

A message received by the Department of External Affairs from Ray O'Leary, officer in charge of the AMARE station at Wilkes, Antarctica, reports that an emergency operation was carried out on Friday, 6th March, on David Rogers, radio operator, who was suffering from acute appendicitis.

The operation was successfully carried out by Dr. Lyndon Murray, with O'Leary as surgeon's assistant, Neville Woods, radio operator, as anaesthetist and Leon Jennings-Fox, weather observer-in-charge, as theatre 'sister'. The station kitchen-mess was converted into an operating theatre by draping walls and ceiling with sterilised sheets and installing operating light, table and sterilisers.

The patient is now recovering rapidly. He was fortunate that a field trip upon which he was scheduled to leave the station some days earlier was delayed by a blizzard, otherwise his attack could have occurred many miles from the station facilities.

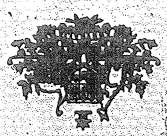
EMERGENCY APPENDIX OPERATION AT
ANTARCTIC STATION

10th March, 1964.

(released only in Canberra)

FOR THE PRESS

CANBERRA:
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.



Valuable results, however, were achieved and the men returned to Wilkes safe and well.

Three men are reported safe after an ordeal lasting two days in an Antarctic blizzard. The men are Peter Morgan, glaciologist of Essendon, Victoria, Keith Budnick, surveyor of Bondi Junction, N.S.W., and Neville Woods, radio operator of Rodd Point, N.S.W.

The men were members of a party carrying out glaciological investigations about thirty miles from the Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions' station at Wilkes when a blizzard, which raged for 48 hours and reached 130 m.p.h., struck on 9th June. The party spent two days huddled in a small plywood caravan, fierce winds, laden with rock fragments, blasted their shelter until it began to disintegrate. When the door had been blown from its hinges and the interior of the caravan was filled with snow the blizzard fortunately abated.

The blizzard blew down most of the elaborate aerials and feeder lines used for radio communication between Wilkes, other Antarctic stations, and Australia. The main food store was severely damaged and ceased food was buried under tons of snow.

ANTARCTIC CRISIS

1/5/64

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FOR THE PRESS

PR 52

CAMBERRA.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

19th June, 1964.

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WILKES
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FOR THE PRESS

(Released only in Canberra)

PM 76

3rd September, 1964.

ANTARCTIC OBSERVER'S ORDEAL IN BLIZZARD

The Department of External Affairs announced today

that the Antarctic Division had reported that Michael Bonnici of Clayton, Victoria, serving as Australian Weather Observer at Wilkes, Antarctica, had a narrow escape from death early

this week. On Monday as part of his duties he was struggling across the 80 yards separating the balloon hut from the

(1) twin hut in a heavy blizzard when he tripped and lost his bearings in the darkness of the storm. The blizzard lines

provided to assist men moving between buildings were buried in the snow. Struggling against the high wind Bonnici

floundered around in the deep snow for five hours. He was just at the point of exhaustion when, by sheer luck, he

collided with the (2) sterics hut, 100 yards east of his objective, and recognised it.

Meanwhile, nearly all the men on the station,

noticing his absence, had been organised into search parties. The search was concentrated mainly on the ice cliffs on the

edge of the narrow peninsula on which Wilkes Base is built. A strong wind had blown the sea ice away and there was a

serious possibility that Bonnici would be blown into the sea by the wind in much the same way as Pinchonne on 7th January

1959, lost his life at the French Antarctic station at Dumont D'Urville.

Ray O'Leary, the officer in charge at Wilkes,

reports that Bonnici was given a sedative by the medical officer, Dr. Murray, and was resting. His condition is

satisfactory.

Note: (1) a twin is a balloon packing device.

(2) a sterics is a radio device for tracking thunderstorms.

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DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

CANBERRA.

FOR THE PRESS

(Released only in Canberra).

PM 84

25th September, 1964.

REPLACEMENT FOR WILKES STATION IN ANTARCTICA

The Minister for External Affairs, Mr. Paul Hasluck, today announced that the Government had decided to build a replacement for Wilkes Station in the Antarctic because of the deteriorating condition of the existing station which is impairing the efficiency of the operation there and which increasingly presents a risk of fire. The new station will be built at a good rocky site about a mile from the existing station. It will be designed to cater for the same range of scientific and technical activities as are conducted at the present station. The work on the new station will commence when the station is relieved in January, 1965, and is expected to take up to four years to complete. The transfer from the existing station will be effected when the new station is completed.

Mr. Hasluck recalled that Australia had accepted custody of the equipment and installations at Wilkes Station from the United States, without charge, under an agreement between the two Governments signed on 4th February, 1959. The United States Government has been informed of the decision to replace the station at Wilkes.

Along with the decision to build the replacement for Wilkes Station it has been decided to close Davis Station next February when the 1964 Party is picked up for return to Australia. Davis Station will, however, be left in a condition ready for immediate reoccupation and operation should this at any time become desirable.

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REPRODUCTION

On 11th November, Ray O'Leary, of Mentone, Victoria, leader of the ANARE party at Wilkes Station, left with five companions in five vehicles on an antarctic journey of two months' duration over the Antarctic plateau. The other members of the party will be Roy Whitworth, Seismologist, of Warwickshire, England, Neil Simmons, Radio Technician, of West Coburg, Victoria, David Rogers, Radio Operator, of Sussex, England, Geoff Hulcombe, Senior Diesel Mechanic, of Moonah, Tasmania, and Harry Jones, Mechanic-Driver, of Sandgate, Queensland.

Traverses carried out by ANARE men from Wilkes Station over the past four years have revealed an ice dome rising to about 4,500 feet above sea level and centred about 70 miles to the south-east of the station. The Wilkes dome is of special interest to glaciologists as its shape and glacial behaviour are considered in many ways to be characteristic of the Antarctic continent. This continent has an area of 5½ million square miles and is now generally held to be a huge ice dome. It is hoped that studies of the very much smaller Wilkes "model" with an area of only about 7,000 square miles, will enable glaciologists more clearly to understand the great ice mass economy of Antarctica as a whole.

On 23rd September, a four-man party, led by Keith Budnick, Surveyor, of Bondi Junction, N.S.W., set out for the dome with two vehicles and a large caravan. His companions were Peter Morgan, Glaciologist, of Essendon, Victoria, John O'Shea, Radio Operator-in-Charge, of Oakleigh, Victoria, and Ross Hall, Assistant Diesel Mechanic, of Port Pirie, South Australia. From the centre of the dome they headed north to a point about seven miles south of Cape Pointsett and then westerly to Cape Folger and Wilkes. During the journey, the party measured the height of the ice surface, erected stakes to enable parties in later years to measure snow accumulation, and made gravity measurements. They returned to Wilkes after a successful journey on 29th October.

O'Leary's party will set out initially for a point 50 miles south-east of Wilkes. From this point they will carry out a traverse along six parallel lines, each about 100 miles long and ten miles apart, measuring the thickness of the ice and the height of the bedrock at ten-mile intervals by seismic and gravity methods. By early January, this party is expected to return to the dome and split into two groups, one travelling to Cape Folger, erecting stakes, measuring the height of the ice surface and taking gravity readings, the other following the route of the earlier glaciological party, led by Budnick, but making seismic soundings. When the last of this year's parties returns to Wilkes in late January, the total distance traversed this summer by ANARE men based on Wilkes will have been about 1,000 miles.

Mass economy studies deal with the accumulation and melting of ice masses and the net results of these changes.

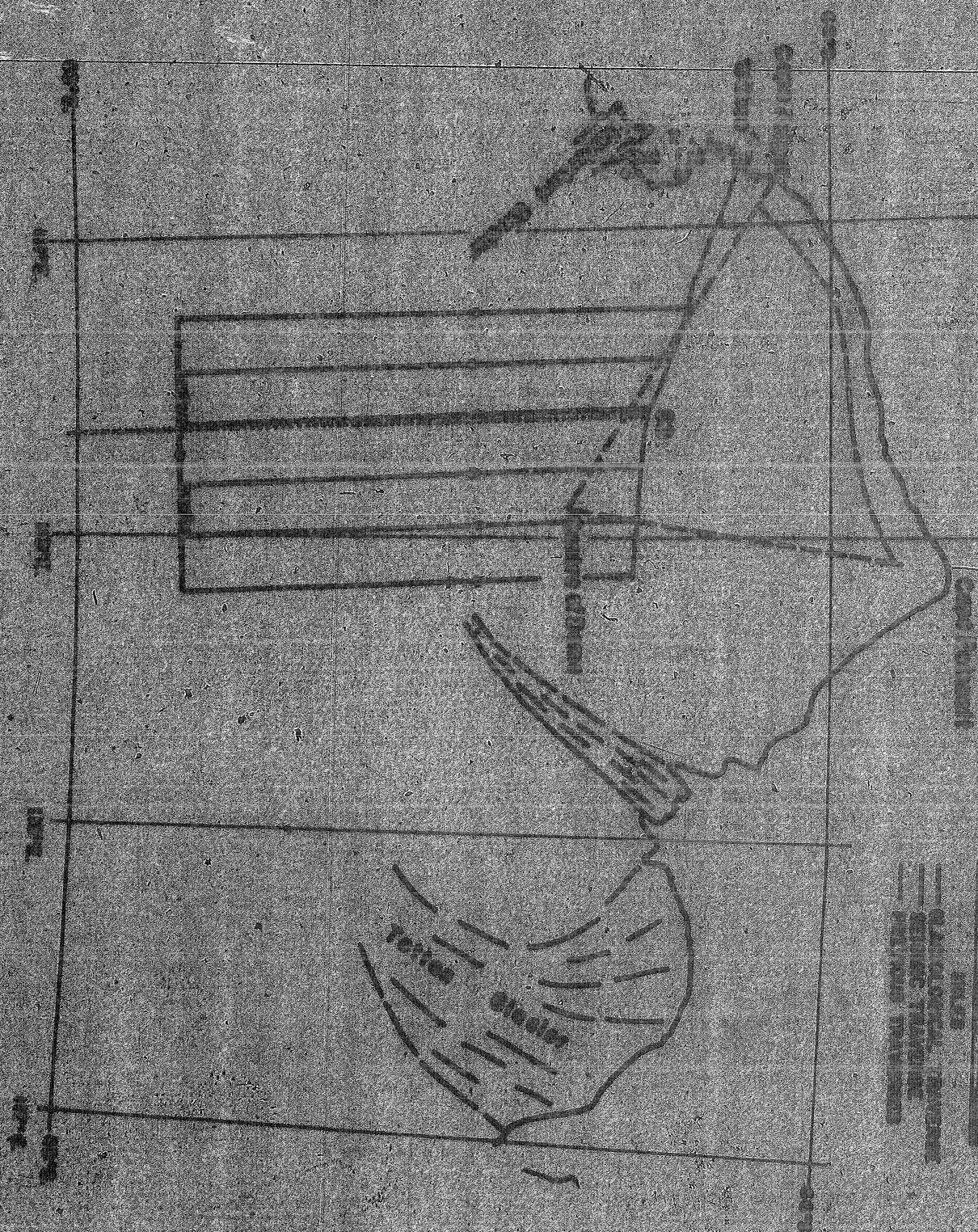
On 23 September, a four-man party, led by Keith Rudnik, a
 surveyor, set out for the dome in a Caterpillar D4 tractor, a
 large caravan and two "snowtracs". From the dome they headed
 north to a point about seven miles south of Cape Polson and
 then westerly to Cape Folger and Wilkes. During the journey,
 the party measured the height of the ice surface, erected stakes
 to measure snow accumulation, and made gravity measurements.

the ice and rates of ice movement and snow accumulation.
 position of the centre of the dome and measured the thickness of
 In April this year an AMARE party determined the exact
 detailed observations which are practicable on a small scale.
 may more rigidly test their theories by carrying out the more
 area of only several hundred square miles. In this way glaciologists
 is valid to use as a model the Wilkes dome, with its much smaller
 understand the ice mass economy of Antarctica as a whole, if it
 ice dome, it is hoped, will enable glaciologists to more clearly
 generally held to be a huge ice dome. Studies of the Wilkes
 the very large area of 1/2 million square miles and is now
 be characteristic of the Antarctic continent which itself has
 its shape and glacial behaviour are considered in many ways to
 The dome is of special interest to glaciologists, as
 has developed.

is situated in an island over which a dome of ice
 west. Hence it would appear that the land mass on which Wilkes
 believed that the trough extends below sea level from east to
 Because large glaciers flow east and west in this valley it is
 have shown that there is a large trough in the underlying bedrock.
 rise again. Measurements of the ice thickness in this valley
 the surface decreases to about 2,700 feet before beginning to
 down to sea level in the east, north and west. In the south,
 an altitude of about 4,800 feet the surface of the dome slopes
 70 miles to the south-east of the station. From a summit with
 over the past four years have revealed an ice dome centred about
 Traverses carried out by AMARE men from Wilkes station

WILKES TRAVEL - 1964

When the glaciological party returns to Wilkes, early
 In November, another party of six men led by the station's
 Officer-in-Charge, Ray O'Leary, will set out for a point 50 miles
 south-east of Wilkes. From this point they will carry out a
 traverse of six parallel "legs", each about 100 miles long and
 ten miles apart. They will measure the thickness of the ice
 and the height of the bedrock at seismic stations ten miles apart,
 and by gravity measurements. By early January, this party is
 expected to return to the dome and split into two groups.
 One group will travel to Cape Folger, erecting stations,
 measuring the height of the ice surface and taking gravity
 readings. The other group will follow the route of the earlier
 glaciological party to Cape Folger and Cape Folger, making
 seismic soundings on the way. If time permits they will attempt
 to extend the seismic work from Cape Folger to the dome.
 When all the men return to Wilkes in late January,
 the total distance traversed this summer by AMARE parties from
 Wilkes will be about 1,000 miles. They should have learnt much
 about the height and nature of the ice surface, thickness of the
 ice and the roller of the bedrock. The station left in the ice
 will be used next year to measure accumulation of snow and the
 movement of the ice when the 1967 roller expedition assumes
 responsibility for the continuation of this long-term project.



DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

INWARD MESSAGE

DATE	
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A/DIR (S)	
A/D	
CO OFF	
SEN ENG	
Copy to Mr. Wilkes	
Mr. Wilkes	

EXTERNAL AA30465

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WILKES 131 17 0230Z

TLXAA30465
ANTARCTIC
MELBOURNE

258 RE W167 A BLIZZARD LASTING 48 HOURS AND REACHING 130 MPH
STROCK WILKES ON 9TH JUNE CAUSING DAMAGE TO COMMUNICATION.
FACILITIES AND BUILDINGS STOP THE STATIONS MAIN FOOD STORAGE
BUILDING WAS DAMAGED AND THE FOOD BURIED BENEATH TONS OF SNOW
STOP THE EXTENSIVE AERIAL SYSTEM WHICH

He the man party

He the man party

This question was not copy which on my copy and on which I have some from release

IS USED TO PASS RADIO TRAFFIC FROM OTHER ANARE STATIONS
TO AUSTRALIA WAS ALSO DAMAGED STOP A THREE MAN PARTY WHO WERE
ABOUT THIRTY MILES FROM WILKES ON GLACIER INVESTIGATION SPENT
THE TWO DAYS HUDDLED IN A SMALL PLYWOOD CARAVAN WHICH STARTED
TO DISINTEGRATE IN THE FIERCE WINDS AND BLOWN

ROCKS STOP FORTUNATELY THE BLIZZARD SUBSIDED AT A STAGE WHEN THE
INTERIOR OF THE CARAVAN WAS FOUR FEET DEEP IN SNOW AND THE DOOR
HAD BEEN BLOWN FROM ITS HINGES

OLEARY

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ALSO A258

SENT IR OTC AT 0304 +

EXTERNAL AA30465

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OUTWARD MESSAGE

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

XTERNAL AA62041
XTERNAL AA30465

FOR MR. R. A. WOOLCOTT & A CANBERRA 2001

FROM MILLETT ANTARCTIC DIVISION MELBOURNE

WOULD YOU PLEASE RELEASE TO THE PRESS THE FOLLOWING

INFORMATION AND LET ME KNOW IN ADVANCE TIME OF RELEASE

IN CANBERRA

FIERCE ANTARCTIC BLIZZARD AT WILKES

A BLIZZARD WHICH RAGED FOR 48 HOURS AND REACHED 130 M.P.H.

STROOK THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL ANTARCTIC RESEARCH EXPEDITIONS

STATION AT WILKES ON 9TH JUNE. IT BLEW DOWN MOST OF THE

ELABORATE AERIALS AND FEEDER LINES USED FOR RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

BETWEEN WILKES, OTHER ANTARCTIC STATIONS, AND AUSTRALIA

THE MAIN FOOD STORE WAS SEVERELY DAMAGED AND CANNED FOOD WAS

BURIED UNDER TONS OF SNOW

A PARTY CARRYING OUT GLACIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS ABOUT

THIRTY MILES FROM WILKES SPENT TWO DAYS HUDDLED IN A SMALL

PLYWOOD CARAVAN. FIERCE WINDS, LADEN WITH ROCK FRAGMENTS

BLASTED THEIR SHELTER UNTIL IT BEGAN TO DISINTEGRATE. WHEN

THE DOOR HAD BEEN BLOWN FROM ITS HINGES AND THE INTERIOR OF

THE CARAVAN WAS FILLED WITH SNOW THE BLIZZARD FORTUNATELY

ABATED

THE MEN WERE PETER MORGAN, GLACIOLOGIST, OF ESSENDON,

VICTORIA, KEITH BUDNICK, SURVEYOR, OF BOND JUNCTION N.S.W.

AND NEVILLE WOODS, RADIO OPERATOR, OF RODD POINT, N.S.W.

CFM 2001 48 HOURS 130 M.P.H. 9TH JUNE

ENDS 1215 AEST 19/6/64 FILE 261/2/5 VEB

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The patient is now recovering rapidly. It was fortunate that a first stop ^{some days earlier} upon which he was scheduled to leave the station ^{was} delayed by a thyroid, otherwise his affairs ~~would be~~ ^{could} have remained many miles from the station parking.

(over) X

Provide photo
of Rogers from
the files in
file + records

in walking from one accident to another
lost in Blizzard AROUND ANTARCTICS
The last was when Max K. Bonner of
Elroy, Victoria, who eventually disappeared
back alone to his station in an exhausted
condition, taking at various points
back out to rescue him. Bonner's
condition is now satisfactory after
making under reduction
The rescue party concentrated
their search on the 24th of the day at
the shore ^{point} where the party was engaged
in the rescue. The rescue was successful
had been long ago.

Decision to make on these things
had been in the mind to lose them
near of direction in a blizzard. They
had been the blizzard of things
which were left to guide from home
but to not under advice and from the
80 yard, separated the two but
between which Bonner had to walk.

AUSTRALIAN

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