

STATION LOG

WILKES 1964

RAYMOND O'LEARY

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~~1960~~
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3/64/747/92 O'LEARY

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Sunday 12th January 1964

No QW3-

Ship arrived at Wilkes Station at 0930 after a fast trip from Melbourne - about 235 hrs. No pack was encountered at any stage.

Wal Jones & Oic went ashore in helicopter to be greeted by Dick Saxon (O.P.K.) & Ken Hicks (2/P.K.) at vehicle park. On arrival at station only three people were there to greet us. Met other members during round of inspection. All appeared very lethargic & disinterested in the functioning of the station. The three Americans appeared to be the most lively.

Generally the station appeared to be run down, untidy & dirty. This has been accentuated by a heavier than usual. Oil drum stacks made in 1958 are now uncovered, together with numerous parking cases, dead seals, penguins, paper, garbage etc.

However, it was obvious that much of the rubbish is from the past 12 months.

'64 party ashore at 1300 to have quick look around - commenced unloading ducks at 1430 - 9 loads received before completion of day. Materials & food dumped in great confusion.

No pre-planning of group no dumps added to this, together with lack of snow to sledge building material (penguins) to balloon & various hut sections. Local terrain restricted area in which stores could be dumped.

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Sunday 12th January 1964 (Cont'd)

Also ducks were very limited in the distance they could travel owing to soft snow.

Prospective, the day was quite satisfying, the '64 party working with great zest & enthusiasm. This was amplified by the complete lack of assistance from the '63 party.

Monday 13th January 1964

Party up at 0500, breakfast 0530 started work ashore 0630. Unloaded 23 ducks during day to 180000. Again considerable ~~excess~~ difficulty experienced in finding enough space to stack stores. Also found it difficult to turn ducks around quickly. This was due to mixed loading at the Nella Dam. Some loads had as many as 8 different groups mixed together. This prevailed over all loads, loading & unloading of ships requires more detailed planning apparently. Considerable work ~~loading~~ on beach was increased by 40% due solely to this mixed loading. Party working well although one or two go to great trouble to ~~reach~~ get at the light boxes.

Still little or no assistance from '63 party. O/p/c does try & help with advice on location of various storage ponds, in buildings.

Tuesday 14th January 1964

Party

Awake 0500 - winds to 80 kn & ship dragging anchor at times. 64 party on board all day & welcomed rest after rather grueling day yesterday.

Wind reached 103 kn (gust) on ship at 2100 hrs.

Wednesday 15th January 1964

Winds still very high at 0700 - about 80 kns

Party getting restless to get ashore again.

At 1300 hrs ducks came alongside in 60 kn wind to take off some members of '63 party who had been on board since Monday night.

OIC went ashore with them to check security of uncrated building panels. Very wet & hazardous ride.

Wind dropped completely at 1430 & party came ashore to commence unloading. Eleven loads off by 1900.

Thursday 16th January 1964

28 ducks unloaded today - this leaves ammunition, fresh food & drummed fuel to be unloaded. Helicopters busy on carrying panels to balloon & seismic hut site. No snow at all in these areas making it impossible to sled materials. Two panels dropped from 150' - one in sea - one on ice.

Neither were damaged seriously. If helicopters were not available, building would be seriously impeded.

Thursday 16th Jan 1964 (Continued from 3)

Pressure of work telling on younger members of '64 party - tea breaks extend to 1 hour if not watched.

Hafflinger cross country FWD vehicle taken out on lead by Hulcombe, Morgan & Schwarzenberger. Overdue at 1800, O/C went out 20 mi on S2 route to look them in heliops. White out prevented sighting them. Finally turned up at 2000. Apparently support vehicle (supplied by '63 party) turned back at 10 mile mark. Hafflinger intend to 25 mile point on S2 trail with only fair performance below maximum.

Heavy melt made ramp from sea almost impassable. Old drum stacks were uncovered, an ramp making it impassable to ducks at times. Alternative ramp (top only) bulldozed out.

Friday 17th Jan 1964

Unloading almost completed. Whole area around mess & carpenter shop covered with cases four high. Bulk of stores stacked in area S of ramp. For some reason 3 years supply of food received this year. This has added considerably to the difficulty of finding sufficient space for unloading. Normal food storage facilities were 90% full on arrival.

80% of 64 dry food has been stacked in open on rocks near field equipment store.

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Frid. 17th Jan 1964 (Cont. from 4)

Cold-sensitive foods stored in passageways alongside east & west sleeping quarters. Some revision of restocking station is required.

Saturday 18th Jan 1964

Most of '64 party working on building erection. '63 party are more noticeable now in the general activity on the station.

4 fuelbow tanks completed & oil pumping commenced. Filled in 13 hours (43300 galls).

Discovered the wooden station dinghy missing. Apparently it was seen drifting past the "Kella Dam" on Tuesday 14th at 2300 hrs by the watch officer. Dinghy had been left upside down on rocks near the new balloon hut. Not secured.

At least nine drums distillate lost in sea from ducks. Mainly due to overloading of vehs. & sliding off at ramp entrances.

Section leaders & some personnel doing a gradual indoctrination with '63 personnel. This appears preferable to taking all people for one or two days after unloading is completed, thus holding up the ship unnecessarily.

Sunday 19th Jan. 64

Unloading of drums completed. Commenced stowing on buildings or stacking in open all various group items. About 50% of 64 party on building projects.

Continual supervision is required to keep some of the men on the job. However, they are getting good results just the same.

Inspected grave on hill adjacent to station with Wal. Jones. Will pour a concrete plinth around grave & block for bronze plaque during year.

Monday 20th Jan. 64

Still on building project & storage of food & equipment. O/I/C & Wal. Jones inspected future station site. Not impressed as there appears to many difficulties with a distinct possibility of drift problems.

*63 & 64 OIC's checked "A" class inventories. Still many items on inventories which RTA'd one or two years ago.

Balloon & seismic hut completed except for launching platform & seismic seismic foundation.

63 party packing & loading RTA equipment
O/I/C's birthday celebrated on ship

Tuesday 20th Jan. 1964

Most people on completion of emergency power station. Others on food storage.

O/C flew over projected eastern leg of autumn traverse. Crossed area extended about 3-4 mile inland from coast. Beyond this line there was no trace of crevasse. Very little crevasse bridging due to extreme summer. 95% of crevasses are open; some 30-40' wide.

Due to poor visibility unable to fly more than 6 mile inland. Absolutely no sign of sleds. so 10 mile contour should be quite safe for traverse.

Landed at "Jack's Donga" about 4 miles E of Wilkes. Checked condition of supplies in hut - well stocked. Numerous seals on floes in this area. Notified duck crews on return & Leon Fox went out to this area & shot two.

Changeover party in evening - quite successful although liquid refreshments disappeared within 30 minutes. Over 100 present inc. ship's crew. Relief leader's leather coat stolen by persons unknown. At first it appeared to be a joke; unfortunately the coat had not turned up at the end of the evening.

Wed. 23rd January 1964

Official changeover from '63 party at 1415L.
Blankets, sheets & pillowslips issued from stock.
Former O/I/C's bedroom handed to two men. Other
bedroom normally occupied by 3 men reduced to
2 men. O/I/C sleeping in office until alternative
arrangements made.

Some of party appeared slightly deflated
when boat's departure was imminent. However
they soon settled down to clean up the station.
Dulcombe & Freeman had the rubbish & the over-
filled sanitary pans emptied within two hours
of our taking over the station. Water tanks
were nearly empty & had to be filled for adequate
fire precautions.

Jahsover of met. Frack's very smooth thanks
to Fox & O'Shea with their extensive previous
experience.

Most sections of station (internally) very untidy
& extremely dirty.

Scientific people appeared to have taken
over their respective responsibilities without
any trouble, although there are approx. 300
cases of scientific equip. still outside.

Thurs. 23rd Jan. 1964

Working day promulgated
Breakfast 0715.

Commence Work 0800

Tea Break 1030

Lunch 1230

Commence Work 1315

Tea Break 1530

Finish Work. 1800

Dinner 1830

Overtime until further notice - 1930 - 2200

Extra-Curricular Duties

MESSING OFFICER	-	DR. MURRAY
FIRE OFFICER	-	J. FREEMAN
ASSIST. " "	-	T. ELLIS
STILL PHOTOGRAPHER	-	J. FREEMAN
MOVIE " "	-	R. O'LEARY
FILM PROCESSOR	-	J. POLLARD
CLOTHING OFFICER	-	N. WOODS
AMENITIES " "	-	J. O'SHEA
FIELD EQUIP. " "	-	P. MORGAN
CANINE CONTROLLER	-	L. FOX,
ASST " "	-	J. ROGERS
LIBRARIAN	-	G. SMALL
PROJECTIONIST	-	J. FREEMAN
No2 " "	-	R. WHITWORTH
RADIO STATION "KOLD"	-	J. POLLARD
HAM RADIO STATION	-	G. SMITH

THURS. 23rd. JAN. 1964 (Cont. 9)

Diesel dept. very busy getting up vehicles on road - only one Weasel & Bombardier & 1- D4 were serviceable at changeover.

Freeman very enthusiastic with fire duties. He plans to reticulate water in 2" main to various parts of station. Interim fire orders issued until definite plan is formulated. Freeman could become over-enthusiastic and get people's back up if not controlled.

Woods on "slushy" duties until Sunday. 4-day slushy roster introduced. Commencing on a Wed. each person works until Sunday doing duty cook on that day. The next slushy starts on Sunday am & works until Wed. pm. His next turn on roster would start on Wed. so that he does turn as duty cook.

All hands to stow food after dinner. Very difficult to find space for cold-sensitive food ^{even} apart from other types.

Ellis laying control cable to transmitter from radio room. Completed during day, but could be damaged by vehicles if ablation is not hastened.

Simmons injured ankle when sledge ran back on him. Dr. considered it nothing serious

FRIDAY 24th JAN 1964

Full station routine operating now, although several hundred cases still in the open.

Morgan ^{sorting} ~~searching~~ out field equipment very industriously. Movement of his glaciological ^{Equip} from his former building very difficult owing to the lack of snow in that area.

Morgan has taken over old micro-met. building. Appears to be satisfactory for his requirements.

Lack of carpenter has caused many minor difficulties - impossible at this stage to continue seismic building or balloon hut, also considerable gp. 2 equipment has to ^{sorted} ~~searched~~ out.

All food stowed away or stacked on rocks. There appears to be enough food for 5 years on the station.

Saturday 25th JAN 64

Freeman conducted mock fire alarm. Some confusion as to assembly point. However this has been ironed out now.

Diesel sec. very impressive in their efforts to get equipment serviceable.

Beer issue and picture night. Well attended. Considerable amount of apparently surplus scientific equip. stored in main corridor. Steps taken to increase space.

Sunday 26th Jan. 1964

Freeman commenced water retic. of station for fire prevention or fighting. Considerable work required to make this project worthwhile feasible but should be worthwhile when completed.

Summer melt still in progress making conditions very damp around station.

Morning made free for everyone. Afternoon spent on further cleaning up of station, unpacking equipment & repairing essential vehs.

SDM removed tracks from 45 tractor & placed on one of only 3 weasels. Newly run tracks should now give more flexible usage of this machine.

Useable vehicles at this stage - 2 weasels, 1-D4, 1-tractor out of a total of 11 vehicles.

Preparations for autumn traverse are also hampered by the inability to get large caravan down from plateau due to melt streams 10-8' in depth, one mile from station. Hope to dig temporary bridge over two at least if necessary.

Washing machines reported to be in poor condition. New Aust. patterns available in shipment this year.

Monday 28th Jan. 1964

Dr. Murray ill - upper respiratory complaint - slight temp.

S.D.M. & assistants cleaning rubbish from outside wall of garage found 1 cart. of primed explosive charges amongst tractor spares. gingerly disposed of into sea.

Work commenced on completion of fibre-glass caravan. Quite a bit to be done - probably 14 days work to complete - Rogers doing most of it when off duty.

Budnick on "shaky" & unpacking of 2 items in spare time (if any)

Concerted effort made after tea to clean up station as far as possible & also remove ^{loose} rubbish. 2 Otis sledge loads of boxes removed to dump. Work finished 2230.

Station looks tidier now, but increasing melt continually reveals new rubbish inc. tons of seal blubber around the carpenter's shop.

Clothing store space at a premium - only $\frac{1}{2}$ of gp 10 unpacked & store is jammed full. In fact, there is an acute shortage of space for every group, especially food.

Morning officer reports only sufficient fruit juices for two cans per day for 24 men.

Tuesday 28th Jan 64

Three men reported ill & in bed — Porsphy Fogarty, & Small, complained common to each. High temps. diarrhoea.

Scientists cleaning out main corridor of surplus gear.

Radio techs. (Ellis & Simmons) started on removal of rock for seismic but instrument foundations.

S.D.M. carried out considerable modification to No 5 snow trace main member. Several days work required. Other m/c still to be done.

Met. & radio section instructed to sheath "vestibule" of corridor outside their building with oil-tempered hardboard to prevent drift entering. Will do this on off-duty times.

All available pers. worked until 2200 on moving timber, cases, scaffold pipe to drift-free storage. Another 2 or 3 similar nights will see the finish of this.

Construction of foundations of seismic instruments will require considerable skill. Forming is quite intricate — probably beyond most of our amateur handy-men.

Wednesday 29th Jan 1964

O/I/C in bed with common Wilkes complaint — diarrhoea & high temp.

Water carrying sledge fell to pieces. Appears this sledge had been held together with wire for some time. Wire lost its effectiveness.

For & Rogers unsuccessful in first seal hunt — dogs on permurean.

New ^{hist.} ~~seismic~~ is isolated from snow by about 80-100 yds of steep rock. Makes it extremely difficult to get sand & screening drums (30 ton) & timber on site. O/I/C designing flying box to bring materials from garage (15 yds). About 10 tons total will have to be moved. Foundations will be required as soon as possible for seismic work.

Most ~~hand~~ people worked until 2200 on general cleaning up of station.

Thurs. 30th Jan 1964

All sick people up & well — Dr. has placed stringent rules on personal hygiene & food handling to eliminate possible source of infection.

SDM having difficulty in locating spares (if any) for Snow-tracs. No spark plugs even!

Rogers working on fibreglass caravan about 10 hours per day apart from his normal radio watch.

Thurs. 30th Jan 1964 (Cont.)

Construction of flying box commenced, appears that it should be efficient.

Melt still continuing causing movement outside building area with vehicles most difficult. Track-shedding by weasels continually because of this.

Large quantity of rubbish previously frozen in around buildings removed to dump, giving station a tidier look.

New road to transmitter dug to avoid badly ablated area over oil drums.

Work until 2100 continued on vehicle repair & unpacking.

Ellis in bed ill - diagnosis: exhaustion - He bears out PNARE manual statement that no two men are alike in endurance & capability. From the day of arrival, he has found any ~~man~~ task, manual or otherwise, to be of gargantuan proportions. Requires continual leading & prompting to get a job completed. Some indications of home sickness could contribute to this attitude - he has been away from his family for 4 months at this stage.

Friday 31st January 1964

Winds (50 to 60 kts) made outside work rather unpleasant today. First day since actual changes in that weather has had any effect on work. Snow fell during latter half of day when wind dropped temporarily.

No overtime worked because of weather. Nearing end of cleanup.

Saturday 1st Feb. 1964

Weather still cold & windy, but moderated about 1600. O.P.C. & Budnick commenced on forming for seismic instruments. Appears to be at least 10 days work in forming alone. Main block (7' x 2' x 3') completed (forming only). Further work done on flying box by Simmons.

Rogers working on fibre-glass caravan. Still a lot of work required to put it on the road. Most of work inside today.

Picture night & "grog" in evening. Buildings looking badly during snow, mainly in corridors.

False fire alarm due to button being pressed accidentally. Response very heartening. 90% of strength in position within 40 secs. Time of occurrence 1515.

Monday 3rd Feb 1964 (Cont)

voltages & currents on this circuit, it could be possible that too high peak voltages are being reached ~~and~~ that puncture pyro sheath. This cable is well noted for not being able to withstand surge voltages. Maybe an overhead line would solve all troubles.

O/K of Hakombi on autumn traverse planning which is being hampered by the continual procrastination of Morgan who still cannot give a definite picture of his requirements for this traverse.

First batch of home brew tried out —
Terrible!

Problem has arisen for surveyor Budnick in obtaining triangulation at Cape Folger at end of strain grid from ice dome during autumn traverse. He needs to get to Chappel Is. to do this. As boat is not suitable some alternative means will have to be found to fix end of grid.

Tuesday 4th Feb. 1964

Fox & Budnick went on trip to NNE of station for rock & to look for possible solid rock for triangulation to Cape Folger — No rock & no suitable rock.

Find barot in evening to clean up station before snow starts — snow started as work commenced.

Tuesday 4th Feb 1964 (Cont)

Flying for completed & tested OK.
About 2 inches of snow fell by 2330. Cleaned station very efficiently & quickly.

Wednesday 5th Feb. 1964

Snowing heavily. About 15" since last night. Met. station considered this extraordinary for early Feb.

All hands to move 200 drums fuel & many lengths of glaciological pipe & flights to rock before snow drifts them up. Conditions rather poor - wind about 50 kts. & visibility 100 yds. Most stuck it thru' but 2 or 3 found reasons why they should be inside.

Station leaking badly in insulated sections apart from corridors.

Home brew makers hard at it making 3rd brew for year.

Thursday 6 Feb 1964

Snowing finished. About $\frac{2}{3}$ rds left after wind.

Whitworth, Freeman & Ellis visited caravan on plateau & removed radio & cooking gear for installation in other large caravan to be used on traverse.

Dogs taken for run after tea by O'Shan, Rogers, Hall

Friday 7th Feb. 1964

Freeman & Ellis preparing caravans for traverse, assisted by Rogers. Freeman has completed the installation of five water reticulation to strategic points inside the station. The five pumps had been seized for at least 12 months & he has this running also. A 6000 gallon reserve of heated water is available for fire fighting now.

All radio equipment packed outside trans-
mitter ^{building} unpacked & stored inside.

Autumn traverse plans completed & written instructions given to various people for preparation & loading of fuel, food etc.

Saturday 8th Feb 1964

Fox, Murray, & Fogarty & O/I/c went to Mitchell Peninsula (total round trip 24 miles) with dogs to investigate possibility of launching boat there to visit Adbert Island. This would be preferable to usual method of taking boat from Wilkes by sea. Good launching spot found close to Ardery Pt. & should be suitable for future visits to islands.

Movies & beer ration in evening.
Both well received

Sunday 9th Feb. 1964

First real blizzard for the year. Winds reached 90 kts. Commenced about 0300 and at 2300 had not lost any velocity. Unable at this stage to investigate damage, if any. O/I/C & S/D/M visited caravans & vehicles & closed doors & ventilators but not before considerable drift had entered vehicles.

Passage-ways, particularly to the radio sec. about 3' deep with drift. Some hard-board had been placed on outside of radio/mid. vestibule & this section is clear, which indicates that a lot more hardboard on the outside of passage-ways would be worthwhile.

Radio communications lost with McMurdo.

Monday 10th Feb. 1964

Blizzard had abated by 0600. Only slight damage. One of Sydney aeriab blown down & anemometer mast leaning about 30° from vertical.

All hands on digging out corridors & vehicles. Two doors sealed with tape to prevent further drift. but still available for fire exit.

Large 2500 gallon water tank broke from moorings & blown several hundred yards, wrecking the tank almost beyond repair. This tank was one brought down this year to augment existing water storage.

Tuesday 11th Feb. 1964

Weather fine & windless. Freeman working on large caravan alterations still. He is doing a good job, spending about 14 hours per day on this work. Ellis installing ANGR-9 radios in large & small caravans, 2 snow-tracs & Redwell. It's doubtful if he will be completed by the target date (20th Feb).

S/D/M commenced Redwell repairs. Appears to be rather extensive repairs required to put this vehicle in the field again.

Small digging out new seismic building which was completely filled during Sunday's blizzard.

Wednesday 12th Feb 1964

New water tank repaired except for top & replacement of insulation & installed outside water Jamesway to fill up with snow which may be melted out with the internal elements when tank is ready for final repair.

Large ice-trail & caravan visited at aerodrome by Hulombe, Budnick, & O/I/C.

Both are ablated in about 30v4. Also traverse caravan (large, 6-berth) & 5 sledges left on plateau are ablated.

Checked air-strip in view of possible American visit. All OK.

Films shown in evening.

Thursday 13th Feb 1964

Jones, Budnick, Fogarty & C/I/C went to plateau with 2-5th & Snowtrac to retrieve items visited yesterday. All returned to Station with some trouble. Broke thru several melt streams with large ice-drill (9 tons) but managed to reach station OK with the two ice-drills, 2 large caravans & 4 sledges (loaded).

Progress on traverse preparations progressing slowly.

Large caravan that had been at aerodrome for past 2 yrs. is nearly off chassis. Needs considerable repair before it will be OK for general use.

Elto installing ANGRIC-9 radios in large caravan, both Snowtracs, & Robin Rodwell. The new SSB French radio is to be installed in the fibre-glass caravan for test purposes.

Friday 14th Feb 1964

Small working on completion of ceramic hut - attaching sealing strips on outside seams of building.

S/D/M completed chassis repairs to Rodwell. His modifications appear to be very sound, and should overcome the shortcomings of the original design.

Carpenter's shop becoming very untidy & cluttered because of the general use of

Frid. 14th Feb 1964 (Cont.)

this building for all sundry jobs & the lack of a carpenter. Fogarty appointed "custodian" of the carpenters shop to control the issue of tools etc. & tidy the place up a little.

Progress on completion of balloon hut, seismic hut & emergency power station virtually nil.

Apart from Freeman & diesel mechanics there is no one who is capable of using tools properly without messing up the particular task. Enthusiasm is plentiful but ability & experience in this type of work is lacking. Also traverse preparations have been given top priority.

Saturday 15th Feb

Morgan, Hall & Ellis went to aerodrome to test ANGRC-9'S to see if it was possible to overcome the problem of bad reception in this area — no success.

First dining night of year. A very successful evening with a very fine spread of food prepared by Fred Cross who went to great trouble to prepare this meal.

Normal station routine during day

Sunday 16th Feb 1964

Very small muster for breakfast & lunch today - few sore heads from last night's "ding".

Day-off for most. Doctor at penguin rookery at Stevenson's Cove banding penguins - about 110 banded.

Beautiful fine day - cloudless, windless & perfect temp. about 28-30°F.

Monday 17th Feb 1964

Traverse preparations in full swing. About 60% of strength working on various jobs towards this end. Freeman's fitting out of large caravan is really a good job. He has used a lot of imagination & his previous ^{Antarctic} experience has helped a lot. On present indications of weather, the traverse should get away by Feb. 22nd, or very soon after this date although there is some doubt about the condition of the *Nadwell*.

Tuesday 18th Feb 1964

Rowthorpe flew first balloon - successful launching in perfect wind conditions; about 3 knots.

Balloon was 12' diameter with nominal payload.

Weather is phenomenal at present. Has been perfect since 9th Feb.

Water wheel threw track during carting. Some replacement will be necessary next year for camp duty vehicles.

Wednesday 19th Feb 1964

Assessment of traverse ETD possibilities does not hold much chance of departure for at least 5 days. Calibration of instruments taking longer than expected, also vehicle repair is still behind, despite great efforts by S/D/M & his staff who work up to 16 hours per day. Doctor commenced tests of Basic Metabolic Rates & blood samples & diets of selected persons.

Fox worried about lack of sealin area - dogs have had only one or two meat meals this year.

Thursday 20th Feb 1964

Normal routine day on traverse preparation & station work.

Friday 21st Feb 1964

Routine day - weather still fine, but getting colder; about 12°F. Large caravan ready for traverse, looks very comfortable although the heating source (Tyreside Heater) is not impressive as the only source of heat. If the bottle reservoir is broken there is no replacement & no heat. A gas heater has been installed as a stand-by in case the Tyreside is not effective.

Saturday 22nd Feb. 1964

Considerable difficulty to start RMIT caravan heater by prescribed method i.e. preheating with matts soaked asbestos fire lighter. Not sufficient heat to vapourise kerosene (ATK) so used LPG heating torch with full success.

CO level is very high in caravan indicating vapour leak somewhere in the heater.

Hogers & Budnick unsuccessfully searched for seals at Stephenson's Cove.

Sunday 23rd Feb 1964

Morgan & S/D/M took Sno-tracker & Rodwell to Cape Folger on test run & to inspect glaciological markers. Accompanied by 8 others for trip.

Sno-tracker performed very poorly - used 1 gallon of oil for 20 miles & gave continuous trouble with stalling. Returned to Station at 1840 hrs after leaving at 1100 hrs. Everyone very pleased about break away from station.

O/K working on RMIT ^{caravan} heater. Overcome by CO fumes but re-wired O.K.

S/D/M feels it is possible Rodwell will not be available for traverse, but will check engine condition further tomorrow.

Monday 24th Feb. 1964

S/D/M reported Redwell engine worn considerably in piston rings. To put this vehicle in suitable condition again would require a major overhaul so have decided not to persevere with it but rather use a large caravan or weasel for the seismic equipment.

Ventilation & exhaust of DMIT caravan heater altered to remove any possibility of CO in caravan.

All of power to transmitter building off at 1830 hrs. Initial investigation showed two de-ion LV circuit breakers burnt as if by high peak voltages at transmitter CTH 7 AC panel.

Also pyrotech feeder cables blew in two places.

Cause was a loose connection on the auto-transformer at power station causing high out-of-balance voltages in circuit to transmitter.

Tuesday 25th Feb 1964

Transmitter circuit-breakers replaced with spares from ice-drill. Freeman worked all day in very poor weather to repair pyrotechs, assisted partly by O/P/C & Simmons.

This pyro. appears that it will be a continual source of trouble apart from yesterday's type of fault. The movement of ice in the vicinity of the transmitter will cause damage always. An overhead line is the solution.

Wednesday 26th Feb 64

Continue preparation for traverse. The testing of seismic equipment has become another source of delay, although the glaciologist is far from ready. On present indications at least another 6 days will be required before the traverse party will leave.

Net. section painted radome (not complete). Weather is still fine on most days although temps. are dropping.

Thursday 27th Feb 1964

Cross, the cook, in bed on drs. orders with dislocated toe. Looking being done on volunteer roster basis. O/I/C & Murray cooked today.

Possibility that toe will have to be operated on.

Seal meat portion temporarily relieved by seal shot on floe against rocks near radome.

Fox & Rogers eventually had to use boat to take seal off floe.

Friday 28th Feb 1964

Continue day with work on caravans (fibre-glass & personnel) completed except for stowing of food. Additional caravan to be used in lieu of Robert Rodwell brought to station area for cleaning & refitting for scientific gear. In very dirty condition requiring 2 men all day to remove grease & slime from walls & floor.

Saturday 29th Feb 1964

S/D/M working on conversion of yellow weasel to carry part of seismic equipment. This vehicle type appears to be all that is necessary for the work that was formerly carried out in the Rodwell, although some equipment (two small boxes) will have to be carried in the scientific caravan. This suggests that a vehicle similar to a weasel should be suitable for seismic work rather than the Rodwell. To use the Rodwell ties up a vehicle for one specific purpose ie a vehicle with 300 mile range without refueling, and utilising only 10% of available space for the seismic equipment.

Been Prime & films evening. For some reason three feature films were shown, plus 1 1/2 hours of shorts. Projectionist instructed not to show this amount again.

Weather still fine.

Sunday 1st March Feb 1964

Discussion of traverse group during morning of final preparations. Scientists still unsure of when their equipment will be ready although they agreed that they should be ready by Wed 4th March.

All traverse party, plus Murray & Pollard worked on packing of food etc. during day.

Monday 2nd March 1964

Traverse preparations in full swing. Caravans ready with all equipment both personal & food stowed away.

Progress on scientific caravan very slow - appears to be a lot of unnecessary modifications being made by Morgan, although Leimaintams all are essential.

Freeman completed installation of very flexible electrical charging system for caravan's lighting. A petrol charger (generator) in large personnel caravan, a 110v generator (AC) thru a rectifier charger in the scientific caravan with an alternative hook-up from either D4 to charge batteries in any of the three caravans. Finally the fibre-glass caravan can be supplied from the personnel caravan. Freeman has devoted a lot of time & effort to this project, working long hours each day.

Tuesday 3rd March 1964

Brophy & Williams shot a seal several hundred yards inland from Stephenson's Cove. Helps to relieve dog food shortage, but many more are required.

Traverse ETD of Sunday appears badly astray. Morgan & Whitworth far from ready to leave.

Sea-ice (pancake) forming around station - air temp. about 12°F.

Wednesday 6th March.

Summary of weather for months January & February.

January

Mean Temp — 31.0°F

Humidity — 65%

Highest Maximum — 41.5°F at 1600 on 28th

Lowest Minimum — 25.8°F at 0400 on 3rd

Highest Wind Gust — 71 knots on 1833 on 14th

Two Days Blizzard

Seven ~ Snow

Five ~ Clear Weather.

26 ~ Cloudy

February

Mean Temp — 26.5°F

~ Humid. — 73%

Highest Maximum — 37.2°F on 1st at 1500

Lowest Minimum — 13.8°F on 29th at 2300

Highest Wind Gust — 87 knots on 4th at 1605

2 Days ~~Snow~~ Blizzard

16 ~ Snow

2 ~ Clear.

27 ~ Cloudy

Film evening well attended although film was very poor — "West of Zanzibar"
Morgan & Whitworth still preparing & calibrating equipment for traverse.

Thursday 5th March 1964

All traverse preparation complete except for seismic equipment which still requires another 48 hours testing! Now appears Sunday will be the day of departure. Considering the amount of vehicle repair & modification to caravans carried out in past weeks it is felt that to leave on Sunday 8th March will be quite an achievement for all concerned especially the diesel mechanics who have worked an average of 90 hours per week since Jan. 22nd. To bring all the vehicles up to a reasonable standard. Also the RMIT caravan was far from complete on arrival at Wilkes — about 200 man-hours were spent on completing the caravan apart from the problems with the heater.

The ATK heater in the R.M.I.T. caravan is now working satisfactorily at least in winds up to 40 knots. Previously the wind velocity & direction had a direct influence on the performance of this heater. With the installation of an H cow on the flue of the heater, a 6" vent in the roof above the heater and a 2" air duct to the heater from the outside, the heater operates reliably. This installation took some time as the requirements were ascertained by trial & error.

Hogers re'in bed with stomach pains indicative of appendicitis.

Friday 6th March 1964

Rogers condition worsened during day so dr. decided to remove appendix. Also cleared of tables etc. after dinner & lined throughout with sterile sheets. Surgical equipment, sterilizers etc. moved from surgery to mess. Operation commenced at 2100 with O.P.C. as surgeon's assistant Woods anaesthetist, O'Shea assistant anaesthetist, & Fox theatre sister. Operation completed 2350. Took longer than normal for various medical reasons (see dr's report).

Movie show run to keep other members occupied whilst operation was in progress. An air of seriousness & concern pervaded the station when it was made known that the operation was to take place & the movie served to distract people from worrying about Rogers. About 8 members stayed up until 0300 Sat. to clean up mess room ready for breakfast.

Whitworth's seismic equipment not functioning correctly as yet. Feel the traverse will never get away at this rate.

Saturday 7th March 1964

Rogers condition satisfactory according to dr's report.

Normal station routine with films in evening. Peter Morgan's birthday celebrated.

Sunday 8th March 1964

All traverse vehicles & sledges moved to plateau about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Wilkes with the exception of seismic weasel & sledge. Whitworth still having trouble with equipment & could be another 3 days. Most frustrating to other traverse members, but it is preferable to get the equipment functioning efficiently now rather than be delayed in the field.

Contrary to previous O/I/C's reports it was possible to take all camions & sledges past the moraine in one trip. The total train weighed approx. 18-20 tons & no difficulty was encountered whatsoever even though there was no snow cover on the ice.

Heggs condition satisfactory.

Monday 9th March 1964

Routine day.

Tuesday 10th March.

Most of Trause party got away during the afternoon at various times. Morgan got as far as the rubbish dump & then returned on foot reporting the Sno-Trac overheating. Hall investigated and found covers had not been removed from engine air vents. Whitworth & Fogarty plan to sleep night at station & leave at 4am. Weasel left idling for more than 2 hours to charge battery - caused of consternation to Hall & Freeman. Freeman reported that most members of party wanted a film. 'Blackboard Jungle' was shown.

Wednesday 11th March

Rogers making rapid progress since yesterday morning. - walked as far as the Toilet & Moss today. Voice communication with Trause established 0800 but not at 1900 hrs. Whitworth & Fogarty up at 0400 but did not get Weasel started until 0630. Weasel broke fan belt on way to plateau. On early radio sched. O'Leary informed that Whitworth & Fogarty had left & said he would look for them. Later in the morning Whitworth & Simmons arrived in Sno-Trac to collect spare fan belt & petrol pump. Murray & self mentioned Soap stock situation. It appears at this stage that the position is grim. There are 5 cases of soft soap - 150 lbs which at 3 days to the tin should be enough for washing up.

for the remainder of the year. Also remaining are
 7 packets of Lux, 13 packets of Fab, 3 1/2 dozen
 packets of Flash, ^{25 bars of Dial} some industrial detergent &
 a small bit of soap powder in a US barrel.

Personal clothes washing is therefore going to have
 to be curtailed drastically. John O'Shea says
 he knows where there is a box marked soap
 powder in a jammerway but have not located
 it as yet.

Discussed with Freeman, priorities for
 those jobs in which he will be concerned. He is
 next slushy. Today while inspecting an alternator
 Freeman found brass shavings from I think the
 commutator & will have to modify the lathe to
 effect repairs.

Wednesday picture night - film The
 three ring circus.

Thursday 12th March.

Communication was established with Trause
 party on the 0800 Sched. by CW. but nothing was
 heard on the 1900 Sched. The Station Pilot & Oil
 stocks were removed. Empty cases were found
 from around the Transmitta building. Rogers has
 been moved out of the surgery into his room.
 He continues to make good progress and will
 probably spend a lot of his convalescence sorting
 out records and tapes in KOD. The monthly
 weights blood pressure were taken by Dr Murray.
 O'Shea found 1 case of soap powder and 3 boxes of

Soap flakes - presumably Emergency stores which will relieve the Working situation a great deal. Freeman worked on warming cabinet in kitchen as well as slushy duties.

Friday 13th March.

Transit party delayed at S2 due to whiteout. Communications with party now established on a regular basis. A routine day spent on normal station activities.

Saturday 14th March.

Issued some of the soap flakes which have been found & explained situation to all present at lunch. A trial will be held using one bottle of soap flakes - the time taken to empty this will be used as a basis for further issues.

Booppy & Woods shot a seal in the afternoon in Stephenson's Cove. Murray cleaned out the shelves in the Head & stacked tailor paper, soap, shaving soap etc. He also cleaned out the photographic paper from the shelves opposite the Head. These shelves can now be used for storing books, maps, brooms etc.

Saturday night - quiz & picture night.

Small injured a finger today - hit it with a hammer while mending the corridor in the magnetic hut.

Sunday 15th March.

Normal Sunday activities. Ellis making 2 peaking knives. Pollard Booppy and Hall went peaking but no seals sighted.

Transverse party delayed at S2 due to whiteout conditions at first and then blizzard. A bit of a blow here last night had dropped by morning.

Monday 16th March.

Hall had to pull a Cat. off line in the garage. Trouble traced to blocked radiator. - Both externally & internally. Freeman worked on slip rings on generator in Powerhouse. - work proceeding smoothly. Murray & Pollard started cleanup of Science Corridor.

Tuesday 17th March.

Trouble in radiator on Caterpillar finally traced to faulty thermostat. Radiator Core cleaned and radiator reinstalled by Hall. Engine now runs so cold that all windows & doors in garage have to be shut to lift temperature into operating range. Cleanup of Science Corridor & Vestibule continues. Aim is to clear science corridor from Science door onwards to provide easy access in case of emergency. Rogers locked Carpenter's shop. Keys held by Rogers and Pollard. Briefly assisting Rogers to tidy Carpenter's Shop.

Drain from kitchen and Photographic Dark-rooms blocked this afternoon. Cleared by Freeman from Outlet end with conduit & brush. It will be done every 6 weeks in future. Congealed fat and other kitchen rubbish the main cause.

Rogers officially back on port time duties tomorrow.

Wednesday 18th March.

Drophy & Ellis shot 5 seals at Stephenson's Cove. They brought 2 back behind the Wessel but the other 3 are still there. Fox will attend to these tomorrow morning after breakfast. This will make a good reserve of dog food.

Generator in Powerhouse put back into service by Freeman. Small has started preliminary work on seismic hut. Next step is re-erection of Flying Box & moving of sand & screenings.

No communication with traverse party yesterday or at 0800 sched today.

Bowthorpe had another successful balloon flight today. - launched in near perfect conditions. ^{Effectively} dock put on Fort Knox by Freeman.

Picture night. Both projectors in good running order now.

Thursday 19th March

Power failure during pictures last night. Motor running but no power being generated. Freeman investigated but after checking this morning could find no reason for the failure & the generator was put back on line where it has run without any further trouble for the remainder of the day.

Some cleaning up outside the Mess Vestibule Carpenter's Shop area was done today

This area is now fairly clean. The only remaining pieces of equipment are 2 gas bottles and the new washing machine. Hall replaced the pump in the Water Weasel when it gave trouble and has now bolted it to the sledge saving much climbing in and out of the weasel. He and John O'Lea will box the tank in when circumstances permit.

Friday 20th March

Fremman tested fire hose system. Hoses stood a pressure of 40 lbs but when the pressure was increased above this the coupling above the IONO darkroom parted and a severe local shower resulted. The hose is in an unsafe condition at present and would be likely to fail in the event of fire.

The traverse party was contacted at the 1900 hrs local sched. last night. The SS13 has broken down & contact was made using ANGLE-9 on a long wire.

Saturday 21st March.

O'Lea, Hall, & Murphy took the dogs for a run in the afternoon. The wind freshened by late afternoon & by night was blowing hard. The temperature dropped below zero Fahrenheit and wind gusts were up to 50 knots. The temperature in the Water Jamesway dropped to 15° & the water pipes froze. ~~The~~ due to freezing. The hot water service in the Head was turned off & the

Work in the kitchen likewise. The men over the Electricians shop started to flap during the night and was nailed on by Freeman assisted by Pollard.

Pictures were shown.

Sunday 22nd March.

Freeman had the water supply fixed by lunch-time. Snow cover is badly needed to insulate the Jamesway & conserve heat. The main camp drainage system failed due to freezing and was cleared by Freeman during the afternoon. The first 20 feet were frozen probably due to lack of flow during the night and early morning while the water supply was turned off.

The Medical Store has been drift proofed by Murray - no drift entered during last night's blow.

Monday 23rd March.

Blizzard started during the night - Drifting up to about 20 feet above ground level. Canvas covering the Pump room started to flap about 0900. Freeman & Pollard battened this down. Several large rocks placed on battens to assist holding the canvas down. List of duties posted - dealing with corridors, doors etc to be kept clear of drift.

Much work done by Murray, & Radio Section in plugging holes. Powerhouse corridor was free of drift. and in general the amount of drift was less than the last blizzard.

Tuesday 24th March.

Weather improved. No wind but snow falling. Should assist in keeping Water Jamsaway warmer. Smith has been granted full Amateur privileges on his Restricted licence. Preparations for ~~transmission~~^{trips} by Fox etc well in hand. Small Hall & Freeman preparing for concreting of Science Pier. Murray erecting shelving in Medical Store after drift proofing same. - an excellent job.

Wednesday 25th March

Flying for re-erection completed and seems to be a firm job. Snow accumulation around the station increases. The clothes dryer stopped and was looked at by Freeman. The starting winding of the ~~dry~~ motor was clogged with fluff. A Libin was shown during the evening. At approximately 8 pm the Cat in the Powerhouse stopped apparently due to overheating. It was allowed to cool and then restarted and has run on load since. Clothes drying in the Powerhouse and a shut window were the causes of the restricted air circulation. Hall has finished tidying the garage - a job well done.

Thursday 26th March

Remainder of Science Corridor cleaned out by Murray, Hall, Smith and Pelland. The Hardboard & asbestos sheets which were stacked along the corridor leading from the Vestibule to the Powerhouse have been moved to the far end of the Science

Science Corridor leaving much more room to walk there now.

Friday March 27th.

Routine Station Activities. Murray & Bellard cleaned the Photographic Store - throwing out a lot of useless articles.

Saturday March 28th.

The Jet Heater in the lounge and Mess ^{was} burst a fuel line and was repaired by Freeman. It ^{was} blowing today - much draft penetrating into the corridor between the Vestibule and Powerhouse. The food cases were removed by Murray Bellard Ellis Wellman and Freeman and reattached in other corridors which are draft free. The corridor from the Vestibule & Powerhouse, was then shovelled free of snow & has remained free since. Draft was penetrating through cracks in the floor & then forced up behind the food cases & out through numerous ^{between} ~~among~~ the cases.

A Ding night was held to celebrate Easter and a buffet meal was provided by Cook Fred Cross. - an excellent meal of barbecue chicken with numerous side dishes. Unfortunately the Meat Refrigerator fractured a gas line & Freeman spent some time trying to find the leak - unsuccessfully.

Sunday March 29th.

Drift built up during Saturday blizzard and completely blocked the lee room door. This is the first case so far of a door being completely covered. Bowthorpe is investigating the possibilities of erecting some sort of a wall to prevent this. Although the door was covered, the steps remained free & it seems likely that if a wall could be constructed the ~~station~~ door might remain reasonably free of drift.

Freeman repaired the refrigerator and at the present time seems fated to have Sundays spent working.

After yesterdays blow much snow has been deposited around the station, indicating where the permanent drifts are likely to form. The Vestibule door will have to be kept clear from now on due to a drift which runs from the carpenters shop past this door and on to the corridor from the Vestibule to the Head.

Monday 30th March.

Vehicles which had become drifted in were moved by Hall Murray & Freeman. The drift which had formed in part of the garage was dug away enabling the Wessel in the garage to be driven out. All vehicles are now clear. The Bombardier however was found impossible to start due to drift in the engine compartment and was pushed by the Transactor.

A Resume of the Field Parties Activities was received from the dt/c.

Tuesday 31st March.

A Seal was sighted by Bowthorpe on the ice just below the Pillow Tanks and was duly shot for Dog Food by Fox. Brophy and Small went to Stephenson's Cove in the afternoon. One Seal was shot and two which had been shot on a previous occasion and then covered with snow during a blow were relocated. Monthly report received from the Trause Party.

Wednesday 1st April.

A Fire ^{started} today in the Carpenter's Shop. The Brawley Heater was lit by Rogers and within minutes the whole heater was ablaze - apparently due to oil overflowing. Rogers sounded fire alarm & then started to extinguish the fire. Hall was first on the scene and the fire was out by the time that most people had reached the vestibule. Very smart action on the part of Rogers and Hall.

The Science building Jet Heater gave trouble due to ice in the pipes. This tank will have to be drained to secure a permanent improvement.

The film shown was 'Dull in the Jungle' - a poor film. These usually receive the best reception - offering scope for imitations etc.

The Bombardier was pushed into the garage by Hall & Murray to then out. It has