

THE PUBLICATION OF THE NEW ZEALAND ANTARCTIC SOCIETY

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Regulating Human
Activity in Antarctica



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The deadlines for submissions to future issues are 1 August, 1 November, 1 February and 1 May.

Patron of the New Zealand Antarctic Society:
Professor Peter Barrett, 2008

NEW ZEALAND ANTARCTIC SOCIETY LIFE MEMBERS

The Society recognises with life membership, those people who excel in furthering the aims and objectives of the Society or who have given outstanding service in Antarctica. They are elected by vote at the Annual General Meeting and are restricted to 15 life members at any time.

Current Life Members by the year elected:

1. Jim Lowery (Wellington), 1982
2. Robin Ormerod (Wellington), 1996
3. Baden Norris (Canterbury), 2003
4. Bill Cranfield (Canterbury), 2003
5. Randal Heke (Wellington), 2003
6. Bill Hopper (Wellington), 2004
7. Malcolm Laird (Canterbury), 2006
8. Arnold Heine (Wellington), 2006
9. Margaret Bradshaw (Canterbury), 2006
10. Ray Dibble (Wellington), 2008
11. Norman Hardie (Canterbury), 2008
12. Colin Monteath (Canterbury), 2014
13. John Parsloe (Canterbury), 2014

ELECTED OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY:

National President: Mariska Wouters
South Island Vice-President: Margaret Bradshaw
North Island Vice-President: Linda Kestle
National Secretary: Myra Walton
National Treasurer: Lester Chaplow
Immediate Past-President: Jud Fretter

BRANCH CHAIRS:

Auckland: Linda Kestle
Canterbury: Ursula Rack
Wellington: Daniil Ivshin



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Cover photo: Walking over snow-covered glacier. Photo courtesy of Bill Strickland.

Photo above: Base staff member descends during the Crevasse Plunge trip (see pp 20–21). Photo courtesy of Bill Strickland.

Back cover: Interior of Shackleton's hut, Cape Royds, Ross Island. Photo courtesy of Colin Monteath/Hedgehoghouse.com.

From the Society's President

It is with pleasure that the National Council of the New Zealand Antarctic Society has appointed Lester Chaplow as the new Editor of *Antarctic*. Lester is a longstanding member of the Society and is also our National Treasurer. This is Lester's second issue and we continue to welcome your contributions so that we can ensure that *Antarctic* covers Antarctic events from around the world.

In March, I attended the launch at Parliament of the Antarctic Heritage Trust's Conservation Plan for Hillary's Hut by the New Zealand Prime Minister. The Hut, also known as the TAE Hut or Hut A, was part of the Trans-Antarctic Expedition 1955–57 at Scott Base. It represents the beginning of the modern era of the study of the continent from

the Ross Sea Region. It also marks the foundation of New Zealand's Scott Base. The Antarctic Heritage Trust has taken on the management responsibility, including conservation and fundraising work, for the structures at Scott Base associated with the Trans-Antarctic Expedition and the International Geophysical Year. The Antarctic Society campaigned hard for New Zealand to establish a presence in Antarctica. We saw the TAE/IGY effort as only the beginning. Several of the Society's members were involved in the TAE and the establishment of Scott Base, and some of these were also present at Parliament for the launch!

This is the time of the year that the Society's branches, and no doubt many of you around the world, turn towards celebrating the longest night of

the year. Midwinter is a special time in the Antarctic calendar. For most parties spending a year in Antarctica, it represents the half-way mark of their isolation which began when the summer teams left them in February. Midwinter is a time when the Antarctic Society asks representatives of other Antarctic Treaty nations to join them to remember parties who have spent past winters in Antarctica and those currently on the continent. It is also a time when we think about the spirit of the Antarctic Treaty by inviting friends from other nations to join Society members in a short celebration of midwinter. We hope to see you at our branch events and wish you all the best for your midwinter celebrations.

Mariska Wouters

As a result of the interest in articles in previous editions of *Antarctic*, we commence a new regular series of articles on **Policy and Governance** by Neil Gilbert and by Alan D. Hemmings, and the series on **National Antarctic Programmes** continues with the programme of the Czech Republic.

This edition also includes a report on the visit of the **Chinese Icebreaker and Research Vessel *Xuelong*** to Lyttelton earlier this year. Our **Book Review** is on *Had we Lived: After Captain Scott*.

We are pleased to include

a report by our two Society **Volunteers to Scott Base** for the 2014–2015 season, Paul Kelly and Bill Strickland.

Continuing our recognition of Antarctic people, we introduce a major continuing activity of the Society: the recording of **Oral Histories** of significant Antarcticans, and we include an **Obituary** for Wing Commander John Claydon, a Life Member of the Society since 1980. Sadly, we also note here the passing of a former President of the Society, Major Norman Caithness McPherson QSM.

Lester Chaplow

Branch News

Canterbury

Canterbury Branch has been working with Gateway Antarctica and seven other organisations in the *Christchurch Antarctic Public Talks* series. A different topic is presented once a month and we welcome all members of the public.

The Midwinter dinner will be held on Friday 26 June 2015. The evening will be packed with good friends, great food and stories of the past from the Oral Histories Project.



Responsibility for Regulating Human Activity in Antarctica

By Alan D. Hemmings and Neil Gilbert

From adoption of the Antarctic Treaty in 1959, through the agreement of additional treaties, leading to what we now call the Antarctic Treaty System (ATS), a key issue has been: Who is responsible?

For the first few decades the answer was straightforward. Responsibility for ensuring compliance with ATS obligations, including meeting reporting and information sharing requirements, resided with individual governments. Not only were Nation States (such as New Zealand)

the entities which had agreed the obligations, they were also the entities that actually conducted human activity in Antarctica. Activities were almost entirely conducted by government agencies, generally through national Antarctic programmes which, if they did not operate absolutely everything down there, subcontracted to either their militaries, or a commercial contractor. The State was where the buck stopped.

Fast forward to the present, and the picture is far more complex. Whilst State activity continues

(for example, in New Zealand's case, this is mostly scientific research carried out by State agencies and universities with management and operational support provided by Antarctica New Zealand, and/or the New Zealand Defence Force), a growing number of activities also occur outside the government sector. This generally falls into three areas: tourism, fishing and environmental NGO activity. Further, whereas State activity in the past generally involved just one's own State, the increasing cost, complexity and spread of even traditional Antarctic science activities may now see multiple States being involved in the same activity. And, to add more complexity, a contemporary Antarctic activity may involve States, a non-governmental entity and ships or aircraft that are not registered in any Antarctic Treaty Party.

In this new world of complexity working out who is responsible for ensuring compliance with legal obligations, for approving activities and for providing the requisite reporting and sharing of information among the Antarctic Treaty States, can sometimes be a challenge.

Part of the difficulty lies in the fact that the source of the obligation in relation to reporting is laid out in the Antarctic Treaty, drafted in the late 1950s when only States were operators in Antarctica. Under Article VII, paragraph 5, States are required to inform other States by "notice in advance, of

(a) all expeditions to and within Antarctica, on the part of its nationals, and all expeditions to Antarctica organised in or proceeding from its territory;

(b) all stations in Antarctica occupied by its nationals; and

(c) any military personnel or equipment intended to be introduced by it into Antarctica."

Polar Pioneer, ice-strengthened Aurora Expeditions vessel, Cierva Cove, Antarctic Peninsula. Photo courtesy of Colin Monteath/Hedgehoghouse.com.

Practice, over ensuing years, became that States advised each other of their various national Antarctic programme expeditions – though this did not and does not include whaling (which is left to the International Whaling Commission) or fishing (which is left to the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources).

In 1991, the Parties adopted the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty (Madrid Protocol). This added additional duties, most significant of which was the requirement to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) prior to conducting activities in Antarctica. The Protocol's Article 3 provides that activities “be planned and conducted on the basis of information sufficient to allow prior assessments of, and informed judgements about, their possible impacts”. These judgements should “take full account of ... the cumulative impacts of the activity, both by itself and in combination with other activities in the Antarctic Treaty area [and] whether the activity will detrimentally affect any other activity in the Antarctic Treaty area.” The activities to which these environmental duties attached were cast broadly as those “pursuant to scientific research programmes, tourism and all other governmental and non-governmental”, including “associated logistic support activities”. But they were qualified as being the activities for which advance notice was required under Article VII (5) of the Antarctic Treaty.

Herein lies the problem. All this works very nicely if you are a national Antarctic programme (for example, Antarctica New Zealand).

We know where national programmes are based, they tend not to move, they have long life and it is clear which state is responsible for them.

Tourism and non-governmental activities are explicitly included in the coverage of the Madrid Protocol – and thus must comply with its EIA requirements – and current practice is that these activities are included in a Party's advance notification documentation issued under Article VII (5) of the Treaty. For a nationally based tourism company this is a fairly straightforward process. If you are based in New Zealand, you have EIA and other obligations under New Zealand law; New Zealand will assess your EIA and impose conditions if necessary; and New Zealand will report on you to the other Antarctic Treaty Parties.

It may become more complicated if you have a helicopter, or use a ship, registered outside New Zealand, or if you are running an expedition to another part of Antarctica for which your final departure point is another country.

In such cases, it becomes less clear as to who is responsible for ensuring advance notification, prior EIA, and other duties are actually complied with. Is it still New Zealand (because this is where our putative travel company is based)? It could be, given that New Zealand law extends to any expedition which is organised in New Zealand. It could also be the state to which the ship is flagged that is responsible (but only if that state is a party to the Antarctic Treaty/Madrid Protocol). It could also be the State from which the vessel makes its final departure for Antarctica (again provided the State is a Party to the Treaty and the Madrid Protocol).

In the 2014/15 season New Zealand approved two cruises

to the Ross Sea region by a Cyprus-registered vessel that was chartered by a Dutch tour operator on the basis that the cruises departed from Bluff (even though the second cruise ended up in Chile).

There have been recent examples where responsibilities for assessing and approving NGO activities have been *shared* across a number of states. The challenges are whether shared responsibility can be sorted out and in a timely enough manner that (a) the necessary information can be assembled and reviewed, and (b) notice provided to the ATS, *before* the expedition in question actually hits the Antarctic? If the expedition is aboard a private yacht, the issue may be whether anybody knows anything about it before it arrives in Antarctica.

All of this can begin to look like a lawyers' picnic. It is therefore timely and welcome that the Parties will hold a special session at the forthcoming Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (Sofia, Bulgaria, 1 to 10 June) on this very issue. The session, which will involve experts from authorising agencies in many Antarctic Treaty States, will take a hard look at the issues encountered when assessing activities involving participants from multiple nations and/or multiple organizations as well as issues involved in handling activities where various elements of the activity are assessed by different national authorities. What is increasingly important in this more complex world, is that the Parties to the Antarctic Treaty and the Madrid Protocol engage in high levels of cooperation to ensure that obligations are being met, and ultimately that the Antarctic environment is appropriately protected. ♪



The researchers' field camp at the coast of Brandy Bay, James Ross Island. Photo by Jitka Mikova, the Masaryk University and the Czech Geological Survey.



The coast with the Johann Gregor Mendel Czech Antarctic Station and Red Island in the background. Photo by Pavel Sevcik, the Masaryk University.



The Czech glaciological team and their weather station at the peak of Davies Dome Glacier. Photo by Radek Vodrazka, the Czech Geological Survey.



The Johann Gregor Mendel Czech Antarctic Station with the Antarctic Peninsula in the background. Photo by Kamil Laska, the Masaryk University.



Field sampling. Photo by Jitka Mikova, the Masaryk University and the Czech Geological Survey.



A Weddell seal visiting the Johann Gregor Mendel Czech Antarctic Station. Photo by Jitka Mikova, the Masaryk University and the Czech Geological Survey.

Exploring the Work of Antarctic Treaty National Antarctic Programmes:

The National Antarctic Programme of the Czech Republic

The Czech Republic has been a signatory to the Antarctic Treaty since 1962. In 2003, The Czech Republic ratified Czech Antarctic Law into national legislation, and subsequently became a member of the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP) of the Antarctic Treaty. Ten years later at the 36th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (2013) in Brussels, the Czech Republic gained Consultative Party Status.

The country's Antarctic science programme is delivered by the Masaryk University which is a lead institution of the Czech Polar Research Centre, which connects Czech research institutions active in polar research. The Masaryk University owns and operates the Johann Gregor Mendel Czech Antarctic Station on James Ross Island, off the eastern side of the Antarctic Peninsula, and is responsible for promoting and co-ordinating Czech polar research activities, managing the Antarctic station's development, and organising and leading research expeditions to the Antarctic.

The Johann Gregor Mendel Czech Antarctic Station, with a 20-person capacity, was built during two summer seasons: 2004–05 and 2005–06. The station bears the name of J. G. Mendel (1822–1884), a founder of modern genetics and a pioneering meteorologist. Since the station's establishment, successful scientific expeditions have been based there every austral summer season. The programme relies on other countries for logistic support, which the Chilean Navy and the Argentinean Air Force have provided to date.

The Organisational Structure of the Czech National Antarctic Programme

Masaryk University, based in Brno, is a public university under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. As the owner and operator of Johann Gregor Mendel Czech Antarctic Station, it is the lead agency for Czech Antarctic research (which includes membership in the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs (COMNAP) and the

Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR)).


For research planning and co-ordination, Masaryk University co-operates with the Czech Polar Research Centre. The Czech Polar Research Centre is also associated with the Czech Geological Survey, the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice, and several institutes and research centres of the Academy of Science of the Czech Republic.

The Czech Antarctic Science Programme

The Johann Gregor Mendel Czech Antarctic Station is primarily used as a summer-only research station, and it also provides support to summer remote field camps. Since 2007, Czech researchers, alongside researchers from Argentina, Slovakia, the United Kingdom and Russia, have stayed and worked at the fully-equipped station, which houses two laboratories.

The Czech scientific programme includes the fields of Earth Sciences (geology, geomorphology, palaeontology, glaciology, geochemistry, analytical chemistry, climatology and hydrology, in particular), and a number of biological disciplines, such as parasitology, botany, ecology, eco-physiology, plant stress physiology, microbiology, ornithology and soil biology.

The research programme, which welcomes international and cross-disciplinary collaboration, that is carried out from Johann Gregor Mendel Station is intended to be long-term and multidisciplinary, and focuses around detailed study of one of the largest deglaciated areas in Antarctica. Research of both the abiotic and biotic components of the area, and relationships between those components, is currently underway, which should provide researchers with a thorough understanding of the functioning of the whole deglaciated system and predictions of its further development.

More information on the Czech Republic's national Antarctic programme can be found at www.sci.muni.cz/CARI/ or www.comnap.aq/Members. 

Xuelong, Chinese Icebreaker and Research Vessel, Visits Lyttelton

By Sue Stubenvoll

At 5.30 pm on Friday 16 January 2015 the pilot boarded the *Xuelong* (*Snow Dragon*) off Lyttelton Heads. A small flotilla went out to greet her as she steamed down the channel to the port, where, in gusty winds, she was helped into her berth by two tugs. As the sun set, a double rainbow, turned magenta by the nor'west sunset, arched across the surrounding hills. The sky augured well for *Xuelong's* visit.

We first heard that the *Xuelong* would visit Lyttelton last year when the Chinese Antarctic programme announced that they would be building a new Antarctic base in the Ross Sea on the steep-sided Inexpressible Island – an unusual choice but one where they should be quite safe from sea level rise. The Antarctic Heritage Trust was able to advise them of the island's historic site, so preventing damage and setting a tone of supportive helpfulness. *Xuelong* is especially welcome, as she went to the aid of the *Akademik Shokalskiy* when that ship got stuck in pack ice off Commonwealth Bay last year.

Security was tight, but a limited number of members of Antarctic organisations were invited by the Chinese Consulate, through the Christchurch City Council, to an official welcome for the ship, her captain and crew and this year's research team. TV crews were active as we cleared security and were ushered to a large marquee on the wharf. We were soon treated to a colourful and enthusiastic display by a ladies' percussion and



dance band in matching pantaloon costumes, followed by a lion dance with two two-person lions, bowing and throwing mandarin oranges (for luck), while a long lion of about 20 dancers weaved back and forth like a huge kite, representing the visitors. The spirited cultural welcome to the ship was reciprocated by an equally spirited welcome from the Rapaki cultural performance team.

A full pōwhiri followed the dancing and singing. On one side the visitors included the ship's officers, representatives from the Chinese National Research Programme and the Chinese Consulate in Christchurch, and the Chinese ambassador from Wellington. On the facing side the official welcoming party included representatives from the Rapaki community, MPs, councillors, heads of every Antarctic organisation in Christchurch, including the university, and a strong contingent from the Christchurch City Council led by its CEO representing the mayor. Speeches in Māori, Chinese (with translation) and English were made, then gifts were exchanged. The latter included a model of the ship and several framed photos from the Chinese delegation; a carved

fishhook from the mayor; and, from the Rapaki community, a large piece of pale green–white pounamu from Te Wai Pounamu, neatly renamed a taniwha to recognise the visiting dragon. Greetings were clearly heartfelt on all sides.

Following formalities we boarded the ship in three groups and were shown round the research labs, a reception room featuring a magnificent painting of an eagle, the bridge, and right down to lower levels. Back on deck we saw one of the specially designed twin counter-rotating-bladed helicopters (made in Russia), which have very short tails so as to be more manoeuvrable on the confined deck space. We even got to sit inside one.

Back on the main deck drinks and a meal were served from a long buffet of maybe 20 dishes, all delicious, while we chatted as freely as language permitted, which was a great pleasure. The ship's first officer kindly accepted a copy of *Dogs of the Vastness* for the ship's library, and everyone appeared to thoroughly enjoy our three-hour visit. A small open day was also held on Sunday 18 January and *Xuelong* left port in the afternoon of Monday 19 January. We hope she becomes a regular visitor. 🐉

Photo above: *Xuelong* at berth. Photo courtesy of Sue Stubenvoll.

Our Oral Histories

By Margaret Bradshaw and Lester Chaplow

For some time now the Society has been recording oral histories from significant Antarcticans. These started in 1997, with 10 interviews taped by Julia Bradshaw, followed by a further 14 interviews in 2004 recorded by Jacqui Foley. All of these interviews were funded with assistance from Lottery Environment & Heritage and, significantly, included a number of New Zealand members of the Trans-Antarctic Expedition and IGY (1955–1957) and their wives (as separate interviews). These early interviews are on tape, yet to be digitised, and are held by the Canterbury Museum.

In 2006–2008, and again in 2010, more interviews were recorded by Jacqui Foley. These were funded from three large donations: one anonymous, one from Antarctica New Zealand and the other from Canterbury Museum. They include two Americans with close ties to the New Zealand Antarctic programme. These are also lodged with the Canterbury Museum.

In 2012–2014, we received another grant from Lottery, and a further 10 interviews were recorded, again by Jacqui Foley; three more in 2014–2015 were funded by the Society. These interviews are generally about three hours long, but one exceeds seven hours. They provide a major resource for future historians in the words of those involved in the events. These interviews have been deposited with the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington.

Sadly, some of our intended interviewees died, or became too ill, before we could speak with them, and many of the early interviewees have died since their histories were recorded. The interviews are available under various terms set by the interviewee, and the repositories; some being available now, and others with longer time-embargoes on them. With each interview is a recording and an abstract.


A list of all oral histories to date, and their repositories, is on the Society's website at www.antarctic.org.nz/pages/projects/oral.php.

There are three issues:

- The early recordings are on tape and need to be transferred to a digital medium for longer-term storage and access;
- There are still many people to be interviewed and, without pre-empting any future plans, these might include our own Life Members, New Zealand

holders of the [British] Polar Medal, and recipients of the New Zealand Antarctic Medal;

- A major oral history project is currently being planned – based around a single significant historic event, recording interviews with many people across several disciplines. Potentially, there could be 50 interviews, and more than one recorder.

For these three continuing issues, the Society needs funds. Funding received to date has largely covered the cost of the professional archivists engaged, but travel and other costs have amounted to a sizable amount, which has been partially funded with a \$10,000 transfer from the F E A Lagace Legacy Income Fund;¹ the balance has come from Society funds. Donations are sought, (and welcomed!) to assist with all three projects. Any donation made to the Society is tax deductible in New Zealand. 




Branch News

Wellington

Wellington Branch, in partnership with Nerd Nite Wellington, held an Antarctic-themed speaking event on 23 March. It was held at the Hotel Bristol and was very well attended, with standing room only. The speakers were Rebecca Priestly, who covered the science history of Antarctic exploration, Rob Suisted who spoke about his experience with leading VIP tours to the Ice, and Veronika Meduna, who explored the future of Antarctica and how the continent is changing.

On 18 June, the Branch will hold its Midwinter Reception at the Royal Society of New Zealand. This is a major event in the Branch calendar. It is held on the Thursday closest to midwinter, with four toasts (Loyal Toast, Past Parties, Present Parties, Treaty Nations) to recognise the occasion. All diplomats from Antarctic Treaty signatory nations are also invited.

Daniil Ivshin has taken on the role of Branch Chair. For more information, please contact us on Wellington@antarctic.org.nz. 

¹ Mr F E A Lagace left a share of his estate to the Society in 2010. The legacy has been invested, with the interest income forming this fund.



New Zealand Antarctic Society Volunteers to Scott Base

15 Dec 2014–14 Jan 2015

By Bill Strickland and Paul Kelly

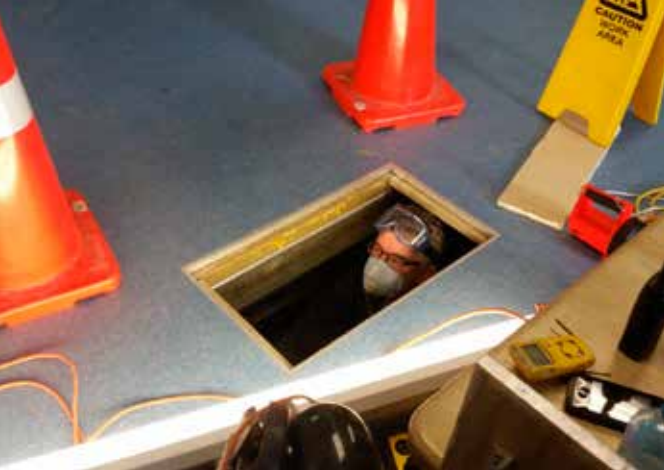
The New Zealand Antarctic Society and Antarctica New Zealand entered into an agreement in 2009 to provide an occasional opportunity for New Zealand Antarctic Society members to work voluntarily at Scott Base, Antarctica for approximately four weeks in December/January. This position is not offered every year, and is advertised on the Society's website when available, usually around July/August. Society members Paul Kelly of Dunedin and Bill Strickland of Whangaparaoa were selected for volunteer work for one month in Scott Base last season. They were assigned to the Engineering division and reported to Base Carpenter Darryn Slee.

After meeting each other and fellow traveller Richard Stafford, who was the new summer base electrician, the good people at the Christchurch base saw us off as we boarded the US ski-equipped Hercules for a fine-weather eight-hour flight south. A round of viewing time was granted by the Air Force crew up on the flight deck, and we were lucky enough to be crossing over the Victoria Land mountains during our turn to see the enormous view from the cockpit.

At Scott Base we were up early the next morning for breakfast and to make the 8.00am Engineers and Support teams briefing at the Pram Point meeting room. This was the start of our daily routine and a taste of life at Scott Base: an important meeting, where we found out what work activities everyone was doing for that day, and how we were assisting.

Most days we had different tasks, so the variety made the days fly by alarmingly quickly. One important task we had was in reducing the fire risk across the base. There is a double floor in most buildings that serves as an insulation space and provides room for the numerous pipes and cables. Over time, combustible dust and debris had built up inside this space, and that had to be cleared out. We had just enough room to squeeze in a couple of vacuum cleaners, brushes and buckets, and ourselves, and to experience an unusual “caving experience” over a few days. With safety always the priority at the base, we had to contact the Comms post by radio on the hour to confirm all was well. We were often supplied top-ups of the plentiful tea-break savouries and coffee during the staff “visual checks” on us. We managed to clean out four buildings’ floor spaces during our stay.

Photo above: On top of Castle Rock, Ross Island. Left to right: Bill Strickland, Richard Stafford and Paul Kelly. Photo courtesy of Field Trainer Richard Bottomley.



We painted interior walls in the comfort of the Scott Base air, heated at 18 degrees. With Paul being a professional painter we soon had two corridors and an office looking very smart, and we received plenty of compliments for the work.

One larger paint job included relocating several tonnes of engineering materials from the old Incinerator Building so Paul could paint the concrete floor. The building was to be reused as a temporary food storage area for the base while the Hillary Field Centre building upgrade progressed. Over two days we needed to use plenty of muscle on ice axes, along with the powerful *Herman Nelson* aircraft heater, to break through a stubborn covering of solid ice before reaching the concrete floor. Not your everyday painting method back home.

After each day's work, recreation choices were fantastic! We were lucky enough to have two fine-weather weeks to explore the nearby sea-ice pressure ridges before the transition access from Ross Island was closed. This is where we perfectly timed walking past a Weddell seal eating a large toothfish on the ice surface some distance from a melt-hole. It wasn't until seeing Dr Eisert and her band of scientists rushing excitedly down to where we mentioned the seal was that we realised that the sight was something special. We later found we were the first ever to see the occurrence. Not bad for two DIY experts.

Paul managed to scale all the local mountain peaks and walks several times over, while Bill picked up the art of skate skiing and later completed the McMurdo Sound half-marathon.

Over the Christmas and New Year's break, we visited the US Constellation aircraft crash site out past Pegasus air field. The plane had crashed in 1970 and the nearby airfield was named in its honour. We had a great time exploring the plane and enjoyed a picnic with several American and Kiwi staff from the back of our Hagglund vehicle.

To test the nervous system on one trip, we spent a morning being lowered down a crevasse. After a

safety training session, we were roped together by field trainers and with other cautious base staff we walked up a creaking and groaning glacier to the crevasse entrance. We were then lowered fifteen to twenty metres into the spacious cavern, which appeared to be bottomless. After hanging around and reflecting on how good the sunshine above was, it was a team effort for everyone above hauling on the recovery ropes to resurface the grateful plunger.

Best yet was the Scott Base Ski Club. Over our month's stay we had three perfect days of downhill skiing at the newly named Castle Rock Ski Field. The best-quality snow found anywhere in the world was declared by The Scott Base Ski Club members, an assessment that proved correct in providing a fantastic fun day carving up the slopes for skiers, or just a relaxing place for the non-skiers who happily ran the barbecue and supplied refreshments.

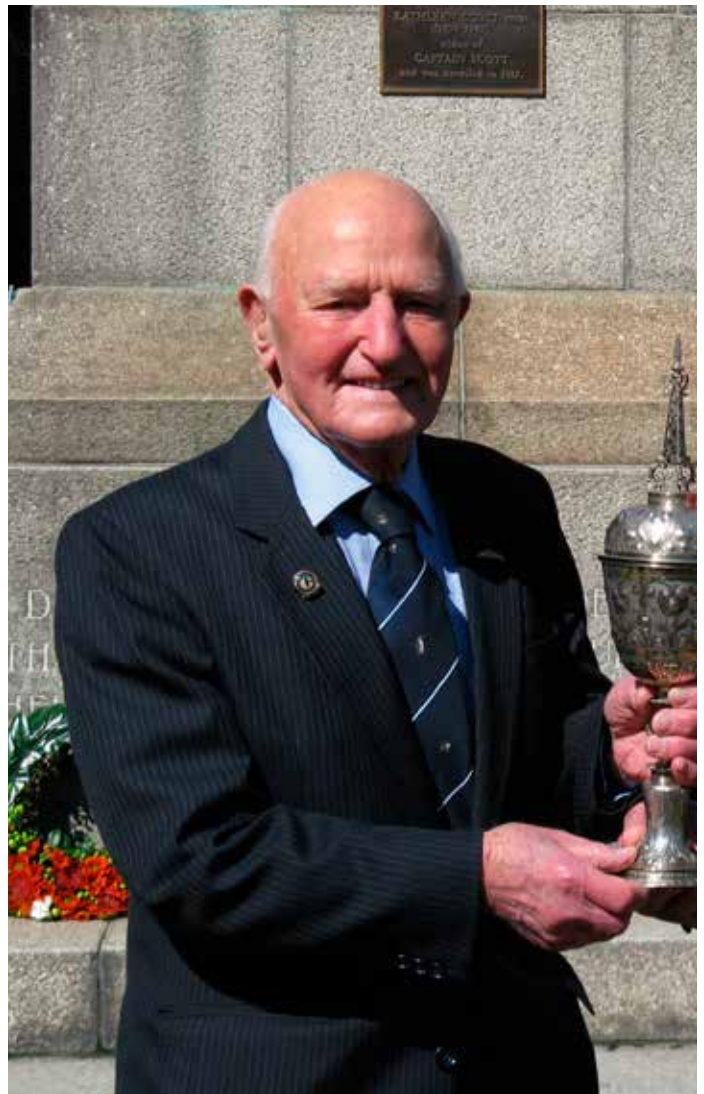
Christmas day celebrations were great fun. With heavy snowfall outside on the day, the Secret Santa presents provided great entertainment for everyone. The famous base Christmas dinner was absolutely delicious. The next day the Americans provided a second dinner in their own style and welcomed us in. The annual "Ice Stock" music festival was held in Mac Town to welcome in the New Year and was enjoyed by a large crowd of joint base staff and scientists. The musical acts on a windy stage and in the balmy -10 degree-but-sunny day were surprisingly high in standard.

Our thanks to the New Zealand Antarctic Society and Antarctica New Zealand for a special trip. We had a great taste of life on Ross Island and the satisfaction of knowing that we contributed to the maintenance of Scott Base over the small amount of time we spent on The Ice. 🍷



Photo above left : Bill Strickland – under-floor fire-risk-reduction work. Photo courtesy of Paul Kelly.

Photo above right: Constellation Pegasus crash site visit – Paul Kelly third from right. Photo courtesy of Bill Strickland.



From the *Antarctic News Bulletin*, No. 19, September 1955

Squadron Leader J. R. Claydon
Squadron Leader John Richard Claydon has been selected to accompany the advance party of the Trans-Antarctic Expedition to the Weddell Sea towards the end of this year, “to gain experience” (says an R.N.Z.A.F. spokesman) “and to fit himself to command the R.N.Z.A.F. element of the New Zealand expedition... in 1956.” Born at Christchurch and educated at the Technical High School there, Squadron Leader Claydon joined the

R.N.Z.A.F. as an airman in 1938 and served for six years on the ground staff before he decided on a career as a pilot, and began flying training in 1942. He graduated with a “special distinguished pass” the following year. In World War II he completed three tours of operations with the renowned No. 14 (Fighter) Squadron in the S.W. Pacific. He served with No. 14 Squadron again after the war, when it went to Japan for duty with the British Commonwealth Occupation

Force. Subsequently he became adjutant and a flying instructor of No. 3 (Canterbury) Territorial Squadron. After a period of administrative duties he was given command of the Flying Training School, Wigram.

Squadron Leader Claydon has left for the United Kingdom, where he will work closely with Squadron Leader J.H. Lewis, senior R.A.F. officer of the Trans-Antarctic Expedition, until they sail for the Antarctic with the advance party in November.

Photo above left: Claydon with cigar at Scott Base. Photo by Trevor Hatherton.

Photo above right: Claydon at wreath-laying ceremony, Christchurch, 2008. (c) NZAS photo collection.

John Richard Claydon

(1917–2014)

Wing Commander (retired), AFC, Polar Medal

By Steve Hicks

In 1955 John was selected as chief pilot for the RNZAF Antarctic Flight in support of the New Zealand Support Party for the Trans-Antarctic Expedition (TAE) led by Vivian Fuchs. In December of that year he joined Sir Edmund Hillary, George Lowe and Bob Miller on the advance party voyage in the ship *Theron* to Vahsel Bay in the Weddell Sea. John's three-and-a-half-hour reconnaissance flight in an Auster plane, after the ship became trapped in the ice pack, found a way out and saved the expedition from defeat.

He and Junior Pilot Bill Cranfield provided outstanding air support for Hillary's Support Party by transporting men, dogs, equipment and supplies throughout the Ross Dependency during the two years of the expedition. While Hillary was away in the field with his tractor party, John served as leader at Scott Base. John, Bill Cranfield and aircraft mechanic Wally Tarr were later awarded the Polar Medal; John was also awarded the Air Force Cross. John always regarded his time with the TAE and Hillary's Support Party as the highlight of his life.

Lou Sanson, now Director-General, Department of Conservation, writes:

I worked with John for 11 years in my role as CEO of Antarctica New Zealand and had huge respect for his knowledge and passion regarding the TAE party's place in New Zealand and Antarctic history, and influence for New Zealand. He regularly shared with me stories around the origin of Scott Base, his support of Sir Ed Hillary and the TAE Party and his sense of respect for what our TAE Party did to create the environment for New Zealand influence in the future of Antarctica. He demonstrated this huge passion right up until his death and New Zealanders should be proud of what he and the TAE Party achieved for New Zealand.

In 1960 John was appointed to Washington DC as Air Attaché, and served there for three years. In later



postings he commanded administration at Ohakea, and was an honorary aide-de-camp to Governor-General Sir Bernard Fergusson. After retirement from the Air Force he worked as assistant manager at the Christchurch International Airport before going to Kathmandu to advise on airport management in Nepal.

He was a stalwart member of the New Zealand Antarctic Society, the New Zealand Institute of Management, and the Commonwealth Society, and helped establish the Air Force Museum at Wigram. He enjoyed hunting and fishing. In the words of a person who knew him well, John was “a gentleman who believed strongly in tradition and loyalty”.

John Richard Claydon. Born Christchurch, 12 February 1917; died Christchurch, 15 December 2014. Pre-deceased by wife Noela; survived by daughter Helen, son Richard, four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. †

Photo above: Claydon with Hillary, at Tasman Glacier, 1956. Photo by Mike Breen.

Had we Lived: After Captain Scott

Reviewed by Dave Lucas

This article reviews a self-published work of fiction written by Richard Jopling. It is the work of ten years' research, in which the author intertwines and blends his imagination into the dreams and experiences of the British Antarctic Expedition (BAE) member Apsley Gerry-Garrard.

It centres upon Cherry-Garrard's life: that of an Oxford graduate, accomplished rower, and young "gentleman landowner." It uses as "punch points" personal letters written by Cherry-Garrard to his mother and sister. The book concludes as Gerry-Garrard becomes a mature sick man revisiting his childhood. He befriends a boy who, like him, is passionate about the English countryside and its abundant seasonally changing wonders.

"It is easy for the Gods to glorify or debase a man."

These words are easily applied to Cheery Cherry, as Scott called him. Following family tradition, "Cherry" sought "work of a noble nature" – an essentially English gentleman's intermediate rite of passage – as he transitioned from the youthful gaiety of an Oxford University undergraduate to the full responsibility of running a large and wealthy estate.

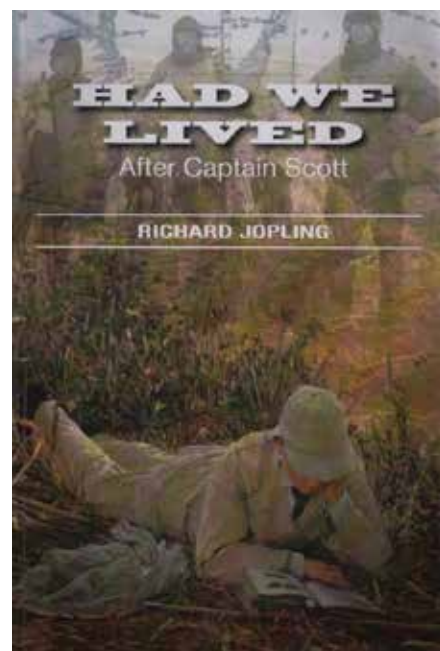
Richard Jopling captures well the motivation driving this most enigmatic of Antarctic explorers. The early part of the book is set in the veldt of South Africa and it continues through to the final days of Cherry's life in London, taking

the reader on an exciting journey. Jopling's imagination knows few boundaries as he progressively and sensitively unfolds Cherry's personality. He was a man who was often "lost in the stream" with so much to prove.

Cherry's early childhood days were spent roaming the countryside of England. The descriptions of the hardening experience of a harsh public school, and, later, the exclusive university education of the Edwardian gentlemen, bring the reader to a greater understanding of the man, his environment, his friends and his loyalties.

He did not need an Oxford qualification, but unlike his friends he was not satisfied with a third or fourth "gentleman's" degree. Cherry also worked hard to become a successful athlete and rower. Never a leader, never a follower; always loyal and dependable; true to the Empire, family, friends and, finally, self. These qualities, his friendship with Bill Wilson, and his financial donation to the BAE Terra Nova Expedition ensured his placement on that expedition.

The BAE ranks highly in every sense, but subsequently the stories surrounding its survivors have rarely been written about. Despite the Antarctic-induced trauma Cherry felt, he was a successful explorer. Being driven by the "right stuff" and being faithful to one's friends were parts of the self-sacrificing ethos of the times. In real life Cherry's feelings of complicit guilt, knowing his closest



friends had died, haunted him until his passing.

Jopling presents a finely crafted book, full of interest, the reality of exploration, fiction and myth, and the unresponsive fickleness of the gods Cherry had studied. The fiction isn't poetry but the imagery is superb. The reality is heart stopping.

Their voices whisper, an eloquent dream within a dream.

Had we Lived: After Captain Scott (2012) is published by YouCaxton Publications.

Paperback UKP 9.99. ISBN 978-0-9571454-5-0

E-book UKP 3.08 £

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100 years ago, Sir Ernest Shackleton was in a race for his life, and for the lives of his men. Noting the centenary of the voyage of the *James Caird* from Elephant Island to South Georgia, the next issue of *Antarctic* has two copies of *Frank Worsley: Shackleton's Fearless Captain*, by John Thomson, to give away. Details in the next issue. £



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Midwinter Night

The acetylene splutters and flickers,
The night comes into its own.
Outside Ambrose and Terror
Are snarling over a bone.

And this is the tale the watchman,
Awake in the dead of night.
Tells of the fourteen sleepers
Whose snoring gives him the blight.

The revels of Eros and Bacchus
Are mingled in some of their dreams,
For the songs they gustily gurgle
Are allied to bibulous themes,

And subjects re barmaids and bottles,
Whisky and barrels of beer,
Are mixed with amorous pleadings
That sound decidedly queer.

Darling you really love me?
Stutters one dreaming swain;
The watch man whispers "Never"
And the dreamer writhes in pain.

From the corner cabin a mutter,
The listener kens not what;
It sounds like "yon pale moon,"
Or some other poetic rot.

Murder is done in another's dream,
And falls from shuddering heights;
Erebus rises to dance on the sea
And the dreamer flees south in tights.

Another sails north on the broken ice
Just dressed in Nature's clothes,
Whilst seals and penguins grin in delight
And the frost plays hell with their toes.

And some see tailors they knew of yore,
Stalk in with their mile-long bills;
And everyone when morning broke
Made a rush for the calomel pills.

VERITAS

(Ernest Shackleton, *Aurora Australis*, 1908, Antarctica)

