



# THE ANTARCTICAN SOCIETY

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Sir Peter M. Scott, 1971  
Dr. Frank Davies, 1972  
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Mr. R. Tucker Scully, 1983  
Dr. Richard P. Goldthwait, 1984  
Dr. Mark F. Meier, 1985  
Dr. Claude Lorius, 1986

*A SOCIETY FIRST - LECTURE ON POLAR TRANSPORTATION!*

*SURFACE VEHICLES ON AND AROUND MCMURDO SOUND*

by

J. Stephen Dibbern  
U.S. Army Science and Technology Center  
Charlottesville, Virginia

on

*Thursday evening, 16 April 1987*

*8 PM*

*National Science  
Foundation 18th and G  
Streets N.W.*

*ROOM 540*

*- Light Refreshments -*

Steve Dibbern is an "adverse terrain vehicle" expert with the Army, and as such has been mainly concerned with oversnow vehicles and air-cushion vehicles (hovercraft). He has been bumping around in various vehicles in Alaska, Canada, Sweden, and Antarctica for the past twenty years. Several years ago NSF asked Steve to go to McMurdo to do a survey of their vehicles uses, which he did. Then this past austral summer he returned to the ice to follow up on some specifics of his first year's suggestions. He has recently written a Letter Report in which he recommends utilizing a 1- to 1.5-ton, pay-load-class type air-cushion vehicle around McMurdo.

Steve, is a geographer by education and an Antarctic historian buff by choice. He recently coauthored (with Dean Freitag) an article on Doc Poulter's Snowcruiser, without a doubt the most publicized vehicle ever taken to the ice. Away from the office, Steve is a sailor, but he evidently doesn't believe in wind power, as he is currently building a steamboat. So his transportation interest sort of covers the whole waterfront, loosely speaking. It should be a very interesting presentation, and he might even be able to tell Washingtonians how to drive on snow!

Last meeting of the 1986-87 year - MAY 12th at NSF - with Dr. Richard Williams, USGS on "Global Monitoring of Glaciers"

Please notify us if you did NOT get Newsletter No. 4 announcing Lanzerotti's Lecture!

An independent, non-authoritative, highly prejudiced collection of items about Antarctica put together by a single member of the Society to meet its requirements for a Newsletter. After fifty-five Newsletters, we came up with egg all over our face on the cover sheet of the last issue. We had the right date, but the wrong day of the week. As we don't aim for perfection, and since Friday is close to Tuesday, we were close - but not close enough. We hope no one was led astray. We got the input for the cover the morning of the printing, and in our haste, did the mockup with our head in the snow.

**ADMIRAL OF THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.** This was the title of a rather lengthy article on the late Admiral Richard E. Byrd which appeared in the Boston Globe Magazine for 1 February 1987. It was written by William A. Davis, a travel writer for the newspaper. If you left out the North Pole controversy - who really cares, anyway? - the article becomes interesting in other respects. Davis described Byrd as "one of the most famous and lauded men in America ... Byrd was an elusive figure, highly visible but with most of his feelings and motivations well hidden. Familiar to many, he was truly known by very few. Byrd was capable of inspiring both admiration and hatred. To all appearances an honorable and selfless officer and dedicated scientific pioneer, he seemed the epitome of noblesse oblige. But some who knew him well charged that he was an egotistical and ruthless man who took credit for the achievements of others and used fraud and deception to further his ends." Bergy Bits never had the honor of really knowing the late Admiral, although he did steer me into the IGY programs. But I have had the pleasure of sitting in the company of many Byrd people, talking to many at some length, and the common thread that seems to come out of all conversations is that the Admiral had a deep concern for his men.

There are very few books on the late Admiral, one of the reasons being that his papers were not available for researchers and biographers. Davis wrote, "Over the decades many documents were lost or mislaid, others were damaged by dampness or mishandling. Protective of his memory, family members denied would-be biographers access to Byrd's journals, personal papers, and expedition records - the scholarly materials" needed to flesh out the skeleton of his historic reputation." As most of you know, the Institute of Polar Studies (IPS) at The Ohio State University bought from the Admiral Byrd Foundation all of Byrd's papers in the Foundation's possession for \$155,000. Proceeds from the sale of the papers, along with existing assets of the Foundation (\$417,000, largely derived from the sale of Byrd's Brimmer Street home on Beacon Hill, Boston), were given to Ohio State to establish a research fellowship at the Institute as a living memorial to the Admiral and his wife. But let's go back to Davis, "Admiral Byrd himself was fastidious, so it is ironic that many of the most useful scholarly clues to the mysteries of his life - that is, the most personal and revealing documents such as journals and letters - were among the moldering contents of several plastic garbage bags, part of the material widely dispersed when the Brimmer Street house was sold." Peter Anderson of Ohio State said that the most valuable documents in the Byrd collection were found in the basement of a Newton house, where they were about to be thrown out as trash. Kenneth Rendell, a document dealer who appraised the Byrd papers for the Foundation said, "The stuff in the trash bags was really gold.

Most of the other material was mechanical files with no sense of the man. Every thing personal was literally in trash bags or Star Market bags. It was badly stained - it couldn't have been much worse if it were kept under water. A couple of more years, and it probably would have been lost."

Relative to the above, The Ohio State University has officially announced the Byrd Fellowship Program. It appears to be restrictive to post-doctorals who have received their PhD degree within five years of selection, really narrowing the number of qualified candidates. (See following section). The purpose "is to provide fellowships at The Ohio State University to men and women with distinguished academic backgrounds pursuing advanced research on either Arctic or Antarctic research problems." The awards carry a stipend of \$24,000, plus a research and travel add-on of \$3,000 per year. The starting dates would be sometime between 1 July and 1 October, and the awards are for one year. Selection will be made by a committee consisting of the Director of IPS and members from the University and polar communities. For further details contact the Byrd Fellowship Committee, Institute of Polar Studies, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210 (love that zip!).

One thing which is of interest to Bergy Bits, and hopefully to our Society, is what sort of recognition will be given to the late Admiral's 100th birthday a year from October 25th. Since Ohio State University is now the home of the Byrd Polar Research Center, it would seem that they should be the logical place for some sort of a commemorative program. Our membership shows a growing number of important polar people in and around the Admiral's adopted home of Boston, and perhaps Brad Washburn of the Boston Museum of Science could be talked into holding a suitable seminar. There is some precedent in going there, as he/they did host the big polar dinner for the Man Living in the Arctic symposium in 1959 (or was it 1960?). Anyway, food for thought, although if anything big is to be done, it should get underway this spring.

**ANTARCTIC DISSERTATIONS, 1983-86.** In our December 1983 and January 1984 Newsletters we published listings of PhDs on Antarctica obtained since time immemorial in the U.S. We found 191, dating back to 1933. We now update that listing with sixteen more, although one on high-latitude, plankton-feeding seabirds is suspect - probably is all Arctic. We're not saying our listing is complete, because we are not all that familiar with key words of Antarctic scientists of today to get the computer at the University of Michigan to come up with everything. However, this isn't all our fault, as we did go to two members of the Washington Antarctic community who could have helped us with their listings of key words, but struck out. So we did our own, and this is the result:

DISSERTATIONS ON GEOLOGY.

Palais, Julie Michelle. Tephra layers and ice chemistry in the Byrd-Station ice core, Antarctica. 1985. The Ohio State University.

Borg, Scott Gerald. Granitoids of Northern Victoria Land, Antarctica. 1984. Arizona State University.

Macellari, Carlos Enrique. Late Cretaceous stratigraphy, sedimentology, and macro-paleontology of Seymour Island, Antarctic Peninsula. 1984. The Ohio State University.

Allen, Richardson Beardsell. Geologic studies of the Scotia Arc region and Agulhas Plateau. 1983. Columbia University.

DISSERTATIONS ON GEOPHYSICS.

Lingle, Craig Stanley. A numerical model of interactions between a polar ice stream,

the ocean, and the solid earth: Application to ice stream - E, West Antarctica. 1983. The University of Wisconsin - Madison.

Rydelek, Paul Anthony. Observations of long-period motions of the earth at the South Pole. 1983. University of California, Los Angeles.

DISSERTATION ON ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES.

Tuncel, Gurdal. Trace elements at the South Pole atmosphere: Temporal variations and sources. 1985. University of Maryland.

DISSERTATION ON PHYSICAL OCEANOGRAPHY.

Macayeal, Douglas Reed. Rectified tidal currents and tidal-mixing fronts: Controls on the Ross Ice-Shelf flow and mass balance. 1983. Princeton University.

DISSERTATION ON BIOLOGICAL OCEANOGRAPHY.

Weber, Larry Henry. Spatial variability of phytoplankton in relation to the distributional patterns of krill. 1984. Texas ASM University.

DISSERTATION ON ZOOLOGY.

Hui, Clifford Allen. Swimming in penguins. 1983. University of California, Los Angeles.

DISSERTATIONS ON MICROBIOLOGY.

Mikell, Alfred Thomas, Jr. Physiological adaptations of microorganisms to high oxygen in two oligotrophic lakes. 1985. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Miller, Karen Joy. The effects of temperature and salinity on the phospholipid and fatty acid composition of a halotolerant, psychrotolerant bacterium isolated from Antarctic dry valley soil. 1984. University of Massachusetts.

DISSERTATION ON BOTANY.

Moe, Richard Lee. The benthic marine algal flora of Antarctica with special reference to Himantothallus, Ascoseira, and the Ceramiaceae. 1983. University of California, Berkeley.

DISSERTATION ON INORGANIC CHEMISTRY.

Kwok, Jane Elizabeth Dennison. Trace element analysis of Antarctic H chondrites: Chemical weathering and comparisons with their non-Antarctic counterparts. 1986. Purdue University.

DISSERTATIONS ON ECOLOGY.

Roby, Daniel Dulany. Diet and reproduction in high latitude, plankton-feeding seabirds. 1986. University of Pennsylvania.

Pietz, Pamela Jo. Aspects of the behavioral ecology of sympatric south polar and brown skuas near Palmer Station, Antarctica. 1984. University of Minnesota.

**AL WADE BEING HONORED BY THE MUSEUM, TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY.** F. Alton Wade, who devoted nearly half a century to studying the geology of Antarctica, is being honored at this time (some eight years after his death) by an exhibition set up in The Museum of Texas Tech University. The exhibition opened on 22 February 1987 and will close on 29 May 1988. If you are going to be in Lubbock on 26 March, 7 April, or 23 April, be sure to drop in The Museum at 10 AM to hear Vestal "Pappy" Yeates, retired Texas Tech Professor of Geology and former Antarctic cohort of Al's, talk about him and then lead a tour through the Museum.

Bergy Bits doesn't know of any other American who devoted so many years to field studies in Antarctica; Al started on the 1933-35 Second Byrd Antarctic Expedition, and was still going strong in the 1960's (led a Texas Tech entourage in 1962, plus four more field parties between 1964 and 1969). One might say he was the forerunner of what we now refer to as the Bentley Syndrome, which manifests itself among geoscientists in the winter season in the northern hemisphere, when there is a strong internal mechanism which drives otherwise perfectly normal people to return to the ice to collect samples which lead to further knowledge but never, never to fully solving problems.

Al, Paul Siple, Steve Corey and Olin Stancliff went on a rather famous 77-day field trip exploring uncharted areas in eastern Marie Byrd Land in 1934. Al returned to the ice in 1939 as Senior Scientist on the U.S. Antarctic Service Expedition. During World War II he was a base commander of the Greenland Ice Cap Detachment, and helped write survival manuals for soldiers stationed (stuck) in the polar regions. He taught eighteen years at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, and then left to become Head of the Geology Department at Texas Tech University in 1954. After ten years he became Horn Professor of Geosciences and Director of the Antarctic Research Center. He was Chairman of the Antarctic Panel of the Circum-Pacific Map Project at the time of his death in 1978 at age 75. As a tribute to Al, *Antarctic Geosciences*, a book about the geology of Antarctica, was dedicated to his memory by friends and colleagues in 1982.

One of the best things that ever happened to Al was when married Sarah Jane Richards in 1938. Once upon a time the Antarctic map showed a beautiful twin-peak mountain Mt. Jane Wade, but Jane was defrocked by the Board of Geographic Names when most women's names, including Mt. Ruth Siple, were removed from Antarctic features. Bergy Bits has always thought the removal of Jane's name from that feature was most unfortunate, as it was rather obvious that the feature and Jane had much in common. The Siples and the Wades were/are close friends; the middle Siple daughter was named for Jane, who fortunately, inherited some of her namesake's basic characteristics.

**GREENPEACE ANTAGONIZES.** Greenpeace certainly had a unique way of endearing themselves to their neighbors in McMurdo Sound, soliciting the aid and support of Sir Peter Scott, son of you-know-who, telling him that they had been denied access to Captain Scott's hut at Cape Evans. This wasn't true at all, as at least twelve Greenpeacers visited the hut on 8 and 9 February when it was open for them and for passengers from the MV WORLD DISCOVERER. Jack Elofsson, master of the tourist ship, said the Greenpeace claim was "amazing and utterly disgusting." Bob Thomson, Director of the Antarctic Division of DSIR, told Sir Peter that Greenpeace's information was "grossly misleading."

It really didn't take Greenpeace very long at all to wear out its welcome in Antarctica, as one of its first acts was to take a large banner, *WORLD PARK ANTARCTICA*, spread it in front of the rubbish dump at McMurdo and take pictures for the world press. With neighbors like that, who needs enemies! Ron LaCount of the Division of Polar Programs at the National Science Foundation was the senior U.S. representative when Greenpeace sought to visit the station. He told Peter Wilkinson, the Greenpeace leader, that they did not have the right of access to McMurdo, but no resistance would be offered. The officer-in-charge of Scott Base, Stuart Guy, made it quite clear how he felt about their presence, sending a message back, "I must advise you that you do not have any authority to visit Scott Base, and further that you or your pilots do not have the authority to land your helicopters on or at any Scott Base-operated or controlled facilities at any time in the foreseeable future." But we understand that they infiltrated both bases, and were soliciting comments

from camp members who were sympathetic with their cause. They, Greenpeace, apparently have all the finesse and tact of mothers-in-law, and probably should be treated just the same way!

**MT. VINSON BECOMES COSTLY HIGH-LATITUDE, HIGH-ELEVATION GOLF DRIVING RANGE.** Money will buy anything in this world outside of health and happiness, and people with twenty-five thousand dollars worth of pocket change are stumbling all over one another for the opportunity to climb Mt. Vinson. One might say that mountaineers are turning to Antarctica in ever increasing numbers, threatening to reach epidemic proportions. Paul Pfau, a deputy district attorney in Burbank, California, decided to organize an expedition last year, and in no time at all had a hundred people fighting to go with him. It seems there is a fad now for mountaineers to climb the highest peaks on as many continents as is possible, and where Vinson requires more dollars than skill, people with money are rushing there. Giles Kershaw, the well-known British pilot-for-hire, charges about \$15,000 for the 1500-mile hop between Punta Arenas and the mountain, and he takes seven at a crack for \$105,000. One member of the expedition said that altogether it cost upwards of \$200,000 for the whole expedition.

Kershaw flies under the banner of something called the Arctic Airways - never mind the name, it's the only carrier flying to Mt. Vinson! The service was started by some Canadian adventurers two years ago. They forged an agreement to make refueling stops at Chile's bases along the Antarctic Peninsula. The flight involves icecap takeoffs and landings on King George Island and Adelaide Island, and an Antarctic fuel drop by the Chilean Air Force. Just how many expeditions - if you can call them that - go to Vinson is not known by Bergy Bits, although the seventh went there in late November, and at least two more went in December. Perhaps the most famous Vinson climber during the past austral summer was Reinhold Messner, the human machine from Italy, who attacks mountains like they are molehills. He went from the base to the summit and back in three days.

But most of the folks going to Vinson are fuddy-duddies bent on ego-building missions. They usually take a week to climb the mountain. Some must be queer ducks, like Dave Tollakson, former junior high math teacher, who got carried away with his numbers rather than common sense. While building a snow fence around his tent at base camp, he forgot to put his boots on over seven - yes, seven - layers. So within two hours after he got off the plane, he had frostbitten toes! But he made it to the top, and according to the Los Angeles Times for 14 December 1986, cut a hole in the ice and buried photos of his wife and father, and a roster of the Los Angeles Single Ski Club. Another guy, a 56-year old pathologist from Santa Barbara by the name of Robert Falling took a #5 iron and an orange golf ball to the summit, and teed off. Then he left the golf club on the top of Vinson. If you ever have thoughts about your own sanity, all you have to do is to compare yourself with adventurers; then you are reassured that you aren't so crazy after all. This guy Falling took pride in being the oldest to ever climb Vinson, but his pride was shattered eleven days later when a 59-year older climbed it on 5 December. Anyway, it sounds rather awesome, or is it sickening!

**ANTARCTICA NEEDS A PETER UEBERROTH.** Watching John McWhethy's three evening reports on Antarctica on ABC's Evening News, plus Dateline's coverage on the same network, was revolting. Conversely, watching the excellent coverage of the ozone hole over Antarctica by NOVA was refreshing. The world is really grossly ignorant about Antarctica, and the scientific community does a real lousy job of selling itself. The average man on the street distrusts anything coming out of Washington, feeling there are ulterior motives for scientists working in Antarctica. Perhaps the Division of Polar Programs should be a covert action assigned to the University of Maine at Fort Kent! SCAR

should probably hire Peter Ueberroth as Commissioner of Antarctica. Anyone who could get all baseball owners to unite against hiring free agents should have no problem selling the Antarctic Treaty, which is basically sound and good. Yet, for some unknown reason, folks listen to Greenpeace and believe them. Did you ever hear so much garbage about Antarctica as that Greenpeace babe foisted on the American public when ABC gave her air time? That was really disgusting. And because NOVA is on PBS, opposite crime, violence, and bloodshed, it was probably seen by a very small percentage of our population.

David Belknap, one of our Society members and a major book dealer of mountaineering and polar books, wrote a letter to Gene Campbell, Chairman of the Society's Committee on Adventurers, which was disconcerting to Bergy Bits. I was appalled at his ignorance about Antarctica and its workings, but what really upset me was that this was from an educated person - Lord only knows what the rest are thinking of Antarctica. If his thinkings are really representative of the public's, then Antarctica really needs that Peter Ueberroth mentioned above. Belknap thinks that everyone concerned with Antarctica is old and not able to contain bodily gases in the lower extremity of his/her body. Having never met Belknap, I would be willing to bet on Peter Wilkniss over him in any physical endeavor, including holding those bodily gases! Antarctica is really a young person's world; the average age of its investigating scientists must be about thirty, and they are extremely dedicated, practically working around the clock every day of the week when on the ice. A lot of people evidently think scientists are there for national political interests. Maybe some of the funding is politically motivated, but Antarctic scientists are there because of their personal scientific interests. Belknap thinks that the "American scientific community" makes decisions on what adventurers should or should not be there. That's pure rubbish, as any adventurer who wants to go to Antarctica can go there; he or she does not need anyone's approval. Bergy Bits feels there were two major awakenings in Antarctica this past austral summer - first, Ned Turner, the SEA TOMATO would-be rower, and second, Monica Kristensen. In previous years both might have gone on and taken their chances, figuring Uncle Sam would rescue them. But this year evidently the message got through loud enough and clear enough to make them both turn back. Maybe the adventurers are learning. But how do you reach the Belknaps of this world?

**CARTOGRAPHY IS A NEVER-ENDING SCIENCE.** In what has been described as covert action, two members of the U.S. Geological Survey, Jim Stoner of Reston and Kathy Covert of Denver, have just returned from the McMurdo area where they tied in points on Ross Island, Beaufort Island, White Island, Black Island, Brown Peninsula, Minna Bluff, and several sites in and around the dry valleys (Vanda, Mt. Bastion, Mt. DeWitt -probably first time old DeWitt has ever been controlled). They were assisted in the surveying by three Kiwis, Bryon Anderson, Roff Paton, and John Oldridge of the New Zealand Land and Mines Survey, as this was/is a joint effort between the United States and New Zealand. It will result in a series of new 1:50,000 maps of approximately 10,000 square miles. Altogether there will be about forty individual maps; the first ones to come out will be on the dry valleys, tentatively scheduled for early 1988.

We aren't exactly sure what they all did this past austral summer, but we are sure they probably had the best job in the Antarctic, as they got in forty-three helicopter flying days over some of the best scenery one would ever want to see. They were placed at sites where they wished to establish control points, and if they weren't able to place a marker in the rock, they would end up by sticking a steel rod a foot into the ground. Then they would set up a T-2 or T-3 theodolite and take both horizontal and vertical angles. Satellite receivers were left at the sites for several days until they had received enough data for their mapping purposes.

From the satellite receivers they were able to get the true latitude, longitude, and elevation above sea level of that site.

While there they tested a portable, lightweight, automatic, electronic, distance-measuring system, the Microfix 100C, and it worked out just great. It can measure distances very accurately, within 15mm from 7 meters up to 60kms. Jim says they obtained the first electronic measurements across the Sound. This instrument has been used in the Rockies for about ten years, but for some undetermined reason had never been introduced to Antarctica. The group also placed gravity meters on all stations where they could be set, and new charts with geoidal heights will result. This is just one step in the preparation of overall Antarctic coverage.

It was Jim Stoner's baptism to the continent, although he is a veteran mapping campaigner with the USGS. He grew a heavy beard, and went the whole yard of being a latter-day explorer. Kathy Covert was returning to Antarctica, as she was the third woman to winter over at the South Pole. Together they formed a fearsome twosome from the States, and with the Kiwis made a very formidable team which loved their work and ended up having a very successful season.

**LAKE HOARE TIED TO MARS?** Dr. George Simmons of the Virginia Polytechnical Institute and State University told the Christchurch Star in mid-February that Lake Hoare in Taylor Valley is a window to ecosystems which existed from 3 1/2 billion to 600 million years ago. Lake Hoare is 58 meters above sea level, 4.1 km long, 1 km wide, and has a maximum depth of 34 meters - your basic standard New England frog pond. Scientists made 65 dives, involving more than 30 hours, this past austral summer. About 24 core samples were obtained, and they found layers of algae. Simmons said, "It was like going for a walk off the main route and coming across a valley containing a herd of dinosaurs." The dry valley lakes provide a valuable insight into sediment deposition mechanism and possible fossilization of ancient life in Martian paleolaccustine environments. That is pretty sacred turf, and to think that this innocent soul wasted his time there this past summer taking pictures of the beautiful Canada Glacier standing guard over the lake! Win some, lose some!

**IF YOU DON'T SUCCEED AT FIRST, KEEP ON GOING BACK, AND BACK, AND BACK.** Dr. Tetsuya Torii, 69, must qualify as (1) the Grand Old Man of the Antarctic, (2) precinct political boss of Dry Valleys, or (3) candidate for Japanese Express Card - don't leave Tokyo without it. After visiting Antarctica twenty-six times in the last twenty-seven years (what happened in that one year?), he has hung up his thermals to dry rot, although for some strange reason he's going back next year as a visitor - guess his home life can't be all that great! He has made twenty-four visits to Wright, Taylor, and Victoria dry valleys, and has written fifty scientific papers. He feels his most important contribution to science "deals with the origins of salt in Lake Vanda," although their origins are still unsolved! Is he another Bentley?

During Torii's 1959-60 stay at Syowa, a Japanese scientist got lost in a blizzard, and his body wasn't located until seven years later, only 4 km from the base. That's hard to believe, but true. Dr. Torii is Secretary-General of the Japan Polar Research Association; he told the Christchurch Star in mid-February that Antarctica "is the only continent where all people work together and investigate important scientific items for the benefit of future humans. We must continue the international cooperation in research work as we have for the last thirty years."

**NEGROPONTE TALKS SENSE.** One of the VVIPs to visit Antarctica in early 1987 was



John D. Negroponte, Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, who oversees America's Antarctic involvement for the State Department. He was quoted in a New Zealand newspaper as saying, "The Antarctic Treaty system has proved to be a very workable one. The countries that are really interested in Antarctica would probably be better off to join the system rather than try to break it. It is not as if the Third World is really frozen out, as India, Brazil, and China have joined."

**AN ACCIDENT THAT WON'T QUIT.** It was over seven years ago that the ill-fated New Zealand DC-10 crashed on the lower slopes of Mt. Erebus, and it will never be forgotten. It was the blackest day in the history of the whitest continent. The original cross commemorating the site where so many (257) lost their lives has been blown away, and this past austral summer a new stainless steel cross bearing an inscription and the aircraft number was anchored to an Oregon wood base drilled into a rock outcrop near the tragic site. May it remain there in peace.

Meanwhile, back in New Zealand, they are getting ready for a four-hour mini-series, *Erebus, The Aftermath*, which is going to be shown on one of their television stations later this year. The drama is based on the book by the late Mr. Justice Mahon. Let's hope the film stays in New Zealand. Who needs another reminder?

And here in the States, there is a 16-million dollar claim against the United States government over the Erebus disaster. Said claim has been filed in behalf of relatives of sixteen of the flight and cabin crew who died in the crash. Each claimant is suing the U.S. Navy for a million dollars in damages, on the grounds that Navy radar operators at McMurdo should have alerted the pilot that he was off course. The Washington lawyer pursuing the case is Juanita Madole of Speiser, Krause, and Madole. The case probably won't be heard for a few more months. There is something called a "discovery period" which was due to be finished by the end of February, although we don't know if it was or not. After that it usually takes at least two more months before a case can be heard.

**NO WAILING AT MCMURDO SOUND.** For the first time in thirty-one years, there are no dogs in McMurdo Sound. The New Zealand folks came to some sort of an agreement whereby the Steger Outdoor Centre in Ely, Minnesota took the fourteen dogs from Scott Base. If the name Steger sounds familiar, it is; he was the leader of a recently successful oversnow expedition to the North Pole. And he will lead the 1989 Trans-Antarctic Polar Expedition. He supposedly took the dogs to provide new stock for their big training and breeding centre. The dogs went back to New Zealand on the GREEN WAVE, and then were flown to the States. One dog who apparently didn't like the prospects of becoming Americanized died enroute.

**FAME IS FLEETING.** Peter Stalkus was living the good life last year as navigator on San Francisco's 12-meter entry, USA, skippered by Tom Blackwaller. It was one of our best entries in the America Cup races off Freemantle. But along came the irascible Dennis Conner and his STARS AND STRIPES, dispatching USA in four quick races. Bergy Bits often wonders what happens to yesterday's heroes, and in this case we can tell you what happened to the losing navigator. He ended up in Lyttleton, New Zealand as skipper of the container ship GREEN WAVE, and was soon making his third trip to Antarctica, dodging icebergs rather than rounding race buoys. If he had been a Russian navigator, he would have been dispatched to Siberia, but we treat losing navigators worse, we send them to McMurdo!

**THE ICE: A JOURNEY TO ANTARCTICA. STEPHEN J. PYNE. UNIVERSITY OF IOWA PRESS.** This is a most unusual book. Bergy Bits doesn't think there has ever been one quite like it. It's a book for the intelligentsia - it's profound, it's complex, it's dull. Pyne writes as an Antarctic editorialist, and he does it well. He's not only a scholar, but he did his homework exceedingly well. Pyne's chapters are units of ice (berg, pack, shelf, glacier, sheet) interspersed with theme chapters (exploration, literature and art, earth sciences, and geopolitics). It is a welcome relief to come to the end of those drawn-out ice chapters and have a chance to read the alternate chapters, as we all have our ice limitations, don't we?

It isn't easy reading, as Pyne likes to use multisyllable words; it's like walking through snow up to your waist. A person like myself can read sentences on just about every page and have no idea whatsoever what Pyne is saying or trying to say. Yet, I'm sure the more erudite among you will not only understand what he writes, but will revel in his artistry with words. Of *The Worst Journey in the World* Pyne wrote it "is a massive book, dense with information, and Anglo-Saxon monosyllables." This one sentence tells a lot about Pyne. For some reason he has complete disdain for simple, precise, clear, understandable English.

If I had one legitimate Antarctic complaint, it pertains to his falling into the snakepit that has suckered in other Antarctic writers, that wintering-over personnel survive the winter only by enduring one personal crisis after another. Listen to Pyne, "Psychosomatic and psychosocial disorders of the winter-over syndrome include depression, outbursts of hostility, sleep disturbance, social withdrawal, and impaired cognition." That is plain hogwash, idiotic. I think I have a general idea of what it's like to winter over, as I have been in a camp with 108 people (Little America V), and in a camp with 18 people (South Pole). Once you get rid of all the summer tourists who are a pain, things become just great.

The chapter I liked best, by far, was the one on literature and arts, and the section which interested me most was on Heroic Age, page 168-185. Pyne wrote that Scott's major literary rival was Cherry-Garrard. And about Scott's Message to the Public and his last letters to relatives and friends, Pyne wrote there are no real equivalents "with the possible exception of Byrd's soliloquy, *Alone*." The same chapter has some very interesting comparisons on Frank Hurley vs Herbert Ponting, on Emil Schulthess vs Eliot Porter, and why artists never seem to get beyond the periphery of the continent.

Pyne wrote that the IGY was the last hurrah for the Byrd boys. Not so. Their last hurrah was Operation Windmill. The IGY was really a new ball game, and one could say with some degree of truthfulness that the only strong Byrd loyalist on the ice during the IGY was Siple. Although Dufek served under Byrd, he certainly put as much distance as he could between himself and Byrd.

I rest my review with a representative sentence of his style - "The esthetics of modern art could accept the abolished perspectives, abstract geography, and simplified iconography of Antarctica." This book could very well win some sort of a literary prize. Hopefully it will then be translated into laymen's language. I don't think it's a book you want for your personal library, but it is a great book to give as a gift, as it serves two purposes - making the recipient think you are learned, and also complimenting his/her intelligence to be able to understand the book. BUY!

**ADD-ON.** Monica Kristensen, Neil McIntyre, two Danish dog-team drivers, and twenty-two dogs returned from their aborted trip to the South Pole on 27 February, and were picked up by their support ship, the AURORA.