



THE ANTARCTICAN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

P. O. Box 40122

Washington, D. C. 20016

Volume 1, Number 2

February, 1976

MEETING NOTICE

Lecture

THE SCOTIA ARC REGION UNLOCKS SOME SECRETS OF GONDWANA LAND

by

Dr. Ian W. D. Dalziel

Lamont-Doherty Geological Observatory

8:00 p. m., Wednesday

February 25, 1976

The President's Room, The George Washington University Faculty Club
University Center Building 800 21st Street, N, W.

Washington, D. C.

The University Center Building is located on the west side of 21st Street between H and I Streets. A limited amount of parking is available on the streets. Parking is also available for a fee on the lower level of the University Center Building. Enter the parking area from H Street.

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Why not decorate that empty wall of your office, study, or den with an Antarctic Society membership certificate? It is artistically designed and suitable for framing (11" x 14"). If you are interested, send an order to Charles E. Morrison, Secretary, with a check for \$2.00, payable to the Antarctic Society. Please print your name as you want it inscribed, and give the date you want on the certificate.

CAPTAIN CHARLES L. KESSLER DIES

It is with sincere regret that we report that the dwindling band of veterans of the First Byrd Antarctic Expedition has lost another member. Capt. Charles L. Kessler (USNR Ret.) died of cancer at age 72 at his home in Richmond, Virginia, on January 3, 1976. His body was interred at Arlington National Cemetery on January 6. During World War II he was in charge of Navy recruiting and induction in Virginia. From 1960 until he retired he was head of the Virginia state draft board. He is survived by his wife, Juel, and a daughter, Mrs. Rita Barte.

As a member of the U. S. Marine Corps he served as a volunteer on then Commander Richard E. Byrd's expedition to Spitzbergen from where Byrd, with Floyd Bennett as pilot, flew to the North Pole, May 9, 1926. Kessler was also a member of the crew of the Eleanor Bolling on the First Byrd Antarctic Expedition, 1928-1930. On what the crew called the "Ever more Rolling," he made four trips from Dunedin, New Zealand, to the Ross Sea. As an observer for Operation Deep Freeze Kessler returned briefly to the Antarctic in 1960 and 1962.

An entertaining raconteur, Kessler lectured widely on Antarctica. Like many of us, he was fascinated by the Adelie penguin, and his popular lectures contained many accounts of their antics. He was an active member of the Antarctic Society. When it was possible, he scheduled necessary trips to Washington on dates that corresponded with Society meetings. He was also a member of the Explorers Club and of the Adventurers Club of New York, the American Legion, and the Writers Club of Virginia. Kessler Peak (83° 37' S., 167° 50' E.), overlooking Lenox-King Glacier in the Queen Alexandra Range, was named for him. The Lenox-King Glacier flows into the head of the Ross Ice Shelf.

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EXHIBIT OF ANTARCTIC PHOTOGRAPHS AND PAINTINGS

Members of the Antarctic Society who live outside the Washington metropolitan area should be interested in an exhibit of 45 full color nature photographs by Eliot Porter and 15 oil paintings by Daniel Lang which is being circulated by the Smithsonian Institution's Traveling Exhibition Service and funded by the Office of Polar Programs of the National Science Foundation. The exhibit is currently on display until February 29, 1976, at CEMREL Inc., 3120 59th Street, St. Louis, Missouri.

Eliot Porter is best known for his wilderness photographs which have appeared in his books, Birds of North America, Flow of Wilderness, The Tree Where Man was Born, The African Experience, and others. Daniel Lang, known primarily for his landscapes, has had one-man shows in New York, Rome, Chicago, and other major cities. Messrs. Lang and Porter visited Antarctica in the 1974-75 austral summer as guests of the National Science Foundation. They were selected for these working visits with the assistance of the National Endowment for the Arts.

From January 14 to 19 the exhibit was on display at the Dimock Gallery of the George Washington University in Washington, DC. The Dinock Gallery is normally closed in the evening, but it was opened specially for the Antarctic Society on the evening of January 15. Mr. Guy Guthridge, Director of Information of the Office of Polar Programs of the National Science Foundation, spoke briefly of the program under which the exhibit was developed and is being displayed.

At press time there were many weeks for which the schedule is open. Therefore, anyone interested in having the exhibit displayed in their town should contact Miss Deborah Dawson, Traveling Exhibition Service, The Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C. 20560. Telephone (202) 381-6631. It is an excellent exhibit.

UNITED STATES ANTARCTIC PROGRAM

At the first meeting of the new season on December 2, 1975, Dr. Robert Rutford, Head of the Office of Polar Programs, reviewed for us the major objectives of the U. S. research program in Antarctica and discussed the proposed research plan for the 1975-76 season. Through visual aids, he traced the steps leading to the appropriation of funds by Congress and outlined the interrelationship of the logistic operations by the Navy, Coast Guard, and civilian contractors. As in all other elements of our society, the spiraling inflation rate most heavily impacts the logistic program costs, and thus limits the extent of the research that can be supported. As a prime example, Dr. Rutford compared fuel costs in fiscal year-71 and fiscal year-76 which show a 300 per cent increase for that period.

Presently, the U.S., France, Australia, United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union are pooling their efforts in a cooperative undertaking, the International Antarctic Glaciological Project (IAGP), a study of the East Antarctica ice cap. Current interest centers on the so-called "Dome C" area, the thickest part of the ice cap, which is located about 600 miles from McMurdo. The objective is to retrieve an ice core at this point which will probably contain the longest paleoclimatic record ever compiled. The French tried to reach this area in 1971-72 and 1972-73 by ground traverse but were foiled by rough surface conditions. In 1974-75, the U. S. flew the French team to the area to carry out shallow drilling and develop plans for deeper drilling in the future. Unfortunately, two LC-130 aircraft were damaged during attempted take-offs from the site. Recovery of the aircraft was a first priority this season.

On November 4, 1975, during a take-off from "Dome C", a third LC-130, No. 320, suffered damage when a JATO bottle malfunctioned and subsequently damaged the number three engine. A support team has been fielded to prepare a landing strip at the site, after which the damaged engine will be replaced, and the aircraft will be returned to McMurdo. The recovery of the other two aircraft will depend on the success with the repair of 320.*

Although ongoing research at the stations was not radically modified as a result of the setbacks, all 1975-76 science projects requiring C-130 field support were deferred after the third C-130 accident. This included the Ross Ice Shelf Project, a projected multi-discipline study of the huge floating ice barrier. The total U.S. scientific program on the continent was reduced by about 35 per cent because of the limited aircraft capability.

Projects within helicopter range of McMurdo were supported. Of particular note was the drilling through 2 meters of sea ice and 122 meters of water into the bottom of McMurdo Sound (Dry Valley Drilling Project). The drilling will provide data on subsurface geology, the nature of the bottom fauna, bathymetry, behavior of the annual ice, tidal effects on sea ice, etc.

A study of the abundance and distribution of antarctic bottom fish populations is being conducted with particular emphasis on feeding habits, digestion rates, and food consumption. This is important for the possible regulation of future commercial fishing. Research continues on the role of glycoprotein antifreeze substances which enable fish to survive in the icy waters.

After completing the icebreaking operations at McMurdo, the Coast Guard

*At the date of publication, No. 320 and No. 129 had been repaired in the field and had been flown out of the Antarctic. The repairs will be completed in New Zealand and in the United States. The repair crew closed its camp at "Dome C," and plane No. 319 will remain at the damage site until the next austral summer.

icebreakers Glacier and Burton Island will support ocean science programs in the Ross and Weddell Seas.

Dr. Rutford concluded his talk by describing the increasing emphasis on antarctic resources. Four nations, West Germany, Poland, Japan, and the Soviet Union, will have vessels operating in the Drake Passage this year, investigating the potential for harvesting krill, a small, edible shrimp-like animal, that is abundant in the southern oceans. He referred to the Eighth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting held in Norway this past summer, which devoted considerable time and effort to discussion of antarctic resources, conservation, and environmental protection.

---Abstract of Dr. Rutford's talk by Kendall N. Moulton.

SIPLE STATION CLOSED FOR 1976

As early as November 4, 1975, when the third LC-130 was damaged at "Dome C" in East Antarctica, it became apparent that the lack of airplanes might prevent resupply of Siple Station, 1,400 miles from McMurdo.

Then, in December, the 12-man summer crew came down with gastrointestinal ailments. In mid-December, one member of the crew showed symptoms of hepatitis. The entire crew was evacuated to New Zealand via McMurdo on January 1. The hepatitis was confirmed in the one person who had shown symptoms at Siple, but the other crew members tested negatively for hepatitis. Because of the sickness and the continuing limited availability of airlift in Antarctica, coupled with the lateness of the austral summer season, the decision was made to close Siple for the 1976 winter.

Plans are to reopen the station in the 1976-77 austral summer.

-This note was prepared by Guy G. Guthridge.

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MAILING LIST REVISED

The Board of Directors of the Society has been concerned about the number of pieces of each mailing that have been returned undelivered. Also some members have complained about not receiving notices. The matter was discussed at the Board meeting on November 12, and the President appointed an ad hoc Membership Committee which has reviewed and revised the mailing list. Keeping the list current, however, is an ongoing process. Treasurer/Membership Secretary William Cooke suggests that you urge any member who is not receiving notices and copies of the Newsletter to write to him immediately. The zip code number, of course, is necessary, but if pertinent, apartment numbers are also important.

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ANNUAL DUES

Dues are payable annually on October 1. By consolidating mailings and other economies we are trying to keep dues at \$3.00. That is why members have not been billed individually. Dues have been coming in steadily, but a goodly number have not paid dues of 1975-76. If you are in arrears, won't you use the blank below and send a check today?

THE ANTARCTICAN SOCIETY

P.O. Box 40122

Washington, D. C. 20016

Enclosed is my check for \$3.00 to cover my dues for 1975-76.

Name: _____

Street _____ Apt. _____

City: _____, State: _____ Zip Code: _____