



THE ANTARCTIC SOCIETY

905 NORTH JACKSONVILLE STREET
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22205

HONORARY PRESIDENT — MRS. PAUL A. SIPLE

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No. 1

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SEE THE OFFICIAL FILM OF THE RONNE ANTARCTIC RESEARCH EXPEDITION

HIGH HEELS TO MUKLUKS

by Jackie Ronne

Ronne Antarctic Research Expedition, 1947-48
Stonington Island, Antarctica

Currently

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Bethesda, Maryland and Boca Raton,
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on

Tuesday evening, 23 October 1990

8 PM

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

Room 540

— Short business meeting precedes presentation —

Jackie Ronne, a distinguished alumna of Columbian College, George Washington University, is famous for holding or co-holding with Jennie Darlington many Antarctic firsts by dint of being the first women to winter over in Antarctica. Three years after Finn took her on a skiing honeymoon she found herself sending out expedition news releases three times a week to the North American Newspaper Alliance; taking tidal measurements; and running the seismic equipment, all the while living with Finn in a 12'x12' "ballroom." ... Jackie has been to Antarctica three times, the last in 1971, when she and Finn were at the South Pole on the 60th anniversary of Amundsen's arrival, the first married couple at the South Pole. Ronne Ice Shelf was named for Jackie (see "Geographic Names of the Antarctic"). A past president of the Society of Women Geographers, 1978-1981, Jackie is an international traveler who has lectured in Europe, Asia, South America, and North America. Come and see and hear *Jackie!*

— LIGHT REFRESHMENTS —

Order 1991 New Zealand Antarctic calendars, \$9 each (see pages 2-3)

The team of Ruth Siple and Paul Dalrymple find themselves winning by default putting together the Antarctic Society newsletters for yet another year, this being our 13th. We sure wish someone would surface who would want to take this over, but in today's society everyone seems overly committed to killing crabgrass, taking care of their sailboats, or spoiling their children and/or grandchildren. So this hapless soul will drive spasmodically, periodically, some 700 miles from Port Clyde, Maine to Washington to put some words on paper which most of you will never read, some will challenge, and others will wonder about. The good news is that the retirement home in Maine will be completed by the time you get this Newsletter; the bad news is that we spent so much money on it that there is no furniture in it. With Peter Wilkniss putting all the good news on Antarctica in his "Dear Colleague" letters, with the environmentalists flooding your mailboxes with all the bad news, all that's left for us is to write obituaries, do book reviews, and come up with a few weird stories. So if you people continue to die, keep on writing books, and do strange things, we will continue to put out these things until we are run out of town. There is nothing I want to do more than sit on the porch and watch the tide come in and go out every day, so hopefully I can make these things so totally unacceptable that I will be asked to remain in Maine. That will be a happy day! Until then, remember the Newsletters do not represent the Voice of The Antarctic Society; they are just the highly prejudiced views of an ancient Antarctic who is living out his life with fond memories of splendid bygone years.

MEMBERSHIP. We now total 641 members, which is our all-time high. Seventy-seven of those are married teams, or at least they are husband and wife combines. Fortunately our membership growth is under control. We will be sending out dues slips to those who owe for the current year, so if you don't get a bill, you are in good standing. As this is strictly a volunteer, nonpaying labor of love, Ruth and I would greatly appreciate it if when you get your bill, you will pay as soon as you can, and make it for multiple years, as it saves us a lot of paper work. Right now about half of our members have already paid for this year which helps tremendously. It's bad enough to drive all the way down from Maine to write newsletters without having to keep sending out dues notices. So please pay early and pay for multiple years.

CALENDARS. Although we don't have them in hand right now, we fully expect to have the New Zealand Antarctic calendars within a month's time, as they have been on the high seas for weeks. We aren't handling the USAP-Navy calendars any more, as the quality of the pictures was getting poor; there was a lot of misinformation on the calendar; they were always late getting printed and into our hands; and the only two people who seemed to moan our dropping them were Michele Raney and Karen narrower. Both Michele and Karen are great folks, BUT! And we have cut back on the New Zealand calendars, so we won't have to act like street corner hucksters

trying to peddle them in December. With a rather large increase in price, we purchased only 200 (vs. 300 last year), so if you want one or more, it behooves you to get your bucks to Ruth ASAP. The price this year will be \$9 each for mailings, \$8 each if you pick them up at one of our local meetings in Washington. We have NOT seen this year's Antarctic calendars, but generally you can trust Colin and Betty Monteath to come up with some excellent scenic shots.

A ROCKY ROAD TO BOULDER. In the past ten years we have scheduled some of our meetings where clusters of Society members live (Palo Alto - 1983, San Diego - 1986, Columbus - 1988), and have been thinking Boulder for many years. To have a meeting outside Washington, we have to attach ourselves to a Polar Research Board or a SCAR meeting to assure success. When we started pushing for a Boulder meeting, PRB had no member from the University of Colorado, so officially they had no host to invite them there. When they got a member, the National Academy of Sciences requested that as many of their Boards as possible utilize a conference center in Irvine, California which they had contracted for meetings. So PRB went there last year. Then this year, everything opened up so they could go to Boulder for their fall meeting, and we got excited. But on the way to the Forum, PRB decided that they should utilize their meeting in Boulder to inaugurate an annual Arctic after-dinner speech, saying that their Washington annual meeting could be on the Antarctic. For a time they considered having both an Arctic and an Antarctic evening in Boulder, but seemed to prefer having the non-Arctic evening devoted to another purpose. And when we could not guarantee any great numbers - we do have thirty members in Colorado, twelve in Boulder - we all decided it was best at this late date to scrub plans for this fall. It sort of hurts, as we wanted to go there, but perhaps Mark can find another Boulder meeting where we can attach our coattails and have a speaker meeting.

WILD ICE: ANTARCTIC JOURNEYS IS AWESOME. Ron Naveen, full-time naturalist, writer, photographer, and the founder of Oceanites (which publishes The Antarctic Century Newsletter that all Antarctic Society members receive gratis) announces that his tome, WILD ICE: ANTARCTIC JOURNEYS, is about to hit the streets. Ron, along with Colin Monteath, Tui De Roy, and Mark Jones, have produced a spectacular blend of photography and text - 175 photographs, 224 pages - taking us on a breathtaking trip from the Convergence to the Pole. They've got more than 60 Antarctic trips among them, and it shows. In vivid color - and with more pinks, magentas, and yellows than you thought possible, WILD ICE glimpses everything from mating albatrosses and Chaplinesque penguins to bubbling lava inside Erebus. Many of the photos were previewed in Ron's presentation to the Society last December. The book is laced with quotes from Shackleton, Gould, Amundsen, Cherry-Garrard, Barry Lopez, and Annie Dillard. (Editor, who is Annie?)

WILD ICE is the lead item in Smithsonian Institution Press's fall catalog, and will be hitting the stores during the month of October for an almost unbelievable \$30. By special arrangement with Pizzi Press in Milan, Smithsonian has taken the care to produce the best photo reproductions we've seen this side of the Corcoran and East Wing Galleries. Even HRH Prince Edward has jazzed about WILD ICE; he has chimed-in with a foreward. No doubt, it will be a hot item for your Christmas shopping list, and your Local B. Dalton is going to be swamped. On the upside, Ron assures us that he and Oceanites will be able to keep up with your demands. Sales (\$30 cover price plus \$5 handling) through the Oceanites Foundation, 2378 Rt. 97, Cooksville, MD 21723, will assist the continued publication of The Antarctic Century Newsletter.

WANT TO EXHIBIT YOURSELF? If your answer is yes, then you just may be the person(s) The Science Museum of Minnesota is searching for their upcoming national traveling exhibit on Antarctica. They really do not want you, yourself, but they may want something in your attic or your basement with an Antarctic connection. It appears that they will take anything which is interesting and tells a story, as a recent letter to us says they are after "used clothing and gear, historical objects and artifacts related to expeditions, objects shattered or otherwise damaged by extreme cold, photographs (preferably slides or negatives from which prints could be made), artwork, journals or diaries (which could be copied), cartoons, stamps, coins, medals, and other Antarctic memorabilia." Also, they want to hear from readers who would like to share interesting anecdotes about living, working, traveling, or exploring in Antarctica. Oh, how I wish I had saved all those great stories written for these newsletters which never got by the censorship of Madam Siple!

I think rather than send a bunch of memorabilia around the country, they should just provide a comfortable rocking chair for Larry Gould and turn him loose to tell it like it was/is. Larry would be better than a thousand pictures, and the audience would remember him much longer than they would if they saw some old snowmobile which Bill Cassidy drove into the junk pile. And someone out there must have on tape Bert Crary's epic response to the chaplain at Little America V in 1958 when the chaplain, seeking a sermon topic, asked Bert what he was thinking when he was tossed into the Ross Sea when the shelf calved while he was making a hydrographic station on the barrier edge.

Responses should be sent to Ms. Kathy Glover, Exhibit Department, Science Museum of Minnesota, 30 East Tenth Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101 - tel (612)221-4715.

PETER WILKNISS WAS IMPRESSED. In mid-summer someone sent us a short clipping which said Peter Wilkniss would be lecturing to passengers on a cruise ship in the Arctic. Three years ago if anyone had said that Peter would be lecturing on a ship with passengers, you would have said they were out of their cotton-pickin' mind. You would have sooner believed that the Pope had just become the new Archbishop of Canterbury. But it turned out that once the facts were in, it was very believable. Peter was invited by the Russians to go to the North Pole on the 75,000 hp nuclear-powered icebreaker, ROSSIYA, this past summer. Seven foreign nations were represented on the ship: Australia, Canada, France, FRG, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, and the United States. Wonder why Saudi Arabia and Switzerland? Have I missed something? Does the Persian Gulf freeze over nowadays? Does Switzerland now have a coastline and ports?

But the ROSSIYA did have tourists, tour operators, media personnel, technical experts, medical personnel - about 50 western passengers. And they were all treated royally, being quartered in one- or two-person staterooms, normally occupied by icebreaker personnel. They had lectures, with Peter giving two talks in English and German on the polar regions and the U.S. Arctic research program. He also gave a special talk to the Russian crew with a Russian translator, Sergeij Karpekin, Deputy Director of Foreign Affairs, doing the translating. Some of the Russians gave lectures, as did some of the passengers. The Russians were proud to show off the fabulous capabilities of the ROSSIYA, and the westerners were "intrigued and appreciative." And to show you there isn't that much difference in a polar cruise on a Russian icebreaker and a Society Expeditions cruise ship, they did have a barbecue, and the crew did put on a show. It really is a small world!

"The ship was under the command of Captain Anatoly Lhamekov, ... and he was assisted by a 'Staff Captain' and regular ships crew. The engineering department numbered about 50, including nuclear reactor specialists. Special ice experts called hydrol-

ogists worked closely with the Captain using their long-range radar reconnaissance and continuous personal observations and scouting in front of the traveling ship. Two MIL-2 helos (with one pilot each) worked around the clock in difficult ice conditions and dangerous weather conditions, i.e., fog. Only radio beacon and dead reckoning by the hydrologist are used. MIL-2 carries a COSPASS SARSAT beacon. Operations are determined - using full power when necessary. However, all ramming is avoided and backing down and trying a different approach is exercised regularly and masterfully.

' ... The ship's 75,000 hp are derived from 2 nuclear reactors (pressurized water) that produce super-heated steam driving two turbines. Six generators are driven by the turbines, two each powering the three electric motors that turn the huge fixed-blade propellers. One oversized rudder is used. The ship's progress in heavy ice is assisted by an air-bubbling system driven by 6 turbo compressors. This way water flow is created in tremendous amounts to create continuous lubrication between the hull and the ice. When used differentially the air-bubbling system also can be used for ship positioning, i.e., parking against ice floes. ...

"Two more of the ROSSIYA type are being planned. The OCTOBER REVOLUTION, maybe with 105,000 hp, is being constructed in the Leningrad shipyard. The URAL, last of this class, maybe having 150,000 hp, is planned for duty in 1995.

¹ ... ROSSIYA has nice accommodations for the crew of about 130, including theatre, comfortable 'salons', pool, sauna and exercise room. A simple hospital is also available. On this voyage ROSSIYA carried 210 people, including the 50 passengers and the service staff."

MORE TOURIST SHIPS ON THE HORIZON. On 20 June 1990, in Kobe, Japan, the newest cruise ship destined for Antarctic waters was launched down a slipway. It supposedly is the first expedition-class vessel to be built since 1974. This 6,700-ton ship, the FRONTIER SPIRIT, will be taking her sea trials next month under the command of Captain Heinz Aye, veteran Antarctic captain. The 164-passenger ship has anti-pollution devices that supposedly make her environmentally friendly, including refrigerated storage of garbage for return to port for processing, waste compactors, grinders and smashers for glass, and an oil separator for the bilge. Novel features include live video feed from the bridge to each cabin, allowing passengers to tune in to action topside; video cameras below water level, capable of 360 degree rotation, for glimpses of fish, marine life, and corals; a marine laboratory with aquarium; a helipad, and a glass-enclosed observatory with tiered lounge offering panoramic views: a scuba center equipped with the latest gear. All deluxe cabins have verandahs, so it will be just like staying home in Peoria. Come to think of it, with all that modern technology, why doesn't the FRONTIER SPIRIT just sail empty to Antarctica, and pump all that good stuff back to land-based tourists in the comfort of their own homes? I guess the answer to that is that they would miss the personal contacts with lecturers such as our own Ron Naveen and Colin Monteath, who will be lecturing on at least one of the ship's two scheduled cruises into the McMurdo area late this austral summer. It appears that the ship is owned and operated by Salen Lindblad Cruising, with other money being invested by Mitsubishi, NYK Line, and Hapag Lloyd. Incidentally, the ship carries a super ice-class rating, one below icebreaker, and it should be able to negotiate six to eight feet of pack ice.

Antarcticans are holding their breaths wondering about the environmental impact of the 460-passenger OCEAN PRINCESS of Ocean Cruise Lines of Fort Lauderdale, which will start making round trips from Buenos Aires on 22 December of this year. They have three "wine and caviar cruises" to Antarctica this season, at the unbelievably low rate of \$3,895 per person, double occupancy. Lars Eric Lindblad has resurfaced with Ocean Cruise Lines.

Society Expeditions is in the process of upgrading their fleet and will have two new ships on line by June 1992. The first, the SOCIETY ADVENTURER will be making her baptismal cruise next July, with her first Antarctic cruise scheduled a year from this November. Next year Society Expeditions will have all three of its ships in Antarctic waters - the SOCIETY EXPLORER, the WORLD DISCOVERER, and the SOCIETY ADVENTURER. The new ship will be larger (395 feet long), faster (17 knots), and carry more passengers (160). It will have an ice-hardened hull rated at 1A1 Super, and staterooms will feature bathtubs in each cabin, television, VCR, in-cabin satellite telephone, refrigerator, and safe. Everything you take a cruise for, to get away from, they are now going to put right in your stateroom. Do you think it would be possible to get a room without a telephone, or would that be an extra? However, on the plus side there will be a fully staffed and equipped "hands on" laboratory, complete with whale and marine mammal sounding equipment, microscopes, and fresh-and salt-water aquariums. The SOCIETY ADVENTURER will have 14 Zodiacs, four launches, one glass-bottom boat, snorkeling gear for one and all, and extensive diving equipment for up to 20 divers. However, we assume most of the diving and snorkeling equipment will be for passengers when they are up the Amazon and not up the Antarctic! Society Expeditions plans to phase out the SOCIETY EXPLORER in 1992, which will make a lot of EXPLORER loyalists extremely unhappy because they love the little ship (238 feet long, holding only 98 passengers, capable of going only 13 knots). Then when the sister ship to the SOCIETY ADVENTURER comes onto line, they will phase out the WORLD DISCOVERER in a subsequent year. Incidentally, Abercrombie & Kent of Oak Brook, Illinois has taken over sales and marketing for Society Expeditions which is a major change.

ANTARCTIC FEVER STRIKES DOWN EX-GIRL SCOUT. Julie Hagelin of Pomona College and Saratoga, California, the Antarctic Girl Scout for the 1988-89 season, has what could be a severe case of Antarctic fever. This fall she is doing an independent study on penguin feathers, using a Scanning Electron Microscope comparing feathers of different genera and species to see if the birds can be classified by differences in their feather structure. Julie says no one has done this before, and thinks it will be interesting. Jerry Kooyman at Scripps Institute of Oceanography has offered her a position in his lab next summer, and she is really excited about working with him and his staff. While at McMurdo in 1988, Julie helped their group study Emperor penguins and Weddell seal diving behavior and physiology. And, get this, she is considering writing a counterpart to the late Paul Siple's A BOY SCOUT WITH BYRD. After sixty years, there has to be a lot of new material on scouting in Antarctica. Last summer she worked with a group of Stanford biologists studying exotic plant species in the National Park on the Big Island of Hawaii. Her early career really has many similarities to that of Siple.

1990-91 ANTARCTIC YOUNG SCHOLARS. Talking about young folks and Antarctica, the National Science Foundation has announced the four new selectees for the Antarctic Young Scholar Program. And they are: Elizabeth Buckley of Westerville, Ohio, Jason Rashkin of Douglaston, New York, Anne Engh of Mankato, Minnesota, and Cashman Andrus of Scott, Louisiana. All are 18 years of age, and it looks like they are all from small cities or towns. And there is one other similarity, they all were either editor of their school paper or won some sort of a literary competition. Elizabeth is headed for the University of Chicago, but will work in Antarctica with Mark Dragovan's Princeton University's team studying cosmic radiation to test theories of the creation and early history of the universe. Jason will be entering Tufts College this fall after working in the Antarctic this austral summer with Langdon Quetin and Robin Ross of the University of California-Santa Barbara, Marine Science Institute doing research on the physiological ecology of adult and

larval krill. Anne is bound for Iowa State and next June will join Peter Kareiva of the University of Washington on the POLAR DUKE studying the spatial dispersion and foraging movement of sea birds. Cashman is a freshman at MIT, and he will be working with Mark Kruz of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in exposure-age dating of the Antarctic ice sheet. Exposure-age dating - wonder how significant this really is to taxpayers? It must have some significance, but I can't for the world imagine what it is! Glaciologists have it made, their work will never get done. There is always another deep core waiting to be drilled somewhere. Anyway, these Young Scholars are all in for most interesting and rewarding experiences. Best of luck to them all!

OLD ANTARCTICAN REFUSES TO FADE AWAY. Norman Vaughan, 84, veteran of many dog sled races, and marriages, finally was recognized for one of those feats, being named 1990 Musher of the Year by Team & Trail newspaper, an internationally distributed publication aimed at the fraternity/sorority of competitive mushers around the world. He claims he has covered more miles behind a dog team than any other musher who has ever lived, which is somewhat of a dubious honor at best, right?! Norman is not so much a winner as he is a competitor, having never won a major race, or a long-term marriage, but he sure competes, whether dogsledding or This past spring Norman finished the 1100-mile Iditarod race for the fourth time, taking ten more days than winner Susan Butcher. But when you are eighty-four years old, one normally considers it a victory if one makes it to the head in time. Old Norman actually did the whole darn Iditarod by himself.

For years critics have told him that he should hang up his jock strap and retire to the warmth of the fireplace, but that's not for Norman. Reputedly he spent the summer back on the Greenland Ice Cap trying to retrieve those planes which bellied in during World War II. Norman is sort of my idol, as he still looks twenty years younger than his true age; wears clothes like a Harvard man - which he was until he dropped out of school to go south with Byrd in 1928; and he had the gumption to write a book, WITH BYRD AT THE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD, coming out this November, by Stackpole Press.

AN UNFLATTERING BIOGRAPHY OF ADMIRAL BYRD. In late spring a former National Science Foundation public information officer, wrote a biography of sorts (BEYOND THE BARRIER, Eugene Rodgers) on the late Admiral Richard E. Byrd, although in reality it is only a two-year biography - the period of the first Byrd Antarctic Expedition, 1928-30. When I visited a meteorologist who was on that expedition, one Henry Harrison of Asheville, North Carolina, about four years ago, he showed me the questionnaire which the author had sent to all survivors of that expedition. It did not take any genius to detect that this person was out to do an expose, as he only wanted to find out negative things on Byrd. Subsequently I visited another member of that same expedition, Howard Mason, in Seattle, Washington, and he more or less confirmed my thoughts. Most of the members who got the questionnaire never responded to him, and some who did respond supposedly answered only the less poignant questions.

The author makes a big issue of the drinking which went on at Little America I on the 1928-30 expedition, making it sound as if Commander Byrd was the inventor of alcoholic beverages, and that he led the camp operations through one long, continuous drinking binge. I feel from comments made to me by several members of that expedition that this was not so, although drinking has been part and parcel of Antarctic living for years and years, as it is in our own home towns, wherever. And who among us are so pure and clean that they can cast stones at those who may have had too much to drink at an inappropriate time? And how about BAE II? On that

933-35 expedition, Charlie Murphy, of all people, was instrumental in pouring ALL of the camp booze down through a hole in the floor into the Ross Ice Shelf, creating the infamous Golden Stalagmite. Even if there were an error in judgement on BAE I, it was not perpetuated on BAE II, so the author should have given credit to Byrd men for recognizing and eliminating the problem on that expedition.

Byrd certainly was not worshipped by all of his men, although the rank and file held him in very high regard. Some of the aviation faction were Byrd antagonists, and a lot of the author's negative, unkind comments seem to have been gleaned from them. However, not all airmen were anti-Byrd, as mechanic Pete Demas was a staunch Byrd supporter. The biggest Byrd detractor was Bernt Balchen, but he was no angel, according to a former colleague of mine, polar explorer Sir Hubert Wilkins, who dropped Balchen from his Antarctic flight plans. Byrd was a mere mortal, probably not really cut out to be an expedition leader, and certainly a poor choice to spend a winter in isolation in the interior of Antarctica. But the bottom line is what an expedition accomplishes, and that expedition had many accomplishments, both in geographical exploration and discoveries, as well as scientific findings of note.

People who knew Byrd and his modus operand! will tell you that Byrd changed drastically from the first expedition to the second expedition, particularly so relative to his handling of men. If one is going to do a biography on a polar leader, one should do it on the person's whole career. One learns in Antarctica by his mistakes, and to judge a person by his baptism to Antarctica is being harsh on that person. The character defamation seems so unfair and unjust, much ado about nothing.

Byrd was a good organizer, a good fund raiser, a good judge of men, and he rewarded those who served him well. I have talked to a lot of the Byrd men who were with him on BAE II, as well as on BAE I, and invariably somewhere in the conversation they mentioned that Byrd helped them get a job after the expedition, helped them get into school, helped advance their careers.

Byrd died a somewhat inglorious death in the twilight zone. He was still young enough to have a role in Antarctica during the planning of the International Geophysical Year, but he was not a scientist; he was old careerwise as a Navy officer, but the new young guard had to do things their own way. It was sort of a no-win situation which was not enhanced by an unsympathetic admiral who was seeking his own glory. And it was all compounded by Byrd being in failing health and a sick man as the IGY approached. He actually died before the IGY officially began, but I have always felt that his soul was with his disciple Siple at the South Pole, and that he did experience the IGY in Antarctica.

SECOND OPINION, STEVE DIBBERN'S. I'm not one of the people who has particularly enjoyed the current craze of hero debunking..... I suppose I am interested in what life was really like on those earlier expeditions, and I don't really think that official tracks like Byrd's did a very good job of telling that. They were written for a purpose and we have to look at them in that light.

.... I feel the book serves some purpose in opening up to the reader the life at Little America which I do feel has been cleaned up in previous publications for public consumption. At the same time it was annoying to have the source diary material telling an interesting (if occasionally self-serving) story only to be followed by a series of suppositions. It was very much as though he wrote one book and then decided that he needed to make it a true exposé and went through and added a sentence of innuendo at each critical point to make the book saleable. My point is that his suppositions frequently do not appear to flow with the rest of the literary style.

I tried to reread parts of the book without the author's "insertions" and found an informative, if sometimes controversial book that discussed the problems and foibles

of a man with a really BIG ego leading an expedition of diverse men into a very demanding environment; dirty laundry if you will, without the nasty cutting edge of condemnation.

.... I didn't like the book, and I didn't take away from it what I think the author wanted me to, but I did learn a lot from it.

ANTARCTIC COMRADES: AN AMERICAN WITH THE RUSSIANS IN ANTARCTICA. GILBERT DEWART.

The Ohio State University Press. 1989. (Reviewed by Garry D. McKenzie). The interests and talents of scientists are often a surprise to their colleagues and to non-scientists. Dewart has captured the essence of the polar plateau, Russians, Antarctic research, Antarctic exploration, and his position as an exchange scientist in a timely, exciting and quite readable book. Several quotes illustrate his talent and the topics: "With the summer sun slanting its weak rays across the still-frozen snowscape, death changes the color of its shrouds from black to white, but it is no less dead." "I learned many things about these contradictory and sometimes maddening people, but the most important is the most obvious—that they are indeed people like ourselves, in some ways very much like ourselves." "The seismic shooting turned out to be very difficult here, as the wind had kicked up again and there was a great deal of blowing snow ..., not to mention the usual frostbitten hands and faces." "The ghostly tide of white powder was still running ankle deep, softening the outlines of the rocks, drifts, and buildings, wiping out the footprints of the homeward bound with its currents and eddies." and, "In Antarctica, my companions and I were in the deceptively quiet eye of this political hurricane"

This book chronicles life in East Antarctica with a Soviet research team in 1960, during the height of the Cold War. The detail and insight to Soviet science (many dedicated and honest scientists), life in the USSR (through the microcosm that existed at Mirny, Antarctica), and research in remote and harsh environments make for good reading by historians, research administrators, scientists, teachers and those who enjoy accounts of polar exploration. Comprehensive, with interesting observations and facts about Antarctica that even those who have been there will appreciate (such things as blue outs and green moats) the book holds your attention with accounts of a difficult traverse to the coldest research station on earth (Vostok), a major fire that claimed the lives of "exemplary men, possessed of that special spirit of comradeship and self-denial that makes an expedition really work" (understandably the shortest chapter), the reaction of Dewart's comrades to the shooting down of Francis Gary Powers' U-2 spy plane, and analysis of the similarities and differences between the Americans and the Soviets. They have unusual approaches to safety, preventive maintenance, and use of equipment (if it works well, don't use it). The availability of tools, and the comfort of workers, ability to party and drink, and variation in quality of food also make interesting reading.

One gets the impression that Dewart knew much more about the Russian people than many diplomats during the Cold War, and that he was one of only a few people who was able to develop close ties to Russians at many levels. We learn about the lives of the working people, the nature of Soviet society, which the author believes has many analogies to a feudal society, the impact of the second World War (veterans estimate that one-sixth of prewar Soviets perished) and Stalin, and the idea that in some areas the war did not really end until 1952, when martial law was lifted. We learn how they accepted Gil Dewart as a scientist and a friend, and the impact that he had on the Soviet station with his bright clothes ("In Russia, men do not wear such bright colors"), his beard (beards became acceptable and a contest was held), his music (jazz became a regular component of the music from the Communications Center), and his Sunday issue of the New York Times.

In addition to what we learn about life in Antarctica and the USSR, we also learn about the life of a geoscientist, including his association with Cal Tech and MIT, work with Big Oil in Louisiana, research at Wilkes Station and the International Geophysical Year, and jobs and experiences of a world-wide traveler. We get a sense of his patience and tolerance in the face of Murphy's Law and its Russian counterpart (Law of Universal Contrariness) and understand the need for these qualities in polar exploration and research. There is no hint of frustration with the delays associated with weather, vehicle breakdowns (is repair the most common word in the Russian language?), and difficulty in taking gravity readings on snow that is perturbed by wind load on nearby tractors. His nicknames also reveal the character of the Soviets and the author: Gil was known as the "finger doctor" because he had bandaids (new to them), the "Corporal" because of his military experience, and "Dyadya Gil" because of the bond developed with a young sled dog.

.... The book is a highly recommended addition for personal and professional libraries; it is good reading even without buttered tea or vodka.

ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE FUND (EOF) NOTIFIES NSF OF INTENT TO SUE. The Environmental Defense Fund on 21 September 1990 put the National Science Foundation (NSF) on notice that it intends to file a lawsuit to prevent open pit burning and land-filling of solid and hazardous wastes at U.S. research facilities in Antarctica. The notice represents the first time legal action has ever been threatened over pollution in Antarctica. EOF is required to give NSF 60 days notice prior to seeking legal action. The letter of 21 September allows EOF to file its lawsuit when summer operations begin in Antarctica in November 1990.

In August 1988, EOF urged NSF to cease open pit burning and landfilling practices in Antarctica and a panel of experts established by NSF to review operations at its research stations there called for termination of open pit burning. In response, NSF released a "legal opinion" in December 1989 which concluded that virtually no U.S. environmental laws apply to Antarctica and asserted that international rules are not binding regulations. Stay tuned for the fireworks!

SNOWFLAKES. *Ron La Count* failed a physical examination and is no mo in the Division of Polar Programs at NSF. No one who ever knew Ron could be very neutral about the guy, as he had strong ways of affecting people. I don't think there ever was anyone just like Ron in the history of the U.S. Antarctic programs, and I trust that there*Abigail Ailing* has been selected to be one of the live-in biospherers for the next two years. Unfortunately, we missed her on the Diane Sawyer-Sam Donaldson program. *Shere Abbot*, she of the Academy's Polar Research Board, tells us that she was in school with Abigail at Yale. *Shere* wonders what happens to Abigail's one-year old baby during the two years she will be locked up. You may recall that Abigail sailed to Antarctica early in 1989 on a Chinese junk-design, three-masted ferrocement ship, studying a population of Humpback whales. Abigail is only thirty, so she is packing in a lot of living in her early years..... *Dutch Dolleman* died on the 8th of September in Manchester, New Hampshire. We never knew this Dutchman who was born in the Netherlands, but educated in this country. He served at East Base with *Dick Black* on the U.S. Antarctic Service Expedition, 1939-41, and was in the construction crew which built, and wintered over at, *McMurdo* in 1955-56. *Dutch* was an expert handler of dogs and trained people in the military on search and rescue techniques..... There is a rumor floating around Washington that our outgoing president, *Bob Rutford*, will be the new incoming chairman of the Polar Research Board Remember when this position was filled by nice quiet guys like *Link Washburn* and *Charlie Bentley*? You were never quite certain in those days who was the real chairman, but now we will know!