICE: SCOTT, SHACKLETON, AND THE HEROIC AGE OF ANTARCTIC SCIENCE***, by Edward J. Larson, Yale University Press, xiv + 326 p., 2011. (Guy Guthridge, NSF Emeritus).

The disclaimer right off is this: I selected Ed Larson for support from among the year-2002 applicants to the National Science Foundation’s Antarctic Artists and Writers Program, which I then ran. And in the preface Ed thanks me “above all” for advice or information he obtained from polar administrators, educators, and scientists. You’re entitled to decide that anything good I have to say is suspect.

That behind us, this is a great and a needed book, highly worth reading whether your Antarctic focus is history or science. History because Ed’s perspective on the Heroic Age is fresh and insightful. Science because he convincingly – and I mean he nails it – shows that the drivers for Scott’s two expeditions and Shackleton’s one during the period 1901-1912 were scientific and geographic discovery – with specific objectives defined before the expeditions left England.

“In the era before World War I, when Antarctic exploration was largely a British project,” Larson writes, “that project was largely concerned with science.” Immediately following news of Scott’s death, the wide recognition was that the major goal of that expedition *was* science. Amundsen saw Scott’s last expedition as “designed entirely for scientific research.” The Queen Mother wrote that the expedition’s “purpose has been achieved.” The 35 pounds of geologic specimens found with Scott’s party became arguably Antarctica’s most famous cargo manifest. Only with broad access to Scott’s

stirring deathbed Message to the Public and a looming World War I amid fears of imperial decline was Scott’s persona made mainly heroic. Larson acknowledges, however, that expedition planners “found the public wanting records most of all.” Bagging the South Pole was a meal ticket, the key to support that would make an expedition possible financially. It’s easy to be cynical, to see the British empire as a clique of white men on the make (to quote a 3 September 2011 review in *The Economist* of another new book, *Ghosts of Empire: Britain’s Legacies in the Modern World*, by Kwasi Kwarteng).

But as I read it the British cultural legacy of exploration wasn’t that at all. Recall the purposeful and carefully documented round-the-world expeditions of James Cook begun in 1768 aboard *Endeavour* and Charles Darwin’s voyage to the Galapagos Islands aboard *Beagle*, begun in 1831. This is the time author Richard Holmes calls the Age of Wonder, and, Holmes writes, “with any luck we have not yet quite outgrown it.” But research and mapping served the goals of empire, too. Recall that 18<sup>th</sup> Century Spanish expeditions to California failed to sustain claims because the discovered places weren’t mapped.

If you have a scientist’s perspective, I think that by the time you reach the end of this rich and readable book you will agree with Ed Larson that, “All three expeditions conducted significant research that, in fields ranging from climate change and paleontology to marine biology and glaciology, helped to shape the twentieth-century view of Antarctica and its place in the global system of nature. . . . Although the focus on heroic but hapless man-hauling turned Scott into a Victorian stereotype, giving due recognition to research, the British expeditions of the Edwardian age should represent precursors of the current era in Antarctic science.”

Other reviewers like this book, too. It is “enlightening and entertaining,” writes Robert J. Mayhew in *Times Higher Education* [UK], 23 June 2011. Ed Larson “rescues the exploits of Edwardian derring-do from the condescension of posterity” by showing their Antarctic exploration “was tied to key debates in the development of a range of scientific disciplines from terrestrial magnetism and geology,



to evolution and global oceanography. . . . Again and again, Larson shows how the feats of endurance that have become enshrined in the lore of polar exploration were driven by scientific goals.”

These expeditions weren’t easy to get going. “Geography was a cut-throat enterprise in late Victorian Britain,” Larson writes. His descriptions of the political maneuvering, bullying, and – I’ll say it – heroic achievements in the parlors and institutions of London *preceding* expeditions make modern-day NSF peer review of research proposals tame by comparison.

Ed Larson is a professor of history at Pepperdine University and has a chair in law there. He earned the history of science PhD from the University of Wisconsin Madison and holds a juris doctor degree from Harvard Law School. Jennifer A. Kingdon, *New York Times Book Review* (3 June 2011), says Larson “is a brilliant researcher” who dug well beyond the standard sources. She writes that “even devotees of polar literature will learn things.” “What takes the book beyond the standard narrative is Larson’s presentation of the British expeditions against the backdrop of the imperial politics of the age, which makes science an integral part of Antarctic exploration,” writes Vassiliki Betty Smocovitis in the 3 June 2011 *Science*. She says the book is “sure to force a rethinking of the Scott-Amundsen race as well as reconsiderations that will include science as a driving force in Antarctic and indeed polar exploration.”

We groused a lot, during my thirty-six years in the polar office at the National Science Foundation, that the public’s interests skip over the amazing scientific findings in the Antarctic and instead focus on topics like penguins and the early explorers. Maybe Ed Larson will help turn the tide.

And that point leads me to my one – probably unfair – lament about Ed’s excellent book. Why does this gifted writer reach back a whole century when ninety-five percent of the Antarctic research literature has been written since the 1950s? After all, it’s modern Antarctic science that delivered most of the wonders – solving the ozone hole, explaining the ice sheet’s melt back into the sea, figuring out why fishes don’t freeze.

Take *Glossopteris*, the fossil Permian flora found on all the southern continents before anyone got to Antarctica. Darwin had hypothesized that *Glossopteris* evolved on a south polar landmass somehow connected to the other southern continents. All three Heroic Age British Antarctic expeditions looked for it: they were tasked to in their expedition orders. Finally, the 35-pound scientific payload with Scott’s dead party contained a sample, collected from Mount Buckley, settling the question. But *Glossopteris* was only the first of the great fossil finds in Antarctica. David Elliot found *Lystrosaurus* at Coalsack Bluff in 1969, Mike Woodburne and Bill Zinsmeister found a fossil marsupial on Seymour Island in 1981, and Bill Hammer discovered the spectacular *Cryolophosaurus* dinosaur on Mount Kirkpatrick in 1991. Each find is a story in itself with important research consequences regarding Antarctica’s past, but of course Larson’s book covers only *Glossopteris*. I know any number of Society members would be itching to read the rest of the story in the engaging way Larson has of writing.

But that’s a quibble, or maybe Ed Larson’s next book.

#### **SOUTH POLE STATISTICAL BLURB.**

In 2007, Robert Schwarz alone held the record for six winters. But he wasn’t back until this season, so Johan Booth, Barry Horbal and Steffen Richter caught up with him in 2008, and Johan and Steff since passed him up. Now there are two folks with six winters--Dana Hrubes and Barry Horbal. Four people are behind them with five winters: Tommy Barker, Heidi Lim, Rod Jensen, and Jake Speed (Joseph Gibbons). Jake was the first to reach this milestone; he also holds the all-time record (5) for the most consecutive winters in 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004 (he was back at Pole for awhile in the 2007-08 and 2008-09 summers, but he’d been spending some of the “off seasons” at Summit and/or with wife Kath) and of course is now still recovering from losing some limbs at Summit in 2009. Tommy and Rod did much of their time back in the days when “winter” commonly meant 13 months on site with a brief R&R.



## **PERSONALIZED BOB HELLIWELL TRIBUTE** (Lou Lanzerotti).

In the early 1970s my small group at AT&T Bell Laboratories was involved with establishing a string of four ground-based magnetometer stations spaced in latitude from New England into Quebec. The purpose was to remotely sense from the ground those space processes that could affect the operations of communications satellites. During our planning and early execution we learned of the plans of Bob Helliwell's group at Stanford to establish Siple Station in the Antarctic in order to transmit VLF signals into Earth's magnetosphere. Since the planned location of Siple was at the "end" of a magnetic field line that could be traced from near where our magnetometer array was planned (a so-called conjugate location), we contacted Helliwell about the possibility of placing one of our Bell Labs magnetometers at Siple. He enthusiastically encouraged us to propose to the NSF for the logistics to support our instrument. We did propose, and we were selected by the Antarctic upper atmosphere program manager, Ray Heer, to proceed to Siple. Joining the Siple contingent at the same time was Professor Ted Rosenberg of the University of Maryland, who was interested in launching balloon-flown instruments from Siple (and the northern conjugate area) to detect any radiation belt particles that would be lost into the ionosphere by their interactions with the transmitted VLF waves.

Bell Labs personnel in the person of Hans Lie accompanied Stanford engineers on two of the initial austral summer field trips to the Siple location. Living out of Jamesways, these couple of initial excursions laid the ground work for the building of Siple, its Stanford VLF transmitter and antenna, and the installation of other instruments, such as the Bell Labs magnetometer and a riometer from Rosenberg. The four feet of snowfall each year over Siple meant that the station and externally-deployed instruments and VLF antenna had to be re-positioned every few years. I recall with fond memory the many meetings and discussions over the years for logistics and science planning with Bob and his group.

During the 1970s Bob was active in the National Research Council's Polar Research Board. He chaired several studies on the future of upper atmosphere and space research in the Antarctic. I

was privileged to serve on Bob's committees and always admired his leadership in looking to the future, both for the science and for the research infrastructure that would be required to be developed.

Our Bell Labs magnetometer at the new Siple Station (established through the insights of Helliwell) proved critical for expanding significantly the science results from our northern hemisphere magnetometer array. Further, the collaboration with the Stanford group proved very fruitful in many ways in achieving better understanding of Earth's space environment. A number of scientific papers were written in collaboration with Helliwell and Stanford colleagues. A book (published by the American Geophysical Union) on Upper Atmosphere Research in the Antarctic was edited by Dr. C. G. Park (at that time a research scientist in the Helliwell group) and me. Bob Helliwell was a strong supporter of this book initiative. The volume contained papers by Bob and his Stanford group on their VLF research in the Antarctic and on their VLF transmitter research at Siple Station.

Following the Siple Station collaboration, Helliwell's group was one of the founding institutional members of the six station Automatic Geophysical Observatory (AGO) network that was established in Antarctica in the late 1980s to early 1990s to further studies of upper atmosphere and space processes. This collaboration continues to exist to the present, with younger persons now taking leadership roles. Many organizational and science meetings were held at Stanford with Bob and his group as hosts. Bob Helliwell was always instrumental in guiding and fostering the frontier research facilitated by this network.

**I AM LOST** (Jerry Marty). The Society asked me the question - why is retirement a challenge for me? One would think the question would be an easy one to answer, but it wasn't for me. I struggled with the self examination and what is making me feel a void in my life. Elena hasn't thrown me out of the house (yet), son and daughter are married (living within driving distance from us), we have 3 terrific grandkids, and we have moved to a beach community that we love – so what is it? The answer for me is within the framework of

USARP/USAP! After 40 years in the workforce (the majority associated with Antarctica) the missing piece is not working with and not being around the USARP/USAP elite group of people who exude the characteristics of camaraderie, esprit de corps, work ethic, and passion for their work. For me this group was comprised of DOD, Antarctic Support Contractor, the PhD Science community, and NSF/OPP team members. I have been very fortunate to have experienced these characteristics while working with individuals who were part of this elite group and I miss it! And ....I haven't been able to find it again, as I pursue my current desire to re-enter the work force.

**PolarTREC AWARD WINNER** (Lesley Urasky). As we were about to walk out the door and take the Newsletter to the printers, we received a

new membership form and a valid check from a school teacher in Sinclair, Wyoming by the name of Lesley Urasky. She indicated that she had recently been to the Antarctic under the NSF sponsored PolarTREC program. Not knowing what TREC stood for, we called Lesley and found out that it stood for Teachers and Researchers Exploring and Collaborating program. It seems that Lesley was one of the recent award winners and had the opportunity to go to several sites on the Beardmore Glacier, citing The Cloudmaker, Mt. Kyffin, and Mt. Hope. Lesley is a grade school science teacher, and worked on a team while on the ice collecting geological specimen. We hope to have more from Lesley in a future Newsletter. She sounds like a real live wire pistol, full of enthusiasm, and a strong desire to learn more about Antarctica. Welcome aboard Lesley.