



THE ANTARCTICAN SOCIETY

905 NORTH JACKSONVILLE STREET
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22205

HONORARY PRESIDENT — MRS. PAUL A. SIPLE

Vol. 96-97

September

No. 1

Presidents:

Dr. Carl R. Eklund, 1959-61
Dr. Paul A. Siple, 1961-62
Mr. Gordon D. Cartwright, 1962-63
RADM David M. Tyree (Ret.), 1963-64
Mr. George R. Toney, 1964-65
Mr. Morton J. Rubin, 1965-66
Dr. Albert P. Crary, 1966-68
Dr. Henry M. Dater, 1968-70
Mr. George A. Doumani, 1970-71
Dr. William J. L. Sladen, 1971-73
Mr. Peter F. Bermel, 1973-75
Dr. Kenneth J. Bertrand, 1975-77
Mrs. Paul A. Siple, 1977-78
Dr. Paul C. Dalrymple, 1978-80
Dr. Meredith F. Burrill, 1980-82
Dr. Mort D. Turner, 1982-84
Dr. Edward P. Todd, 1984-86
Mr. Robert H. T. Dodson, 1986-88
Dr. Robert H. Rutford, 1988-90
Mr. Guy G. Guthridge, 1990-92
Dr. Polly A. Penhale, 1992-94
Mr. Tony K. Meunier, 1994-96

Honorary Members:

Ambassador Paul C. Daniels
Dr. Laurence McKinley Gould
Count Emilio Pucci
Sir Charles S. Wright
Mr. Hugh Blackwell Evans
Dr. Henry M. Dater
Mr. August Howard
Mr. Amory H. "Bud" Waite, Jr.
Dr. Charles W. Swithinbank
Dr. Paul C. Dalrymple

Paul C. Daniels

Memorial Lecturers:

Dr. William J. L. Sladen, 1964
RADM David M. Tyree (Ret.), 1965
Dr. Roger Tory Peterson, 1966
Dr. J. Campbell Craddock, 1967
Mr. James Pranke, 1968
Dr. Henry M. Dater, 1970
Sir Peter M. Scott, 1971
Dr. Frank Davies, 1972
Mr. Scott McVay, 1973
Mr. Joseph O. Fletcher, 1974
Mr. Herman R. Friis, 1975
Dr. Kenneth J. Bertrand, 1976
Dr. William J. L. Sladen, 1977
Dr. J. Murray Mitchell, Jr., 1978
Dr. Laurence McKinley Gould, 1979
Dr. Charles R. Bentley, 1980
Dr. Robert L. Nichols, 1981
Dr. Robert H. Rutford, 1982
Mr. R. Tucker Scully, 1983
Dr. Richard P. Goldthwait, 1984
Dr. Mark F. Meier, 1985
Dr. Claude Lorus, 1986
Dr. Louis J. Lanzerotti, 1987
Mr. Peter J. Anderson, 1988
Dr. Ted E. DeLaca, 1989
Dr. Saved Z. El-Saved, 1990
Dr. Charles W. Swithinbank, 1991
Dr. Susan Solomon, 1992
Dr. Michele E. Raney, 1993
Dr. Doyle A. Harper, 1994
Dr. Edith L. Taylor, 1995

SOCIETY GETS A BLOOD TRANSFUSION

*COOL WOMAN (52 MONTHS ON ICE IN LAST 8 YEARS)
JOINS STAFF*

KRISTIN LARSON

Environmental Compliance Section
Office of Polar Programs
National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22230

E-mail klarson@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu

Kristin will be writing *PENGUIN PRATTLE* in our Newsletters. Although there is no "clear cutting," Kristin will essentially tell us what her sensitive ear drums pick up in the corridors of the Office of Polar Programs, and PCD will continue taradiddling on the Ancients and Honorables.

Neelon Crawford returns to the hallowed halls of the National Academy of Sciences for the second time in two years with "Antarctic Palette," an exhibition of large color photographs of Antarctica, 28 September 1996 through 15 December. In the last seven years, Neelon has made five trips to the Antarctic, as well as one trip to the Arctic. His exhibited photographs, seventeen in number, vary in size from 21.5" x 25" to three 30" x 50". Needless to say, all photographs are for sale, ranging from \$1800 to \$3500. One winter-over McMurdoite ordered one by E-mail for his stateside charmer. So bring your checkbook and walk out with a beauty!

Two of the world's premier Antarctic lecturers, Society members John Splettstoesser and Frank Todd, will be doing their thing on the first ever circumnavigation of Antarctica by a cruise ship this austral summer. The KAPITAN KHLEBNIKOV will sail from Stanley in the Falkland Islands on 24 November 1996, and return some 65 days later, 27 January 1997. Some sixty deep-pocketed adventurers are paying anywhere from \$29,900 (triple occupancy) to \$55,000 to hear John and Frank. They had better be great!

1997 ANTARCTIC CALENDARS (New Zealand's Hedgehog Fantastic) now on sale here! Send \$11.00 each to Ruth at the address above. Best Possible calendar buy!

Here we go again, the nineteenth year that Ruth Siple and yours truly have been involved putting out these so-called Newsletters, but this year we are introducing new blood into our production. One of our ex-presidents told us about this woman in the Office of Polar Programs who was a human Antarctic dynamo, and we propositioned her immediately. And she said, "Why not?" So a large segment of each Newsletter this year will include the words of Kristin Larson. We hope that Kristin will add a stronger current flair to the Newsletters. Both Ruth and I welcome her aboard with open arms, and look forward to working with her. Later in the Newsletter, she will tell those of you who have not had the pleasure of meeting her just who she is, and all about her Antarctic connections.

Even though Kristin is joining our staff, she will not influence our style of writing, or vice versa. We still will strive to get people to read these things, and we certainly don't intend to let the truth get in the way of an otherwise interesting story. It will be up to you to determine if anything herein is valid. So basically we are in business as before, with rays of hope for you who want something current.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the IGY scientists who went to Antarctica in the fall and early winter of 1956. With many of the IGY Antarctic countries experiencing financial questioning, including the United States, the past forty years may well have been the Golden Years of Antarctic Science, never to be equalled again. However, maybe Roberta Score's pickup back in 1984 bought some more time for the United States. Let's hope so. Global warming and the ozone hole need new running mates up on Capitol Hill, so when in trouble hook onto any passing meteorite from Mars!

AND THEN THERE WAS ONE. Howard F. Mason died on June 26th of this past summer, and with his passing, the only living survivor of the First Byrd Antarctic Expedition of 1928-30 is the indestructible Norman Vaughan of Trapper Creek, Alaska, who has no immediate, or even future, plans for packing it in.

Howard Mason was a very quiet and subdued man, whose actions spoke much louder than his words. Insofar as we know, he is the only man who went north with Wilkins and south with Byrd. He was a radio operator, and was one of the very few who got any remuneration for his services, being paid by the New York Times. He told us that when he got home, he had this check, and didn't know in which bank in San Francisco to deposit it. So he walked around town, looking for the bank with the most imposing pillars, and when he found it, deposited the whole check therein. He slept soundly that night, but it was to be his last good night of restful sleep, as that bank went belly-up the next day.

Howard built his own home with his own hands in Seattle, and actually died in that house. Howard was married more than fifty years to his beloved Genevieve, and they were a very devoted and loving couple. Genevieve is a lively soul, and reports that she is in good health, counts her blessings, and drives "anywhere I want to, or need to." Howard was 94, but we won't tell you how old Genevieve is. Ruth and I had the pleasure of visiting in their home in Seattle in 1986, and it was a most enjoyable day. We will stay in touch.

BON VIVANT OF THE SOCIETY, HARRIET EKLUND, SUCCUMBS. We were remiss in not doing an obituary on Harriet Eklund who passed away on March 19, 1996 after a long illness. She and her late husband, Carl R. Eklund, were the genial host and hostess who germinated and gave birth to the Antarctican Society in the basement of their Washington home back in 1959. Both were always ready for a good party, so this Society got off to a rousing start. An elephant hoof was the receptacle for donations to help pay for the fare of the day, which, with people like Ambassador Paul Daniels, Bert Crary, Harry Dater and others, leaned heavily towards the liquid side.

Harriet was born in Brooklyn in 1910, the daughter of Eduardo and May Donaldson San Giovanni. She was a physical education teacher, and taught in many parts of the United States, as well as in Santiago, Chile and Malawi, East Africa.

HARRIET EKLUND - A MEMOIR (Mort Rubin). How does one remember Harriet Eklund? Generous? - hospitable? - energetic? - excitable? - attractive? - ebullient? - interesting? - warm and responsive? Yes, all of that and much more. Her life had many facets, much of it associated with Carl Eklund, but a lot more as her own personality was not one to be subsumed by someone even as engaging and energetic as Carl.

She was the daughter of a college professor, a former Roman Catholic priest. She and Carl met at a summer school at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, where she was in the physical education program. They carried on unusual activities together, such as collecting wild rice in the northern lakes in Minnesota. She was with Carl during his various assignments with the Fish and Wildlife Service. When Carl was in the Antarctic at Wilkes Station during the IGY, she and their daughters, Linda and Signe, spent some of that time in Santiago, Chile "to be closer to Carl." There she met Tessa Chau, a young Taiwanese woman, who later came to Washington and looked on Harriet as her surrogate mother, and was considered a member of Harriet's family over the years.

No one who has ever been associated with Harriet, even casually, was impervious to her charms. Harriet was unofficially the 'First Lady' of the Antarctican Society, and the elegant Eklund home on Tulip Hill Terrace in Bethesda was the venue for the founding of the Antarctican Society in 1959, with Carl, as one of the original members, becoming its first president. For years it was a gathering place for many reunions of 'Old Antarcticans', where the elephant's foot had a place of prominence, and seal burgers were on the menu. All were assured of a warm welcome. That tradition continued after Carl's death in 1962, when Harriet moved to an apartment in Bethesda.

In later years she lived close to her daughter, Signe, and Signe's husband, Chris, in England (where Rosa and I visited her in 1981, in Forest Row, Sussex), in Birmingham, Michigan, and in Spring Valley, New York.

After her stroke she lived in a nursing home in Monsey, New York, where she died after a long debilitating illness. However, in telephone conversations with her, while she was not particularly happy, her wry sense of humor was still evident. She was a person who radiated warmth and personality, and her memory will long be cherished.

AN ANTARCTICAN SPAWNED THE IGY. There is hardly a soul alive in this country worth tiis/her mettle who doesn't know that the IGY was an outgrowth of a remark made by an Antarctican, Lloyd Vilh Berkner, at a social gathering at the home of James A. Van Allen in Silver Spring, Maryland on April 5, 1950. Lloyd was a former radio engineer on the First Byrd Antarctic Expedition, serving on the CITY OF NEW YORK. This six-foot, two-and-a-half-inch man, made a suggestion at the party that it was time for another polar year, and it was met with such enthusiasm that it was decided that

Lloyd and Sydney Chapman should present such a plan at the meeting of the Mixed Commission on the Ionosphere at Brussels in three months' time. And so it all began in Silver Spring unless

You want to say that the true Father of the IGY was an Austrian naval lieutenant by the name of Karl Weyprecht who, in 1875, presented a paper at the German Scientific and Medical Association meeting in Graz which set in motion the First Polar Year. It began in August 1882; the only stations even remotely close to Antarctica were the French station at Cape Horn and the German station on South Georgia. Twenty or more volumes were published about that Polar Year.

A second Polar Year was conceived by a German explorer and meteorologist, Johannes Georgi, and proposed on November 23, 1927. It was to follow the 50th anniversary of the First Polar Year, but was to be carried out "for the earth as a whole," with emphasis on the polar regions. The year was to run from August 1, 1932 through the end of August 1933. Forty-nine nations pledged to take part, and twenty-two sent out expeditions. Thirty magnetic stations were established north of the 60th parallel.

In October 1952, Sydney Chapman proposed at the Amsterdam meeting of ICSU (International Council of Scientific Unions) that the third Polar Year be changed to the International Geophysical Year (IGY), and it was so carried by its General Assembly. The aforementioned Antarctic of old, Lloyd Berkner, was named Vice-president of the Special Committee for the IGY. The Rome conference in late September 1954 set in motion efforts to study both Antarctica and outer space. And the United States agreed to operate scientific stations at the Geographical South Pole, one on the Ross Ice Shelf near where Byrd had quartered, and one at 80 degrees south in Marie Byrd Land. Stations were later added on the Knox Coast and on the shelf ice bordering the Weddell Sea. And the rest is all history.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE START OF THE ANTARCTIC IGY. Although the paper date for the official beginning of the International Geophysical Year was 1 July 1957, it was necessary to have the Antarctic scientific personnel in place during the preceding austral summer, so forty years ago this summer people were being selected for slots at Amundsen-Scott, Little America V, Byrd, Ellsworth, Wilkes, and Hallett. There were no official IGY programs at McMurdo.

We like to feel that the beginning occurred at the National Academy of Sciences on Constitution Avenue at an evening meeting in late April 1956. It was a gathering of everyone who was anybody in Antarctica prior to the IGY, and the keynote speaker was Admiral Richard E. Byrd, who was quite frail and beginning to show the effects of an illness which was to strike him down a year later. He was followed on the podium by Admiral George Defect. On the stage at the time was something covered by heavy wrapping paper. As the new Antarctic admiral assumed the stage, he had a lackey jerk the wrapping paper off this object with great fanfare, and the uncouth admiral bellowed out, "That was to wake up all of you people." That was really the opening of the Antarctic IGY, the exit of Byrd and his supporters, and the ascension to the throne of Defect. What was under the wrapping paper? Bill Breismeister's brand new 1:5,000,000 map of Antarctica published by the American Geographical Society.

Seventy individuals were selected/chosen/picked up or whatever, for the first year of the Antarctic IGY. A good book could be written about the seventy. You could write a whole chapter on the ballistic, arrogant German, Peter Schoeck, who asked Larry Gould for "the toughest assignment in Antarctica." Another chapter could be written on the Bull of the Pampas, Mario Giovinetto, who left his mark at the South Pole in the form of a hole in the wall which got in the way of his fist. And how about Harry Wexler's hand-picked leader for Weather Central, Bill Moreland, who never walked outside the camp during the four months without sun. His reply to why he

wasn't going outside for flag-raising ceremonies when the sun returned was "Why should I? I never took it down!" Bill Cromie, who had no particular qualifications for going to the ice, was there only because he had met Bill Field in New York City and convinced him that he merited a chance. Moose Remington was there mostly because his father was a military officer who personally knew President Dwight Eisenhower. The Norwegian Olav Loken was found on a ship in Baltimore harbor, and was brought into this country for his Antarctic assignment through Canada! I was there by default, as MIT taught, on a one-time-only basis a summer course on micrometeorological instrumentation, and I took that course, even though I tried to drop it the afternoon after the first class. It made me eminently qualified when no one else applied for the Antarctic job some six years later. But I was highly qualified compared to the glaciologists they finally picked up. They did have one very strong candidate, but he couldn't convince the head shrinks on his sexuality, so never got to the ice.

A ticket to Antarctica was no guarantee of success. Detailed camp plans (prepared months ahead) were often just exercises in futility. An unexpected located radio antenna farm at Little America V drove me to the South Pole the following year. My program was actually two-pronged, being a sister program to one being established in the high Arctic on a glacier in the Brooks Range. But my counterpart, a professor from the University of Washington, committed suicide at the camp site, so that comparison study went out the window.

The true story of the Antarctic IGY will never be known, as it involved six different camps, six entirely different camps, led by six very distinct individuals. Siple wrote about the South Pole, Ronne about Ellsworth, Dewart about Wilkes, Chappell about Little America V. But they are pretty well sanitized. John Behrendt is coming out soon with a book about Ellsworth which should be a dandy. And as soon as Mildred Crary gets through dotting the i's and crossing the t's, Bert Crary's long-awaited book on his illustrious career in both the Arctic and the Antarctic will be published by The Ohio State University Press. This should be the most definitive of all books on the Antarctic IGY, as it comes straight from the horse's mouth, and if it is Vintage Bert, it will be great.

The summer of 1956 will probably never be forgotten by those of us who had to visit Washington periodically. Young college candidates beat a steady path to Bert Crary's office where a West Virginian beauty by the name of Yum Yum worked. The story goes that when she came there to be interviewed for a job, an incumbent by the name of Alison Wilson said, "Well, you aren't going to hire her, are you?" And Bert replied, "Hell, yes, she can type 15 words per minute." Besides Yum Yum, visitors included the world's famous. I can distinctly remember the thrill of meeting and standing aside of Maurice Herzog, and we walked in history with the likes of Paul-Emile Victor.

We all rendezvoused as a group at Davisville, Rhode Island, in mid-October 1956. That was the one and only time we were all together, although Paul Siple wasn't among us, as he was already on his way to Antarctica. But there were some heavyweights, as the overall chairman of the United States National Committee for the International Geophysical Year, Dr. Joseph Kaplan, was there. Ditto for the first man to ever fly in Antarctica, Sir Hubert Wilkins. Davisville is not exactly the Fun Capital of the World, but there was one watering hole in Kingston which was a salvation. There was a large amount of mystique associated with it all, as the only station awaiting us was Little America V. Ellsworth and Wilkes were not even pinpointed until icebreakers found havens in January. Station leaders for some stations were still up for grabs. The sessions ended under a cloud of gloom, as we heard that four had been killed in a plane crash at McMurdo. The runway ended up with large holes, and it was touch-and-go up until the end of January 1957 whether the Amundsen-Scott station could even be established before winter set in. An Austrian glaciologist, Andy Assur, was brought in to solve the holy problem, and we all lived happily or sadly evermore.

The IGY selectees for the first year were a somewhat older group than was to go in subsequent years, as the first crew consisted of a lot of people who had been standing in the wings for years just waiting for an opportunity to go to Antarctica. Sort of a motley crew, but not exactly nun-like personnel on earlier expeditions. The oldest was probably Carl Wyman, a retired Marine colonel whose family had grown up and left the hearth, leaving him with nothing to doThe youngest was Dick Chappell, a young Boy Scout from near Buffalo, who went on to become one of the most distinguished scientists ever to go to AntarcticaThere were many from foreign countries: Herfried Hoinkes from Austria, Peter Schoeck from Germany, Hans Bengaard from Denmark, Vladimir Rastorguev from the USSR, Jose Alvarez and Mario Giovinetto from Argentina, and Olav Loken from NorwayThere was only one black among us, Bob Johns, probably the first black American to winter over in Antarctica. And, unfortunately, he was also the first one of us to die, because upon his return to CONUS, the Weather Bureau conscripted him to go north to a floating ice island station, where he contracted pneumonia and died within days of arrival there early in January 1958 Another one of us, one of our more promising superstars, Ed Thiel, died in Antarctica in November 1961, burning to death in a fire which erupted when a plane crashed on takeoff from WilkesOnly one of us had to be evacuated, the German, Peter Schoeck, fell into a crevasse and suffered multiple injuries, including broken ribs, and had to be air-evacuated back to New Zealand..... Four of us were to stay in the Antarctic for the following year - Bert Crary, Charlie Bentley, Mario Giovinetto, and myself, and thus was coined the phrase "two-time losers." Many of the seventy were to return to Antarctica, but only one, Charlie Bentley, has remained active on the ice in each of the following decades..... John Behrendt has gone on to be an Antarctic powerhorse, and is one of this country's foremost authorities on Antarctica Some fled to the Arctic, like Fred Milan, who became the U.S. head of studies on Circumpolar People.

One of my roommates, Bruce Lieske, even became a man of the cloth, although I vehemently deny I drove him to such an extreme. George Toney became a lawyer; Ned Ostensco became a high ranking bureaucrat in Washington; Ralph Glasgal became president and head of a large communication company. On the unlikely side, Bill Cromie became the executive secretary of the Scientific Writers of America, and was ghost writer for a lot of the astronauts; Rudi Honkala got fouled up with a politician in Montana, and followed him to Capitol Hill.

A lot of PhDs came out of the Class of 57, and a lot, a whole lot, became college professors - to mention a few: Nolan Aughenbaugh, Hugh Bennett, Charlie Bentley, Dick Berkley, Dick Cameron, Dick Chappell, Gil Dewart, Mario Giovinetto, Herfried Hoinkes, Arlo Landolt, Fred Milan, Jim Shear and Ron Taylor. Quite a few are now deceased: Dick Berkley, Bert Crary, Carl Eklund, Gerry Fierle, Ben Harlin, Gene Harter, Norman Helfert, Herfried Hoinkes, Bob Johns, Fred Milan, Finn Ronne, Jim Shear, Paul Siple, Ed Thiel, and Carl Wyman. Mind you, any listing herein is incomplete, as we can't keep track of everyone, and we are reporting only those whom we are sure of. If any of you have additions to any list, please send them to the Nerve Center.

George Toney is the only 1957 U.S. Antarctic station leader still alive; he shook off his polar reins for the comforts of court houses. The premature death of our Antarctic IGY leaders is really appalling. The Chief Scientist, Harry Wexler, died at age 51; Carl Eklund, Station Scientific Leader at Wilkes died at age 53; Paul Siple, Station Scientific Leader at Amundsen-Scott died at age 59; Lloyd Berkner, United States National Committee for the IGY, died at age 62; the Voice of the IGY, Hugh Odishaw, died at age 67; and Admiral Richard E. Byrd died at age 68. Although we don't have a date for his death in our failing memory bank, we do know that Jim Shear, Station Scientific Leader at Hallett, died in his late forties. An Antarctic comet who hovered above Roosevelt Island in 1957, who became a truly great Antarctic,

Gentleman Jim Zumberge, also perished before he reached 70. A lot of these famed Antarctic IGY scientists literally died with their boots on. Paul Siple dropped dead at his desk at the Army Research Office; Lloyd Berkner collapsed at a meeting of the Council of the National Academy of Sciences; Harry Wexler, I believe, had just finished attending a conference or workshop at Woods Hole; Carl Eklund was on a lecture tour. But the Antarctic Superstar, Larry Gould, defied everyone, and was on a roll until the Great Reaper in the Sky called his number. He was 98, which proves some Antarticans can live long lives, but you should not count on it. Chances are that you will go before your time, and you should beware of cancer.

THEN AND NOW. What are the big differences between 1957 and 1997 in Antarctica? If you were at Byrd Station in 1957 and were to go to any U.S. Antarctic station this year, you would think you had died and gone to Heaven. Through an open loop-hole at Little America V, a whole case of beer was inadvertently sent to Byrd Station for the camp for the year! About a can per person per year! And they had the guts to complain!!

If you were at the South Pole in 1957 and went back now, you would sing hallelujah every time you went to the head. The thrones at the South Pole were, naturally, open pits, and, when they got filled nearly to the top, some Navy man would go out and set off charges, and there would be a big hole again. The air space took on the temperature of snow at depth, probably ranging 60 to 70 degrees below zero. If you had any concern at all for the family jewels, you never dallied. I never heard of anyone having frosted testicles, but presumed if anyone was sitting out an attack of constipation, that it could have happened.

If you were at McMurdo in 1957 and went back, the first thing you would notice is that women are everywhere, and junk and debris are nowhere. It's not that women didn't get to McMurdo in 1957, as a chartered PAA Super Constellation made one flight into McMurdo, and two hostesses (one, Pat Hepinstall was a former model) were taken into camp and given dog-sled rides. Well, the dogs are gone, and now women are performing like men. I mean, they are actually doing men's work of yore. Those men could probably accept women with some belief, but they never could understand how a polar camp would be shipping trash back to the States!

And the Navy Task Force could never, never, never believe that their jobs have either gone to civilians or are in the process of being transferred to civilians. The most sacred of Antarctic jobs, flying, will in the relatively near future be in the hands of civilians. A document recently sent by some public release expert said that 70% of all Antarctic exploration was done by Task Force 43. If that was the case, why did the United States have an IGY and send scientists there? But now the Navy is losing Antarctica, and they are going to have to go back to Pearl, San Diego, and Norfolk.

Now the Crown Jewel of the Antarctic, the South Pole Station, is on the hit list up on Capitol Hill. Back in 1957, every Congressman wanted to fly to the South Pole. Six of them flew over the South Pole in a C-124 on November 24, 1957, and Oren Harris, Arkansas Democrat and chairman of the group, said to Paul Siple over the phone, "I can assure you this committee will take your problems before Congress when we return." We believe there is a Latter Day Arkansas Democrat who is chairman of another group in Washington, and we wonder if he has the same warm feeling towards the South Pole as Harris. Forty years can make one hell of a big difference!

OPERATION HIGHJUMP, 50TH REUNION, OCTOBER 10-13, 1996, NORFOLK, VIRGINIA. In what was described at the time as the largest peaceful invasion in history, Operation Highjump saw 4,400 men and 13 ships visit Antarctica in 1946 for the purpose of mapping and charting Antarctica. Now the men of Task Force 68 are going to assemble

at the Waterside Marriott Hotel in Norfolk in October to celebrate their events of fifty not-so-long-ago years. Those of you who may want to attend are requested to contact Don Leavitt (2109 Grand Ave., Morton, PA 19070-1311, tel. 610-461-1623). An alternative point of contact is James Bentley (1863 Bruce Rd. NE, Atlanta, GA 30329. tel. 404-634-8373). If you want to assure yourself a reservation at their hotel, the Marriott number is 1-800-228-9290. They have a special room rate of \$94 per day; running hot and cold water comes with that rate. Parking at the hotel is another \$8. Fifty years ago you could have stayed at any hotel in the south for a week at that cost! For those of you not-in-the-know, Operation Highjump left from Norfolk for the Antarctic, so this will be a returning home trip for the good old boys. We encourage you to attend, as the committee has been working really hard to stir up interest, and they deserve a good turnout for their efforts.

P E N G U I N P R A T T L E

OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE. When Paul Dalrymple and Ruth Siple first approached me with the idea of contributing to the Antarctic Society's Newsletter I was more than just a little flattered ... but being new to the "beltway", I didn't know too much about the Society nor exactly what I was agreeing to. Now that I have attended some of the meetings, and have met many of the "colorful" local members, I feel even more honored to be contributing to this shared passion! The readers may well wonder what "antarctic credentials" I bring to the Society, and I will hasten to admit that they pale in comparison to those of the many accomplished explorers and scientists in our midst. Nevertheless, I offer them up now as a grain of salt to take while reading this first edition of ... Penguin Prattle.

GRAIN OF SALT. We all have some recollection of our first real awareness of Antarctica, and probably even remember the awakening of an odd, if not outright perverse, desire to venture to the icy continent. Mine didn't occur until my third year in college when some fellow biologists came back from a season at Copacabana Camp on King George Island. Their amazing stories of life among the penguins, ice floes, and Poles (as in Polish nationals), and their photos capturing the subtle blues and greys of the peninsula region struck me as other-worldly. What really cinched it, though, was Eliot Porter's picture of Bull Pass in the Dry Valleys. Now, some eight years later, I have visited both Copacabana and Bull Pass, and have logged over 52 months of "ice time" along the way!

I started out my Antarctic journey as the winter-over Lab Manager in McMurdo's Eklund Biological Center - a job I performed for two successive winters. During that same time, the Crary Science and Engineering Center was quickly rising up alongside the old "biolab", and soon I became the first Supervisor of Laboratory Operations in that world-class facility. The new lab provided many opportunities to get acquainted with, and to support a much wider cross section of antarctic science, and engendered many noteworthy collaborations and lively seminars. The Crary Lab also opened up many opportunities for laboratory-based research hitherto impossible in the older "expeditionary"-style labs. Still, in retrospect, the caliber and breadth of "pre-Crary Lab" research becomes all that more impressive when one considers that it was performed in a space 90% smaller than the new lab!!! After four years of fine-tuning the Crary Lab, I made a transition into the environmental compliance group as a contractor at the National Science Foundation where I now bring my collective experience in research, science support and writing to bear in a very satisfying new job. Anyway, enough about me.

WHAT IS PRATTLE? My primary goal with this column is to provide informal updates on happenings in and around Antarctica. While this particular edition focuses largely on NSF news, members can look forward to news on Antarctic tourism, the

Environmental Protocol legislation (which is currently on President Clinton's desk), mini-profiles on antarctic "players", rumors and gossip in future editions. I am particularly keen to hear what you readers want, too.

THE BLUE ICE RUNWAY. A first! This year WINFLY (Winter Fly-in) was accomplished using Air Mobility Command C-141 Star Lifters. Usually, station opening at McMurdo is heralded by the deep drone of the Hercules LC-130 prop planes lumbering onto the skiway at Williams Field. This austral spring, a new chance to test the Pegasus Blue Ice Runway concept was made by bringing in wheeled aircraft at a time historically reserved for ski-equipped birds. Pegasus is located approximately 30 miles from McMurdo Station (as the skua flies) in a snow ablation zone. The current concept for a blue ice runway was conceived by the late Malcolm Mellor, an ice engineer from the Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory. Up until this year, the Pegasus Runway (named for the Pegasus C-121 Constellation aircraft which crash-landed nearby in 1971) was used only at station closing to augment the fleet's Hercules aircraft. Who knows, maybe mid-winter flights will be next!

There are many advantages to using the larger, wheeled aircraft, payload capacity being most obvious. Another advantage is the aircraft's ability to fly all the way to McMurdo and return to New Zealand without landing. As we all know, weather in Antarctica can turn unexpectedly nasty with little warning; thus having the extended range is a real safety bonus. Dave Bresnahan, Office of Polar Programs' Systems Manager for Operations and Logistics flew into McMurdo on the opening flight, and was very pleased with the C-141 operation despite some minor weather delays. The use of the larger aircraft presented the McMurdo winter-over population with new challenges, too. In the past they have only had to contend with an "invasion" of 30 new faces per flight ... can you imagine seeing 100 jubilant, tan and energetic new people arrive in one day? That could make even the most gregarious winter-overer run for cover! Mickey Finn, NSF Winter Station Manager, reported on the "freshies" gorge fest that kept many winter-overs prone or otherwise incapacitated in the Winfly aftermath!

OZONE DEPLETION, RIGHT ON SCHEDULE. Reports are coming in on the annual formation of the ozone hole from researchers in McMurdo. Dr. Terry Deshler, Atmospheric Scientist and Professor at the University of Wyoming, who has been going to the ice for over ten years, told me that the ozone depletion rate is showing its characteristic depletion pattern. As of mid-September, approximately 50% of the total column ozone had disappeared, and is expected to reach its seasonal low by early October. Dr. Deshler's field team goes to McMurdo each year during Winfly to launch several small- and medium-sized balloons into the polar vortex. The measurements provide a kind of "ground-truthing" for the satellite-borne Total Ozone Mapping instrument. The big news is that Dr. Deshler's team and some collaborators from Italy are finding absolutely no traces of volcanic aerosols in the lower stratosphere. This is significant because of controversy surrounding the degree to which volcanoes contribute to, or cause ozone depletion versus manmade agents like chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). The new measurements should help settle this dispute ... and remember you read it here first!

On the topic of ozone, this year marked the tenth anniversary of the National Ozone Expedition (NOZE) to McMurdo Station. This expedition spawned much of our current ozone research efforts, and led, in part, to the recently awarded Nobel Prize in Chemistry to three scientists whose early work on stratospheric chemistry has contributed significantly to our current understanding.

ARTISTS AND WRITERS ON THE LOOSE. Also during Winfly, Ann Hawthorne, Antarctic Society Vice President and professional photographer, went to McMurdo as a member of the august group of NSF Artists and Writers. I imagine that even as I write this, Ann is suffering greatly from the sleep deprivation brought on by endless hours of extremely photogenic pink and violet light which bathes this region in early spring

("cottoncandy light"). Ann joins David Rosenthal, a landscape painter, who wintered over in McMurdo as the resident artist this past year. Reports have it that David greatly enriched the winter-over community by providing drawing and painting classes, "gallery events", and dining hall beautification, while also making significant additions to his remarkable portfolio! Also, hot-off-the-press is Sara Wheeler's new book *Terra Incognita*, a travelog of her many trips to Antarctica. Sara was twice an NSF-sponsored writer, and also a visitor to Italian, Chilean and British bases. Thus far the book is available only through her British publisher, but should be out in the United States very soon. Look for a review in an upcoming Newsletter!

WHIRLYBIRDS ENTER NEW ERA. As many of you know, the Navy population in Antarctica has been diminishing steadily over the past several years, and this year we will see yet another major milestone. Helicopter operations in McMurdo will be handed over to Petroleum Helicopters International of Louisiana starting in October. The initial contract is for a two-year period with three optional one-year extensions. In the first year, there will be a total of four aircraft: three "Squirrels" (also known as "A-Stars") and one Bell-212 (the civilian equivalent to the Navy "Huey"). This contract affords the U.S. program the flexibility to extend the flying season, and to field a variety of payload capabilities. The contract was competitively bid, and the selection was based largely on the impressive safety record of Petroleum Helicopters. Last year alone they flew over 200,000 hours worldwide without serious mishap.

Naturally, this new helicopter contract will result in some adjustments to the way business gets done around McMurdo Sound; mainly because the new contractor will be operating under FAA Regulations rather than DOD Flight Instructions. For instance, sling-loads must be flown separately from passengers; hazardous materials will be subject to new rules; and the aircraft will be piloted by one person only (i.e., no crew members). Also, the cabin-size of the Squirrels is significantly smaller than that of the Navy Huey, so mission planning will be closely coordinated. For the transition period, some former squadron helicopter pilots (who have switched to fixed wing operations) will be on-hand to assist with terrain familiarization. Also, rumor has it that the new contractor was able to hire one pilot who had previously flown in the McMurdo Sound region as part of a U.S. Coast Guard coterie.

MARTIAN MESSENGER. Roberta Score never dreamed that the rock she picked up off of a remote Antarctic ice field in 1984 would result in an endless stream of interviews and national media appearances twelve years later. The rock, it turns out, is most likely from Mars, and initial investigations have revealed that it harbors tiny structures similar to microfossils found on earth. If the interpretation proves correct, Roberta will be the first person to have ever made physical contact with extra-terrestrial "life", and the rock may well become the story of the century!! Dr. Dennis Peacock, Chief Scientist for the U.S. Antarctic Program said that the finding of this meteorite illustrates that even relatively small research projects can produce remarkable results. He pointed out that the job now at hand is to look at the rock itself and try to unravel its mysteries. For instance, the search for life is usually the search for water; but this meteorite appears to have originated in a very arid environment. How will this fact be reconciled if the microstructures are determined to be biogenic in origin?

Meanwhile, in between calls from *People Magazine* and *Larry King Live*, Roberta (known as Robbie) is busy planning her return trip to Antarctica. This year, however, Robbie is not planning another Martian rendezvous, but, rather, will serve on the staff of the Crary Laboratory at McMurdo. Robbie recently left her position as Supervisor of the Meteorite Laboratory at the Johnson Space Center in Texas, and is excited about her return to Antarctica (she must have been bitten by the "gotta-get-back-to-Antarctica-bug!"). Her former teammates will also be returning to Antarctica to resume their search for messengers from outer space.