



EXPLORER'S GAZETTE

Uniting all OAEs in Perpetuating the Memory of US Navy Operations in Antarctica

Volume 2, Issue 3

Old Antarctic Explorers Association, Inc

Fall 2002

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Jim Eblen – OAEA President

To All OAE's – This will be my last article as your President and I promise to keep it short. Although I will not be seeking a second term, I have thoroughly enjoyed my term of office. The association has come a long way since its inception. This was accomplished by a lot of hard work and dedication, beginning with the establishment of the Executive Steering Committee and developing into the status we have today. The OAEA is now chartered and enjoys a tax-exempt status. The majority of the establishment was through E-mail, with the written correspondence handled by Secretary O'Connell. A "Tip of the Hat" and a personal THANK YOU, to all who participated in the formation of this unique organization

Our first Symposium/reunion is fast approaching. All of the information regarding this event can be found elsewhere in this bulletin. The committee handling this event has put a lot of effort into ensuring that business will be handled, and a great time will be had by all. This will be the time for all of the general membership to make their desires and views known. The officers of the association take care of business between Symposiums and the members assembled conduct the association's business at the Symposium. For those that cannot attend, designate a proxy and have them carry your desires and your vote. This is especially true in the case of elections of those officers required by the Bylaws of the association

I am looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Pensacola. To those who have lost a loved one or a friend, our prayers are with you. To those who are under the weather, we wish you a speedy recovery. Until we meet.

Jim Eblen
President

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Cecil D. Harper - OAEA Chaplain

As September 11 approaches many in our nation, and around the world, will become more and more apprehensive over the possibility of another major terrorist attack. As individuals there is little we can do but to be alert and not put ourselves or members of our family in positions of risk. There is something else though. As we remember the tragic events of a year ago and feel the emotion well up within us, something we should certainly do.

We should be thankful we live in this country. There is no other like it.

We should be thankful we are led by a God fearing president who practices his faith.

We should be thankful that we have the freedom and the liberty to go and do and say just about anything we want to.

We should be thankful for our families, our friends, our homes, our communities, and the general well being of all American citizens.

We should cherish life, thank God for it, and try to live it to the fullest in a positive and meaningful way.

Our nation will prevail in this protracted war against terrorism, and the world will be better for it. Keep the faith!!

November will soon be here and our first reunion will take place in Pensacola, Florida. I am looking forward to being amongst the OAE's again. You are made of a special fabric. See you there.

Blessings and Peace!
Cecil D. Harper
OAEA Chaplain
OAE 72-73

O'Connell at penguin64@att.net or the OAEA National Headquarters

EDITORIAL

Jim O'Connell – Editor

What could a Doctor in the East, an oil field welder out West, a farmer in the North and a corporate CEO in South possibly have in common? This is a question the majority of our society would ask but we know that they are among the finest people in the world. They are all OAEs and many of them will be gathering in Pensacola, FL in November to share their common interest. It is their 'Antarctic Experience'

Life in Antarctica was so unique that the only people that really believe and understand the stories about it are other OAEs that have lived it. With this in mind, I have been told by more than one person that they don't think 3 days will be long enough for everybody to have adequate time to get their stories out. They may be right. If Webster was attending the reunion, he could probably write another dictionary with the words we have come to hold dear. How many our nation's citizens have even heard the words "Herbies", "Honey Buckets" or "Bunny Boots", let alone know what they mean.

This thread of brotherhood and comradeship is very well depicted in the "Antarctic Experience" section of the membership application you have all filled out and it continues to be the main memory of everyone.

I know many of you wanted to attend but situations prevented it and I can only say that, hopefully, you can make it to the next one, you will be missed.

Jim O'Connell

Editor

LOCATOR - (Editor's note – members who are off line may contact the OAEA Secretary and he will put you in touch with the requester)

Dale Bracken - Marty Wise is trying to locate Dale Bracken (59/60 time period). If anybody knows where Dale is, please contact Marty at wiseIII@msn.com (e-mail has 3 Capital I's in it)

George Stewart – If anybody knows where George has relocated to please contact Jim



IN MEMORY

OAE Tom Osborne passed away on July 9th in Fidioute, PA. Tom was a member of the OAEA and served with MCB Special and ASA from '56 to '65

OAE Charles Mallory passed away on July 6th in Glen Burnie, MD. Charles was not a member of the OAEA but he served in Antarctica on Operation Windmill in 1947 and 48.

OAE Fred Charlton passed away on April 12, 2002. Fred was not a registered member of the OAEA but he served on the ice at Wilkes Station with MCB Special during DF-II

A cash donation was made to the OAEA by OAEA member Eugene Forsht in memory of LCDR W. D. Counts, USN, VX-6 who perished in the crash of P2V #439 at Wilkes Station on November 9th, 1961.

LOCAL ACTIVITIES

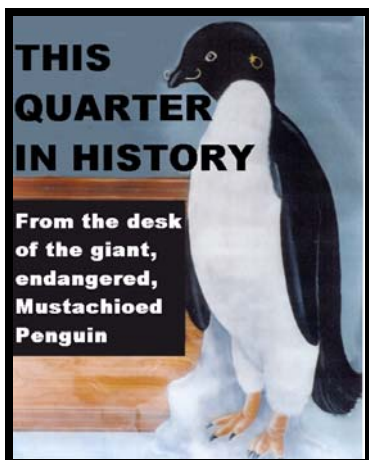
If you are out and about this great country of ours and happen to be in the vicinity of one of the below scheduled get togethers, the host locations would be more than happy to have you drop in and share a period of fellowship and memories.

Pensacola Area – The Pensacola Group meets the first Saturday of the third month of each quarter at the American Legion Post 240 - 8666 Gulf Beach Hwy. Pensacola and they had their quarterly meeting on 7 September. Our next meeting is on Saturday, December 7, so if you are in town you are invited to stop in. For additional details, you can contact Jim O'Connell at penguin64@att.net or (850) 478-6222. Also, you might visit this watering hole while in town for the reunion in November.

Tidewater Area

– See a special article in this edition about the recent meeting the Tidewater folks had. For more information contact Ed Hamblin at hamblin@pilot.infi.net or (757) 405-3362.

This Quarter In History
By Billy-Ace Penguin Baker – OAEA Historian



- July Events**
- 21 Jul 1908 Great Britain makes the first territorial claims in Antarctica
 - 20 Jul 1934 Poulter & party set out to rescue Byrd
 - 01 Jul 1957 IGY begins
 - 07 Jul 1960 Ike signs the ASM bill
 - 27 Jul 1989 Will Steger leaves for South Pole from Antarctic Peninsula
- August Events**
- 14 Aug 1908 Shackleton revisits the Discovery Hut
 - 09 Aug 1912 Mawson sets up Aladdin's Cave
 - 30 Aug 1916 Shackleton's men on Elephant island rescued
 - 08 Aug 1934 Second attempt to rescue Byrd by Poulter
 - 03 Aug 1960 Fire at Mirny kills 2 men
- September Events**
- 04 Sep 1819 Spanish ship *San Telmo* abandoned at 62°S
 - 25 Sep 1908 Shackleton's party at White Island
 - 08 Sep 1911 Amundsen departs for South Pole
 - 01 Sep 1934 First autogiro flight
 - 25 Sep 1934 First autogiro crash

*What is brown, has a hump and lives at the South Pole ?
A very lost camel !*

TIDEWATER OAEs GET TOGETHER

– Submitted by Ed Hamblin

We had a nice couple of hours, with Bob Cantrell entertaining us with stories about what it was like to be a Marine aviator with Navy pilots. As always, a little bit of show and tell, a lot of stories, some laughs, and some memories. We left with the date of Saturday, October 26 for our next non official Tidewater area OAE get together. Four of us (Bob Cantrell, Charlie Thompson, Homar Hall, and Ed Hamblin) that were there are going to be in Pensacola in November.



Homar Hall – Note the University of Antarctica T-shirt. . He was enroute to a volunteer function. Homar does several appearances throughout the year in his penguin costume for charity, assisting in the raising of tens of thousands of dollars for children




Besides Homar who is also pictured in the group (Homar wintered over at McM DF-71), the remainder of folks in the group picture from left to right are Bob Cantrell, VX6 1969-1971; Charlie Thompson, VXE-6 1974-1976; John Strider, DF1 and 2; Homar Hall; Fred Nootnagle, VX6, Winter Over 1964 (Apologies to Fred...I may have the year wrong, but he was winter over back when men were men, etc. etc.) and Jim Silverstorf, , Winter Over 1973/74.

REUNION INFORMATION

DET. ALFA 1972-73 WINTER-OVER CREW October 6th thru 11th 2002 in Las Vegas. For more information contact Jim Wallace at utcret@tampabay.rr.com

USS YANCEY (AKA-93), 7-10 Nov, 2002, Charleston, SC. Contact George Clifton, 4660 West 89th Pl, Hometown, IL 60456, (708) 425-8531, clifs@ameritech.net. The *Yancey* served during Operation Highjump

OLD ANTARCTIC EXPLORERS ASSOC., INC.  November 6th thru 8th 2002 in Pensacola, FL however registrations needed to be postmarked by 1 October.

Editor's Note - If you have any information regarding individual OAE group reunions, please send the information to Jim O'Connell at penguin64@att.net for publication in the Gazette

GLACIER RESTORATION LOG –

16 – 21 July by Ben Koether

1. We completed a record two weeks work period aboard ship in Suisun Bay. About 20 persons were active most days, either aboard ship or working issues ashore. We accomplished some very significant events. I'll just mention the highlights:

a. We conducted an underwater survey to check the propellers and runner, satisfactory!

b. We removed an exhaust fan that services the forward portion of the ship. It is frozen and will need replacement or rebuild. We located two identical units on a nearby ship, so we have alternatives.

c. We conducted an inspection of the Main Diesels. Fairbanks is preparing a quotation of parts and assistance for returning all 10 engines to service. The inspection included removal of ports. The engines look very good. All lighting in the engine rooms worked. Visibility was excellent for the first time and the spaces are beginning to appear normal. You can now visualize them being back in 4.0 condition with another big push from a dedicated group of engine men.

d. We completed disassembly of frozen parts on the forward crane so they can be repaired and crane placed back in operation.

e. We recovered a very significant quantity of parts from the ships along side and we constructed inventory lists on a palm top for transmittal to a PC database. The ship is coming together very professionally and with great teamwork and organization. If we can turn out big crews like this again we will approach having a complete inventory of parts on board, or identified as

missing, so we will know what we need to get underway.

2. We launched a new effort, Hospitality Services, Led by Eric Rosenquist of Cinni-Little. Cinni-Little is the preeminent Food Service Design/Consulting firm in North America. He conducted a through survey of the galley, reefers, food storage, and the berthing. He will form a Committee of Food Service Industry Manufacturers to restore completely our total capability for Hotel services. This will include cooking, holding, preparation, dispensing, cleaning and berthing supplies as well as food stores. The goal will be to have limited capability shortly after we hit the pier with full operational capability by next spring when Elderhostel's program with the *Glacier* will be published.

3. We conducted a "Pier" meeting and reached verbal agreement on terms and conditions for a berth. We are awaiting conformation documents from the real estate agents prior to drafting a contract. Meanwhile we are still investigating alternatives. However, for the first time I believe we have berthing in hand.

4. We have begun discussions with possible vendors on telephone switchgear. *Glacier's* switch is missing. The proposed new equipment will give us full ships telephone service and interconnect to shore circuits. Our goal will be to have this in operation coincident with hitting the pier so we have good communications and security services operational.

5. Last but not least, I wish to share that this past week we had our first international member volunteer, Keith Holmes from Oxford England. Keith is a veteran of Stonington Base, a geologist by trade and explorer by interest. He will be our senior leader in the UK and very active with us in the future! Keith shares the vision of sailing up the Thames to London!!

6. WE URGENTLY NEED YOUR MEMBERSHIP AND CONTRIBUTION PLEASE WRITE A CHECK TODAY OR CONTRIBUTE AT THE WEB SITE. SUPPORT YOUR CREW!

Respectfully,
Bernard G. Koether
Chairman
Glacier Society, Inc.

GLACIER RESTORATION LOG – 17 – 1 September 2002 By Ben Koether

1. We have our first Major *Glacier* society Board Meeting this week at which time we will review our plans to move the ship to Berth #10 at Mare Island. If the Management Board approves the draft documents they will be off to MARAD & the Mare Island Crews for signatures. We expect to have *Glacier* along side the pier before Thanksgiving.

2. Workweeks will continue as previously outlined, being the second week of the month. We have two months left, September and October and then the move. If you have not been aboard, these two months are your last chance to qualify as a “Restoration Plank Owner”. Please contact Jack Erhard to book your participation. Reach Jack at: jacknbetsy@earthlink.net. Jack will relieve Bob Farmer officially during the movement from Mare Island. Bob has responsibilities at home that will prevent his continuing the aggressive schedule he has maintained for the past two years. We will have an award for Bob at that time, meanwhile please send him your thanks. Bob has performed a wonderful service and has set a “Gold Standard” for the retired United States Coast Guard Captains. Were looking for another retired USCG Captain to pick up from Bob. Who's going to step up?

3. Last weekend I had the pleasure of working the California Restaurant Show with Eric Rosenquist our Hospitality Group Leader. We raised about \$50,000 worth of new equipment for the ships galley, and we are not done yet. Please be assured that we will have an entirely new galley with the latest equipment. We are building a special Hospitality Leaders Web page at the *Glacier* web site, watch to see who the members are. You will be impressed!

4. We have signed contracts with Elderhostel. Three programs will begin next spring aboard ship. Elderhostel ran a similar program for the Battleship Missouri and it was one of their most successful series. We hope to set a new record.

5. *Glacier* society will be very busy this month. We will be at these activities: *Glacier* Society Trustees & Managing Board Sept. 4th, Stratford, CT. *Glacier* visits Digital Ship in London and holds discussions with *Glacier* Society of UK. Sept 7-14. *Glacier* holds up the flag at the Norwalk Oyster Festival, sharing booth with Sea Cadets and Navy League, Sept. 6,7,8

in Norwalk, CT. *Glacier* briefs UNOLS Icebreaker Coordinating Committee at the National Science Foundation, Sept. 23 & 24. The SNAME Trade Show in Boston Sept 25 through 28th see: <http://www.sname.org>. All this plus our regular week aboard ship Sept. 9 through 13.

6. If you are interested in voyaging aboard *Glacier* from MARAD to the pier please contact the *Glacier* Office via e-mail, but first ask yourself, are my dues paid?

7. We'd like to ask you some questions. How many persons would be interested in having RV parking and power facilities along side *Glacier* at Mare Island. How many of you would like us to arrange joint visits to the ship with a pre set tour of the Napa Valley, San Francisco and other parts of California. We encourage you to consider bringing the family for a joint work and tour. Please give us your comments.

Ben Koether
Chairman

Winfly Opens 2002-2003 Antarctic Research Season

– NSF Press Release All photos: Mike Hush / Raytheon Polar Services Co.

The 2002-2003 Antarctic research season officially got underway in late August as U.S. Air Force transport planes bested snowstorms and high winds to bring in cargo and personnel to McMurdo Station, the National Science Foundation's logistical and scientific hub on the continent. NSF manages the U.S. Antarctic Program, the nation's research endeavor on the southernmost continent.

Dubbed Winfly, the flights were the first to land at McMurdo since the station closed for the austral winter in February. The annual Winfly missions allow the Antarctic program to bring scientists into McMurdo at the beginning of the austral spring to conduct time-sensitive research, such as monitoring ozone depletion.

Two C-17 and four C-141 jet transports brought in a total of 264,054 pounds of cargo and 304 passengers. The cargo included 12,000 pounds of fresh produce and another 12,300 pounds of mail for those who spent the winter at the station. The cargo also included three Challenger 95's, multi-purpose, tracked vehicles each weighing approximately 38,000 pounds that are used to maintain runways, skiways and roads. In addition to U.S. personnel, the plane also brought in members of the New Zealand Antarctic Program, which maintains a year-round station near

McMurdo. The planes landed at Pegasus Field, an ice runway that the Antarctic Program last spring certified as suitable for landing wheeled aircraft.



A U.S. Air Force C-141 transport aircraft flies into McMurdo Station, the National Science Foundation's logistical and scientific hub in Antarctica, in late August. The plane was among the first to visit the continent since the station closed for the austral winter late last spring.



A C-17 cargo aircraft, all but obscured by an Antarctic storm, sits on the ice runway near McMurdo Station.



A U.S. Air Force C-17 cargo aircraft awaits favorable weather to depart from Antarctica.



A Challenger 95 tracked vehicle rolls out of an aircraft cargo bay. The vehicles will be used to maintain runways, skiways and roads.



A Challenger 95 emerges from a U.S. Air Force C-17 cargo aircraft. The vehicle will be used during the upcoming Antarctic research season.

Sunglasses

The following was submitted by Marlene McLennan and is taken from a personal note to her from Judy Spanberger who is currently wintering over at Pole Station

Today I needed sunglasses for the first time in 6 months. The sun has been up for a few days, but under clouds for most of the time. Today the clouds cleared and there he was in all his glory several fingers above the horizon.

Not a meek orange ball just barely waking up, still groggy and blinking from his long sleep, but a wide-awake bright yellow, powerful and glowing force that filled up more of the sky than I can remember a sun ever doing. Was it always this amazingly captivating and beautiful? Has it really been so long for me that I again can be completely enchanted with the sun? Wow. I stared at it for far too long, but seeing spots for the next hour was worth the price. I would come indoors and try to work, but found myself having to go outside and look again it was such a joyful thing. Warmth and light and shadows and yellow on the snow and and and... "we're outta the woods, we're outta the dark, we're outta the night..." No coffee for me, thanks, I'll just go look out the window for a minute! Everyone is wide awake. It's a cool and wonderful thing. Now if we can just keep our pants on for the 4 more weeks we have to wait for a plane we'll be doing just fine.

I thought the gradual sunrise was wonderful and uplifting and really, it was more than enough after 4 long months of total darkness. It was the light at the end of the tunnel. But now I know it was that early morning feeling after a really good sleep. That time when you've just woken up and it's a beautiful day outside and you don't have to get out of bed for at

least 20 more minutes so you lay there and revel in your comfort and the hope of the new day which you are certain will be great. And in fact during this time I wanted to, and sometimes did, sleep copious amounts. Deep, undisturbed peaceful sleep. It was what they must mean when they say "the sleep of the dead." I enjoyed every bit of it and would wake up refreshed with a feeling that I'd travel far and wide to magical lands. But this is better than that. This is the hope of a great day fulfilled. Ah. I could write paragraphs about the sun being BACK!, but I'll move on. Suffice it to say I'm diggin' it.

Although funny thing... I love the sunlight and the fact that it's all almost over, but I have this place in my heart, a soft area very close to me that holds a deep fondness for the dark and all I gained from it. How it brought my world right up to the tip of my nose . . . there was nothing to see beyond it. I struggled with all that came into focus as I wandered around in the dark with only the nooks and crannies of my own psyche to keep me company and found the darkness a soft place to land. Sometimes literally as I sat on my knees in the softer new blown snow and wept out that which needed to go. I'm finding it harder in some ways to get around outside now that I can see how much I can't see due to fogged glasses or flat light. It's distracting. In the dark I went more by feel and even though I fell a lot more I never had the sense that I was not knowing where I was going. Make sense? I guess it's that ignorance is bliss thing.

We had our second coffee house and it was as much fun as the first. I helped make the coffee drinks with our two teeny cappuccino machines. We had homemade Bailey's and hot chocolate to go with it as well as homemade chocolate-almond Biscotti (yeah, it was all as good as it sounds). I sang three numbers with a few of the guys who play guitar and banjo and I enjoyed myself immensely. I took extra good care of my voice for the week leading up to the coffee house and I'm glad I did. It was very gratifying to sing a jazzy blues number and really pull it off. The singing I've done this winter is one of my favorite accomplishments. I've sung with the band all winter as well and over the course of the months have developed a stronger voice and more courage to just sing it out and not hold back. Very freeing and I've really enjoyed it.

WEST NILE VIRUS KILLS PENGUINS TOO

— *By Billy-Ace Penguin Baker*

On August 17, 2002 a zoo penguin in New York died from an infection of the West Nile virus.

Twenty-five other penguins at the Seneca Park Zoo in Rochester, New York also tested positive but were not ill. A number of crows in the zoo also tested positive for the virus. Infected birds also have been found in surrounding counties and across the state.

West Nile virus, which first appeared in the United States in 1999, is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito, and can infect people, horses, many types of birds, and some other animals as well.

The death of a penguin from West Nile virus at the Seneca Park Zoo should not prevent people from visiting their local zoos because the carriers of the disease can just as easily be buzzing around at home in their back yards.

The virus in a Pennsylvania zoo killed a second penguin on September 7, 2002. The Health Department reported that a penguin at the Philadelphia Zoo has died from West Nile virus. In addition more than 50 birds have been found to have been killed by the mosquito-borne virus in the city of Philadelphia so far this year.

The zoo had stepped up mosquito control efforts, even before a flamingo at the zoo died August 30 of West Nile virus. Health officials say that there is no need to avoid the zoo. Humans cannot get the virus from birds. People get the virus from mosquitoes. Health officials say that the best way to avoid getting the virus is to get rid of mosquito havens, such as standing water.

Three Nations Agree to Share Ice Core That May Yield Clues About Nature of Lake Vostok

— NSF Press Release

Scientists to discuss Lake Vostok research at webcast press conference

Scientists from the United States, France and Russia will equally share samples of an 11.7-meter (38.5-foot) ice core taken from the ice sheet above Lake Vostok, deep in the Antarctic interior, under the terms of an agreement worked out among representatives of the nations' Antarctic research programs.

Glaciologists, geochemists and biologists will use the lower portions of the Vostok ice core, which was drilled in 1998, to learn more about the subglacial lake known to exist under the ice at Russia's Vostok Station, high on the polar plateau. Joint investigative protocols will allow scientists to

explore some intriguing questions about the lake while insuring the compatibility and consistency of individual investigations.

Major questions that will provide the framework for future research on the ice core include: How is the ice formed and what is its age? What does the geochemistry of the ice reveal about the lake and its origin? What kinds of organisms are present in the lake and how did they get there?

The agreement was reached at a meeting of U.S., French and Russian scientists held in April at the National Science Foundation (NSF) headquarters in Arlington, Va. Participants included the directors of the U.S., French and Russian Antarctic programs as well as scientists and program managers who support or conduct research on the Vostok ice core.

NSF funds and manages the U.S. Antarctic Program, which supports almost all U.S. research on the continent and in surrounding waters.

The ice samples were drilled at Vostok Station under the terms of a U.S., French and Russian scientific collaboration that has made important contributions to the understanding the last 420,000 years of the Earth's climate. Research on these samples has delivered valuable insights for understanding the forces that drive climate change.

The samples governed by the agreement were left at Vostok Station until the 2001–2002 austral summer, when arrangements were made to bring out some of the remaining ice from a storage trench. They represent roughly the bottom 12 meters of the ice core and are thought to have formed from accretion, the process by which water from the lake freezes onto the base of the ice sheet. This ice is different from the core that provided the Vostok climate record.

A plan developed at the NSF meeting will allow the three nations to cooperate and share the samples in such a way as to maximize the scientific return and ensure an accurate comparison of results.

Most notably, participants devised a plan to use a piece of the accretion ice for comparative study of ice-decontamination methods for biological studies. This procedure will ensure that research results obtained in different laboratories can be compared without undue concern about sample contamination.

Existing collaborations between French and Russians scientists and among U.S. scientists will continue and will allow analyses of the shared core to begin in the very near future.

Scientists from the U.S., France, and Russia will continue to examine the ice after a review of research proposals submitted to the nations' Antarctic programs. Plans for a future subglacial lake exploration and research are scheduled for discussion at an upcoming meeting in Shanghai, China in July.

A four-person panel of researchers from the U.S., France and Russia is scheduled to discuss recent research conducted at Lake Vostok during a press conference at 3 p.m. EDT on May 28 as part of the spring meeting of the American Geophysical Union in Washington D.C.

PENGUINS AND AIRPLANES

—*Audobon Society Magazine.*

“A Mexican newspaper reports that bored Royal Air Force pilots stationed on the Falkland Islands have devised what they consider a marvelous new game. Noting that the local penguins are fascinated by airplanes, the pilots search out a beach where the birds are gathered and fly slowly along it at the water's edge. Perhaps ten thousand penguins turn their heads in unison watching the planes go by, and when the pilots turn around and fly back, the birds turn their heads in the opposite direction, like spectators at a slow-motion tennis match. Then, the paper reports, “The pilots fly out to sea and directly to the penguin colony and overfly it. Heads go up, up, up, and ten thousand penguins fall over gently onto their backs.”

ODE TO THE GCA OUTHOUSE

—*By Billy-Ace Penguin Baker*

During Deep Freeze '66 there was an unscheduled WINFLY for the purpose of evacuating a man who had been injured in a fall. While preparing the runway for the WINFLY aircraft a Seabee driver inadvertently destroyed the GCA Outhouse, which was affectionately, know as the Rock Factory.

A long time before the Kiwis built a station at Lake Vanda and skinny dipping at the lake became the “in” thing to do on the ice during the summer, the Rock Factory at GCA was “the” place to visit by the urbanites up on the hill. To sit on the throne in the Rock Factory was a real macho thing to do. However, the GCA crew did not always appreciate outsiders using their privy as a tourist attraction. So if you were an extra naive fengie who had no class at all you would not be allowed to go inside the factory, but the GCA crew would present you with a collectable “rock” sample from the factory.

Unsuspecting fengies would place the rare Antarctic rock "specimen" in their field jacket pocket and catch the next shuttle bus to the hill. Upon arrival they would invariably rush into the Chow Hall or their hooch and proudly reach into their pocket to pull out their treasure to show it to

all present only to find that it had melted and what they had was a hand full of shit. So disgusting and repulsive that not even Lucky The Husky would eat it. Not that Lucky was very smart but there was no way in hell that the offering looked like a *Baby Ruth candy bar*.

LEST WE FORGET

*Unknown D-8, This is Willie GCA
Ennie, Meanie, Minnie, Moe
How do you hear my radio?
You're on a collision course with our outhouse!*

++++++

ODE TO THE GCA OUTHOUSE

A D-8 destroyed our outhouse
While preparing for a mid-winter flight.
In bits and pieces, its usefulness ceases,
Man has rarely seen such a sight.

A D-8 ran over our outhouse,
Our outhouse is no more.
A victim of tractory, our Antarctic Rock Factory,
We shall never more open its door.

Farewell, O Noble Outhouse!
In our thoughts you will always stay.
Our only salvation, is the realization
That another is not far away.



Silas Williams drove his D-8 tractor, into, through, and over the ill-fated edifice that was a familiar Williams Field landmark.

Filled with Emotion and remorse at such a loss, it seemed fitting to ACCS Ernest Presley, USN to immortalize the Rock Factory in verse in June 1966.

Resurrection and prologue by Billy-Ace Penguin Baker 8/29/02.



PANAM FLIGHT REVISITED

—by Billy-Ace Penguin Baker

The Fall 2001 issue of the *Explorers Gazette* (Vol. I, Issue 3) featured a story about the PANAM flight to McMurdo during the austral summer of DF-III. Elizabeth Chipman, a life member of the OAEA from Australia, forwarded the below information to me. The text and photograph appeared in *The Polar Flight*, by Basil Clark, published in London 1964 by Ian Allen.

“ . . . In the American build-up for the IGY it became necessary to bring in some additional construction teams of Navy Seabees, and no naval transport aircraft was available to them from the USA. A Boeing Stratocruiser of Pan American Airways was chartered to make the trip from San Francisco, via Fiji, Australia and New Zealand. The chief pilot of the company's Alaska operations, Captain Ralph Savory, was in command and the remainder of the crew was specially picked. The Stratocruiser was an entirely standard aircraft of the type used on both Atlantic and Pacific services.



Airline stewardesses go everywhere, even to the Antarctic. On a charter flight these PANAM girls flew into McMurdo Sound for a few hours. One of their tasks was to judge a beard competition.

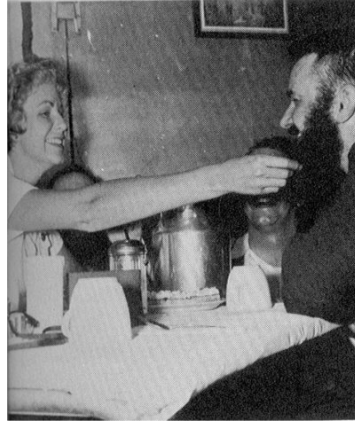
The final hop to Antarctica was started from Christchurch and the aircraft made a normal wheel landing on the ice at McMurdo Sound at 8:30 p.m. local time on October 15, 1957. In the crew were two stewardesses, Pat Hepinstall and Ruth Kelly, the first women ever to fly into

Antarctica and unless the Russians have taken women further south, the only women to have stood less than 1,000 miles from the South Pole.

The Stratocruiser remained in the Antarctic for only three-and-a-half hours before returning on another uneventful flight to New Zealand. As a matter of interest, the aircraft returned to San Francisco via London, and passed over the Arctic Circle before completing its tour round the world, probably the only commercial airplane to have been in both the Arctic and the Antarctic in one month.

Pan American does not state the charge for this charter, but it can safely be assumed that, however low it was, the publicity value of such a flight produced results that could never have been bought by normal methods . . .”

The following photographs are from the Task Force 43 Operation Deep Freeze cruise book for DF-III edited by Morton Beebe. Beebe is currently the polar historian for the Explorers Club and will be departing for Antarctica on November 14, 2002 as the guest lecturer on the tourist ship MS *Endeavour*.



Stewardess Ruth Kelley inspects Robert Farman's beard.



Public Information Officer Beebe interviews Pat Hepinstall and Ruth Kelley.



The first commercial aircraft to land in Antarctica carried Navy Seabees, VIPs and two PANAM stewardesses who were the first women to visit a Deep Freeze station.

AN ICE STORY- First Polar Plateau Station Landing

—By Bob Owler Edited, foreword and graphics by Billy-Ace Penguin Baker

FOREWORD

The author was a LC-130 flight engineer with Air Development Squadron Six (VX-6) from 1963 to 1966. His story occurred on December 13, 1965. At the time Plateau Station was the smallest, highest, coldest and most inaccessible of all the US scientific stations in Antarctica. It was 11,890 feet above sea level and 1,350 miles from McMurdo Station. Built by Commander S. K. Kauffman, CEC in December 1965 the station consisted of five fabricated vans that were assembled into a building 25 by 75 foot, plus an additional van and a Jamesway hut for emergency shelter. An additional building was constructed by a small detachment of Seabees from NCBU-201 the following year. Between 4 and 8 people wintered at a time and the station was closed in January 1969.

Billy-Ace Baker



The Plateau Station vans were designed to fit snugly inside the LC-130. This van will be connected to others by roof and floor creating extra space for work and relaxation.

During the Deep Freeze season of 1965-1966 VX-6 was tasked to support the establishment of a Polar Plateau Station, which would be at or near the center of the Antarctic continent. The estimated altitude of the station was about 13,000 feet but nobody really knew in those days.



Plateau Station flag flies beside Old Glory on the Polar Plateau.

We prepared for the mission by off loading anything that was not required to lighten up our bird *The City of Christchurch* 148318 because we knew it would be difficult to take-off from that altitude in soft dry (believe it or not) snow. Two rounds of 8 Jet Assisted Take Off (JATO) bottles were loaded on to help during our take off. The flight from McMurdo to Pole Station for refueling was necessary because the Plateau Station was about 800 miles further on. Our flight from the Pole to our destination was uneventful. Commander (at the time) Moe Morris, Skipper of VX-6 once again proved his flying abilities.

After landing we looked for footprints and when we could not find any we surmised that we were in fact the first people who had ever been here. The planting of our grand *Old Glory* and the station flags were accomplished and followed by congratulating handshakes. The United States Antarctic Research Program (USARP) personnel and cargo were off loaded to begin the establishment of Plateau Station.

Now was the time to prepare to attempt a take off and I mean *attempt*. Loading the JATO bottles was the first obstacle at 13,000 feet they felt a lot heavier than at sea level. Hyperventilating on walk-around oxygen bottles helped us increase our strength to complete that job. As was our normal open field and soft snow procedure we taxied back and forth many times only to find that the snow would not compact, remember my “dry” snow statement. All during the operation we were of course burning off fuel that caused a lighter aircraft. Commander Moe



NSFA Chief of Staff Captain D. Bursik congratulates Commander Moe Morris who has landed where no plane has ever been before.

gave the direction to “give it a try”, on the first try, which felt like 11 miles long, we achieved about half (of the required) take off speed. On the next *try* the order was given to fire the JATO when our top speed was obtained, at our *top* speed the JATO was fired only to find out that the elevators in the full up position were not enough to keep the nose up nor the nose ski from digging in the snow and slowing us down.



“Goodbye and God bless you”. Rear Admiral Bakutis, Task Force 43 Commander bids farewell to LT Jimmy Gowan, first OIC of Plateau Station.,

All during this time I had the four-engine bleed air valves closed to get more power and that made it was very cold in the cockpit yet we all began to sweat profusely. The second and last round of JATO bottles to be loaded felt heavier

than the first but as always the VX-6 crew got them on the bird.

The remaining fuel was now down to approximately 8,000 lbs that happened to be the minimum needed to reach our closest place of habitation, which was South Pole Station. I must now tell you that I for one was not about to walk to the South Pole. Now came the time to fess up to the Skipper as to what had been done to give us more power in an emergency. Note: One does not always tell the Skipper what you have done up until one is forced to and I guess I can reveal this 36 years later.

Before departing McMurdo the Temperature Datum (TD) fuel control valve null orifices were manually repositioned to the full open setting that would give us more juice if needed. So I suggested that on this take off attempt we switch the electronic TD switches to null in case we could get more power, also advising not to look at the engine turbine inlet temperatures just put the throttles to the fire wall.

This ski run also seemed too long but we were increasing speed, at our “top” speed the nervous order was given to fire our last round of JATO. With a big bounce of the nose ski we were airborne, not necessarily flying but off the dry snow. After skimming the snow for who knows how many miles we began to gain some altitude and our thoughts turned to what a great time it would be to have a stiff drink. I can’t remember if we drank that 40oz bottle of Jim Beam that was in my survival kit or not. The Throttles were pulled back, the TD’s returned to auto and bleed air valves opened. The remainder of this historic flight was uneventful; we had enough excitement for one more day on the *ice*.

AFTERWORD

The over temp’s did not hurt our faithful Herk T-56 engines at all. We knew that we had to go back to Plateau Station but how could we get a skiway that would support routine? It was determined that our old and beloved D2 cat *Linnus* with her cut down LGP tracks would need to be taken to Plateau Station to drag a skiway. *Linnus* had traveled all over Antarctica with us, but we knew that we would never be able to lift her back out of that Station. She did her job and regular flights began to Plateau Station.

Bob Owler

McMURDO STATION

— NSF Media release

McMurdo Station, located at 77 degrees 51 minutes S, 166 degrees 40 minutes E, is the largest Antarctic station. McMurdo is built on the bare volcanic rock of Hut Point Peninsula on Ross Island, the solid ground farthest south that is accessible by ship.

The station was established in December 1955. It is the logistics hub of the U.S. Antarctic Program, with a harbor, landing strips on sea ice and shelf ice, and a helicopter pad. Its 85 or so buildings range in size from a small radio shack to large, three-story structures. Repair facilities, dormitories, administrative buildings, a fire-house, power plant, water distillation plant, wharf, stores, clubs, warehouses, and the first class Crary Lab are linked by above-ground water, sewer, telephone, and power lines.

Recorded temperature extremes have been as low as minus 50 degrees Centigrade and as high as plus 8 degrees Centigrade. Annual mean is minus 18 degrees Centigrade; monthly mean temperatures range from minus 3 degrees Centigrade in January to minus 28 degrees Centigrade in August.

Drifting snow can accumulate about 1.5 meters per year, although the station becomes snow-free in summer. Average wind is about 5.1 meters per second; a gust of 52 meters per second was recorded in July 1968.

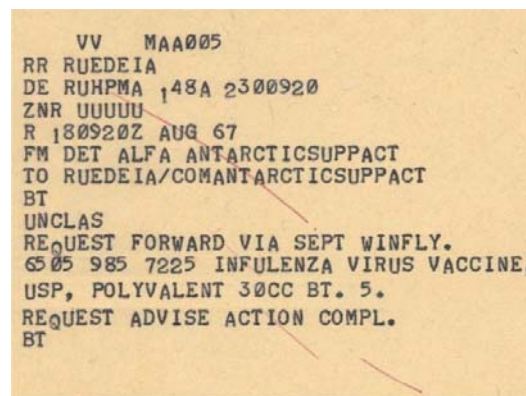
THE FLU SHOT CONTROVERESY OR YOU CAN'T FIGHT CITY HALL

—by Billy-Ace Penguin Baker

During every winter-over period the personnel at Antarctic stations who have not been exposed to influences from outside sources suffer a degradation in the functionality of their immune system including a lowered resistance to respiratory infections after winter isolation. The personnel of DF-67 were no exception to this rule.

In my collection of Deep Freeze memorabilia there is a series of 12 messages pertaining to a failed attempt by the winter-over party to obtain influenza vaccine prior to returning to CONUS.

In an effort to minimize the effects of the flu season in the United States the winter-over doctor recommended to the OIC that flu vaccine be ordered for delivery at the earliest possible date. The OIC concurred and the below message was dispatched to homeport.



```
VV MAA005
RR RUEDEIA
DE RUHPMA 148A 2300920
ZNR UUUUU
R 180920Z AUG 67
FM DET ALFA ANTARCTICSUPACT
TO RUEDEIA/COMANTARCTICSUPACT
BT
UNCLAS
REQUEST FORWARD VIA SEPT WINFLY.
6505 985 7225 INFULENZA VIRUS VACCINE,
USP, POLYVALENT 30CC BT. 5.
REQUEST ADVISE ACTION COMPL.
BT
```

Initial message sent to homeport requesting flu vaccine.

The message requesting the vaccine was just one of many messages being generated by the winter-over party in preparation of returning to civilization. Therefore, no one thought of the message again until a few days later when a message was received from CASA with the following one line of terse text: **REQ ADVISE PURPOSE OF VACCINE REQUESTED BY REF A.**

The Det Alfa OIC was flabbergasted and although he never doubted the professionalism of the Det Alfa Doctor he decided to dispatch a message to the Doctor at South Pole and request a second opinion to so speak.

The Det Alfa OIC explained to the South Pole doctor that AFRTS News Files had reported an expected flu epidemic for the fall season on the east coast of the U.S. and increased flu cases through the country. With this in mind it was easy to draw a conclusion that personnel arriving in CONUS from the ice would be more susceptible to contracting diseases than most persons.

The Det Alfa OIC suggested that a possible answer to CASA might be that he planned on inoculating all the Weddell Seals against summer support personnel.

As was expected the good doctor at the South Pole concurred with the opinion of his colleague

at McMurdo and he too recommended the advisability of procuring the flu vaccine for the winter-over personnel. He further suggest that the pain inflicted would be in the true spirit of DF-67 and could be considered as the final kissoff.

The next message in the series to CASA convinced the good Captain that the flu shot was probably a good idea and action was taken to procure the vaccine. But, alas, the vaccine would not be available until October 31, 1967 and winter-over personnel could not receive their inoculation until after that date.

The next ploy was for the Det Alfa OIC to send a message to the Christchurch Detachment requesting vaccine from that source. It just so happened that the Christchurch Detachment medical department had 30 bottles of standard Navy influenza vaccine left over from the previous season and promised to ship via first available air transportation in September.

Alls well that ends well, but it was not over. Somehow the staff in Washington had gotten wind of the great flu vaccine debate and the following message was received.

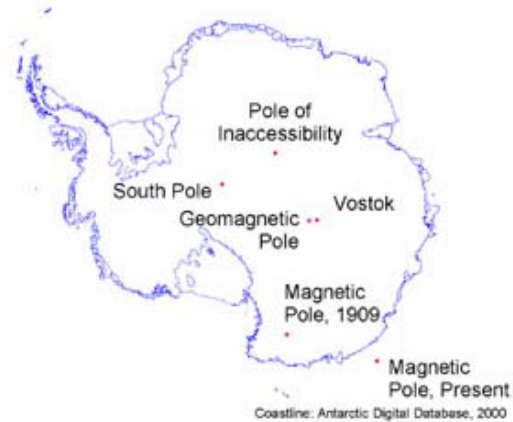
```
MR NR 199/25
DE RUCIJHA0946 2370419
ZNR UUUUU
P R 251415Z
FM COMNASUPFFORANTARCTICA
TO RUHPMA/DET ALFA ANTARCTICSUPPACT MCMURDO
INFO RUHPMC/DET ONE NSFA CHRISTCHURCH
RUHPMA/BYRD STATION
RUHPMA/SOUTH POLE STATION
BT
UNCLAS
A. YOUR 242311Z AUG 67
B. DET ONE 242323Z AUG 67
1. EACH YEAR THE STRAIN OF ORGANISM WHICH CAUSES
INFLUENZA VARIES. THE PREDICTED INCREASE IN
INFLUENZA THIS YEAR BY PHS IS DUE TO STRAINS NOT
IN PREVIOUS VACCINE.
2. DO NOT CONSIDER USE OF OLD VACCINE OF ANY
VALUE AS THERE NEVER HAS BEEN A CASE OF INFLUENZA
DIAGNOSED IN ANTARCTICA SINCE INCEPTION OF DEEP
FREEZE OPERATIONS.
3. PERSONNEL SHOULD WAIT UNTIL RETURNING TO CONUS
FOR RECEIPT OF NEW VACCINE SHOT.
4. BUMED CONCURS WITH ABOVE POLICY.
BT
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The last word.

Thus ended the struggle and no further message traffic was exchanged on the subject.

How far is the geographic South Pole from the magnetic Pole?

Courtesy of the Antarctic Sun



Answer: At present, they are about 1,940 miles apart, according to Kelly Brunt, senior analyst for the Geographical Information Systems unit at McMurdo Station. But that distance will continually change as the magnetic Pole makes its relatively rapid shift, geologically speaking.

The South Magnetic Pole is the point in the southern hemisphere where the Earth's magnetic field lines are vertically aligned. Put another way, the magnetic Poles are the points where a compass needle will stand vertically. It was located in Victoria Land when Douglas Mawson, Edgeworth David and Alistair Mackay sledged to it in the South Magnetic Pole in 1909. Since that time it has migrated out to sea and is now located off the Adelie Coast at about 64°31'S and 138°25'E, according to Brunt. The geographical Pole, of course, is considered the true bottom of the world at 90 degrees South.

The South Magnetic Pole's movement has generally been moving in a north to northwesterly direction since Mawson's expedition. That movement can be greatly affected by activities such as solar storms, which distort the Earth's magnetic field and can temporarily displace the magnetic poles several kilometers in a single day.

LETTER FROM QUONSET AIR MUSEUM – Submitted by Sean Milligan, QAM Historian

Editor's Note: QAM has been a strong supporter in our efforts to obtain an LC-130F for exhibition since the inception of the OAEA.

Date: 16 SEP 02
To: VX-6 / VXE-6 (XD JD XD)
From: Quonset Air Museum
Via: OAEA
Subj: (a)Recovery of a VX-6 aircraft from The Ice
(b)Recovery of a VX-6 aircraft, other source of

Gentlemen :

For more than a few years, many of you have worked hard and have lent your support to land an ex VX-6 "Ice Herk" here, at former NAS Quonset Point's Quonset Air Museum, for permanent display.

ALL HANDS - PLEASE KNOW THIS

The Quonset Air Museum (QAM) welcomes any REPEAT any VX-6 bird that has been on The Ice - From ANY source.

Rumors have been circulated that a clean-up operation on The Ice may be underway and that the 'old junk airplanes' should be (maybe right now) 'disposed of'.

There is a home here at Quonset, for some of the aforementioned 'junk', which is, in reality, highly important historic American aeronautical artifact and, at least as importantly, your Navy, your Marine Corps and your Naval Aviation Heritage: NOW - AND - FOREVER.

Most of PEGASUS (R7V-1 / C-121) is still down there ... R4Ds (LC-47 and LC-117), UC-1 (U-1B) OTTERS, HUS-1L (LH-34D) helos ... PIECES ... You, VX-6, get SOMETHING up here to Quonset - NOW. We can and will help you with this and we will work on it together and make an airplane out of what ever is left.

With your proven savvy and never quit attitude, already demonstrated by your Service in the Navy and VX-6, tough and good, the day will come when a Puckered Pete Ice Herk rolls onto the NAS Quonset Point QAM ramp only to be greeted by another VX-6 bird, one that had gone before, flown, maintained and otherwise provided for by everyone in your Squadron, DevRon SIX. CAN DO ?

s/ Sean Paul Milligan
NAS Quonset Point/QAM Air Station Historian

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