

# Arthur Ellis & Co. Ltd.

Head Office: Private Bag, Dunedin, New Zealand

Please address all correspondence to The General Manager

NEW TELEPHONE No. 67-284  
Telephone: 60-490 (6 lines)  
Telegrams: Flokapok  
Telex No.: ELCO NZ 5256



MRE/bb

6th June 1979

Mr Paul Dalrymple  
3336 Lockheed Boulevard  
No 204 Alexandria  
VIRGINIA 22306  
U S A

Dear Paul

What a pleasant surprise to receive your letter of 5th May and my apologies for the delay in replying. I can remember you very well, and especially on our arrival at the South Pole on 4th January, 1958, as you were the only person with a flag that resembled the Union Jack, and if I remember correctly, you were rapped over the knuckles by the Station Commander for dropping Old Glory and flying the Bermudian flag during the few hours of our arrival. We also remember you calling in early December, 1958, after your two year term down in Antarctica.

This is certainly a long time ago, as I am no longer 34 years old -- 54 yes -- am still the same weight (180 lbs), a little less, if anything -- still married with two children (a daughter of 26 years of age and in London, and a son of 23 years of age and starting a marketing job after gaining a science degree) -- and still keen on Antarctic adventure and meeting fellow travellers. In this respect I organised a very successful reunion of our 23 members who wintered at Scott Base in 1957. We held the reunion at Mt Cook one weekend, and I managed to get every member who was on the expedition to be present. Two Englishmen came from England -- we had a New Zealander who came back from Montreal, and one from over in Australia -- so you can see the bond of old Antarctic explorers in New Zealand is much stronger than say the US. Subsequent to our reunion one of the members unfortunately has passed away with cancer. He was one of the scientists, Herb Orr, the Seismologist.

Regarding your query on Antarctic today I believe things are changing very rapidly down there as they are in the rest of the world. I was down in 1967 again with Ed Hillary, when we had a five week trip up Cape Hallett way climbing Mt Herschell and travelling up to Cape Adare. We used the small snowmobile vehicles, not tractors, this time, and it was a very enjoyable five weeks, although I felt my age a little when getting in and out of cold sleeping bags. Fortunately, being on the coast of Antarctic, the temperatures were somewhat warmer than what we had previously experienced on the Polar Plateau.

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At that stage no woman had wintered down in Antarctic, but this is now becoming an accepted way of life as you mention in your own letter. At Scott Base this year there are two women members, and of course, this has required a different approach, and enlarging of facilities to cope with these extra people. Scott Base is being rebuilt, costing millions of dollars, and they are designing facilities for both sexes in their new complex. I agree with your comments regarding women in Antarctic, and I believe that the place will never be the same again, as this was one area where men could enjoy the spirit of adventure and fellowship, without the other pressures which always seem to foregather when womenfolk are around. There is a saying 'God first created the world, and then he rested. He then created Man, and rested. He then created Woman, and ever since neither God nor Man has rested'. I am afraid it will take more than the Pope on a balcony on Mt Erebus to hold back what is now the inevitable.

\* The reason for my delay in replying to your letter is because I have been up North and had the opportunity of talking with Peter Mulgrew, and showing him your letter. He remembers you very well, and I enclose herewith a card of his business address in case you would like to contact him at some stage. Peter, as you may or may not know, had a trip to the Himalayas in 1961 with Ed Hillary, and lost both his legs in an unfortunate climbing accident on Mt Makalu. He was climbing with one of your countrymen, and collapsed near the summit due to lack of oxygen, and was very lucky indeed to come out with his life. He got badly frostbitten in both legs, and finally had to have them amputated. He left the Navy after he recuperated, and was able to get around on artificial legs, and went into the business world, and has done very well indeed. He was in top executive positions with one or two large New Zealand Companies, and is now Managing Director for a big US Company, W R Grace Ltd. With his physical disability, and unable to go climbing, Peter took to yachting, and is an expert in the yachting world, both here and overseas. He hasn't changed any -- still the very lean looking gent, and still with a very keen sense of humour. I see Peter quite a bit, although we are at the extreme ends of the Islands, and we do correspond a little bit now and again.

Peter and I did discuss the questions you raised, and as Peter said the answer is really known to all of them. There was never any rivalry whatsoever between Hillary and Fuchs, in fact we were all quite surprised ourselves, that so much was made by the newspapers of our effort. The reason for ourselves going on to the South Pole was purely to pave the way for Fuchs who was running so far behind his timetable, and we were still striking a considerable number of crevassed areas on the Polar Plateau around the area in which he wanted his last <sup>Fuchs</sup> Field Dump. At no stage was the Queen ever in communication with the organising committee back home -- in fact communication was very poor between ourselves in the field and Scott Base or with Fuchs' crossing party. The only person we seemed to have good communication with was the Good Lord, as there were several times we felt he was with us in some dangerous crevasse country. The reason for Hillary suggesting Fuchs stopping at the Pole, and continuing the following year, was purely his concern at the lateness of Fuchs reaching the South Pole and wanting to continue on with his complete scientific investigation across the Polar Icecap.

However, once he reached the South Pole and knew our vehicle route, then time was not such a significant factor as it was first considered. Two years ago, Sir Vivian Fuchs was out at the Canterbury Museum opening the Antarctic Wing in conjunction with Prince Phillip, and we had a very pleasant weekend with Fuchs and several members of the New Zealand Crossing Party. The relationship between Fuchs and Hillary was as friendly as ever and they got on very well, as did the rest of us. In fact we found Fuchs a more delightful character at this function than when he returned from the Antarctic Crossing. No doubt the passage of time had mellowed him considerably, and he was more relaxed with less responsibility, and looking at hind sight to the venture, greatly appreciated the effort made by the New Zealand support party. I hope this gives sufficient information and evidence for you to counter rumours or scuttle-butt which may be arising from the US. From my observations, and from what little contact I have had with the English Members, there is no resentment or feeling at all between either side, and the fact that we had the two Englishmen out to our New Zealand Reunion, is a clear indication of the esteem in which the whole party looks upon one another.

Ed does travel to America quite a lot, and I shall mention your interest to him, and perhaps he may make contact, or if you would like to write to him, his address is Sir Edmund Hillary, 278A Remuera Road, Auckland, New Zealand. For the past two months he has been in Nepal, carrying out his aid work for the Sherpas, and is due back very shortly. He was supposed to have been here at the beginning of the month, but I understand that he has had a local illness, and finished up convalescing, so his return has been somewhat delayed. As you may know he has had a tragic event in his life in 1975, when his wife and daughter of 18 years of age, were killed in an air crash in Kathmandu whilst helping with Aid work. This really shattered Ed, as he was so fond of them both, and it is really only now that he is starting to regain some of his old interest. In a months time he reaches the illustrious age of 60, and is starting to slow down considerably, finding it difficult to master even the 14 and 15 thousand foot altitudes these days. However, he is still very keen on anything he tackles, and has a group of young people around him carrying out all the strenuous physical plans which he himself cannot perform. He still loves the outdoors and the challenge of organising and getting people in the field.

I remember meeting Sir Hubert Wilkin when he visited Scott Base when it was being built. His parka is on display in the Canterbury Antarctic Wing, which incidentally has an excellent display. You will be sad to hear that Rodger Duff, the Curator of the Museum, whom you mentioned, passed away early this year. He was a livewire, especially when it came to collecting artifacts and raising money to improve the Canterbury Museum. The present setup is a living tribute to his enthusiasm and skill. I was very interested to read that you have a companionship with Paul Siple's widow. She certainly sounds a great person, and of course, Paul himself was a well recognised authority, and a keen Antarctic explorer. He visited our home in October '61, during one of his trips through New Zealand, and I have his book 90° South autographed by him, which I consider a valuable part of my Antarctic Library.

I can also remember Larry Gould who was in McMurdo Sound in the '57/'58 era, and his name is well and truly respected by New Zealand scientists. I have a very strong friendship with Dr Trevor Hatherton who was the New Zealand chief scientist for the IGY Party at Scott Base. He often speaks in glowing terms of Larry Gould, and the work that he has carried on in Antarctica. You speak of him memorising the worst journey in the world -- well, we were the team that found the small stone hut over at Cape Crozier. It was a tremendous thrill locating the hut, and finding all the historic pieces of equipment which had been manhauled over during the mid-winter of 1911.

One member of your South Pole team which I often wonder about is Moose Remington. He used to be located just out of Washington, and was handling our Sleeping Bags at one stage along with other camping equipment but went to ground early on, and I have not heard of him since. Would be interested to know if he was one of the members who turned up for your reunion.

It was very good to hear from you again, and I hope that we may keep in communication, and certainly if I am ever Virginia way I shall be in touch with you. Last year I came through New York, but didn't venture further South, but one of these days I am threatening to spend more time in the US, as I had 14 months training there in the War time, and would very much like to visit some of the old haunts.

My very best wishes and kind regards to any other members who may have been unfortunate enough to meet us New Zealand Kiwis.

Yours sincerely

*Murray Ellis*