

Antarctic Summer

In 1972-73 I spent 3.5 months as a field assistant. In some ways we were mountaineers on the cheap. This was the last time it was done this way. Specialist training teams were used after this. I was training NZ'ers and American Rescue teams. Then I worked with field teams as support.



In white-out conditions our three-wheeled gnat seemed to be chugging away fine but it didn't feel like we were making progress. I stepped forward to discover that we had been grinding away against the side of a frozen-in iceberg!

- * Two greens - one Scott Base - other, snot in Weddell seal's firing tube
- * Scotts Hut at Cape Evans
- * Shackletons Hut

McMurdo was a rubbish disgrace. Shipping tied up against a wall of dumped frozen rubbish. 'Tide-cracking' they called it. One day I started picking up rubbish around Scott Base clean-up. Faces at windows. Others then came out to help.

- * Dry valley amoebas.
- * Mirages - cliffs - Black Island

I met Jim Lowery in the Geology Dept. He had artificial legs as a result of being pinned under a vehicle in a crevasse for over 24 hours. After 12 years of persisting he was back. The cold dry conditions suited his legs. In the dry valleys he was walking unsupported and later he was finally back on skis.

- * Adelie penguins & Emperors.



The clear air gave great visibility. Things appeared much closer. Looking across the sea ice one could see 11,000 foot mountains with their bottom half hidden by the curvature of the Earth. Temperature inversions gave rise to mirages

* 5 nearly lost.

[This is as far as I have got - Just outline notes. It is supplemented by illustrations and excerpts from my diary]





Dave Greenwood talking to seal pups.

"Hello, I'm a sex maniac. I want to look at your organs."

"So on. Bight Bob Shomsons boots. Not every seal gets to bite Bob Shomsons boots."

"Your colours are going to be all green. Same colour as Scott Base. Now aren't you lucky."

"Don't you bite. If you bite I'll have to get my assistants to put you in that smelly old seal bag."

