

Society.

Knuth was proud of his ancient lineage but, to his friends, his kinship seemed to lie rather with the Inuit hunters whose ruins he studied. Much of his private means went into those studies, while he enjoyed the simplest lifestyle, preferring, as he said, his tent in Peary Land to, say, the comfort of an exclusive club. He was a fastidious camper, keeping his tent in neat order and serving two-course meals from a Primus stove with exquisite care. His astonishing physique — tall, lean, and loose-limbed — enabled him to carry on active fieldwork for decades after his contemporaries had taken permanently to their desks. On long walks in summer he would carry a pair of green wellies that were donned for crossing glacier streams half-naked.

Knuth was seen at his best in the close-knit community of a field camp or among a few friends with similar interests. He liked people but was never at ease in a large group, partly from shyness and partly from deafness, although he claimed that he could hear perfectly in an aircraft cruising at 20,000 feet. ('Don't shout — I'm up in the air,' he would say.) He will be remembered especially for his whimsical sense of humour expressed, for example, in a Christmas card of his design portraying his car on an open road in Denmark. The gap of sky between the trees formed a map of Greenland beckoning towards the next field season. It is hardly surprising that he never married.

*Geoffrey Hattersley-Smith*

**The Rev Harold Duncan**, former missionary at Pond Inlet, died on 30 November 1995, aged 92. Born in London on 17 November 1903, he won a scholarship to the King Edward VI School in Sheffield. After school he taught at Monkton Combe for five years.

In 1928, at the age of 25, Duncan left his teaching post to train at the Bible Churchman's Missionary Society College in Bristol. After having been ordained Deacon by the Bishop of Ontario in 1929, he accompanied Jack Turner (later Canon Turner) to Pond Inlet, where they became the first resident missionaries. In 1934 Duncan returned to England on furlough, and, due to ill health, did not return to the Arctic. He returned instead to his teaching career, and was headmaster of Cloverly Hall School in Shropshire for 18 years, following which he returned to the Church and undertook a variety of clerical posts.

During the time Duncan spent at Pond Inlet, he translated the Scripture Union Bible Reading Cards into Inuktitut and the Book of Isaiah from the dialect of the Labrador Inuit to the dialect of the Baffin Island Inuit. This was later printed by the British and Foreign Bible Society, and at present is on display at the Scott Polar Research Institute, along with many artifacts he kindly donated to the museum in 1990.

To this day, Duncan is still spoken of among the community at Pond Inlet with great respect and affection. His musical talent, in composing hymn tunes and accom-

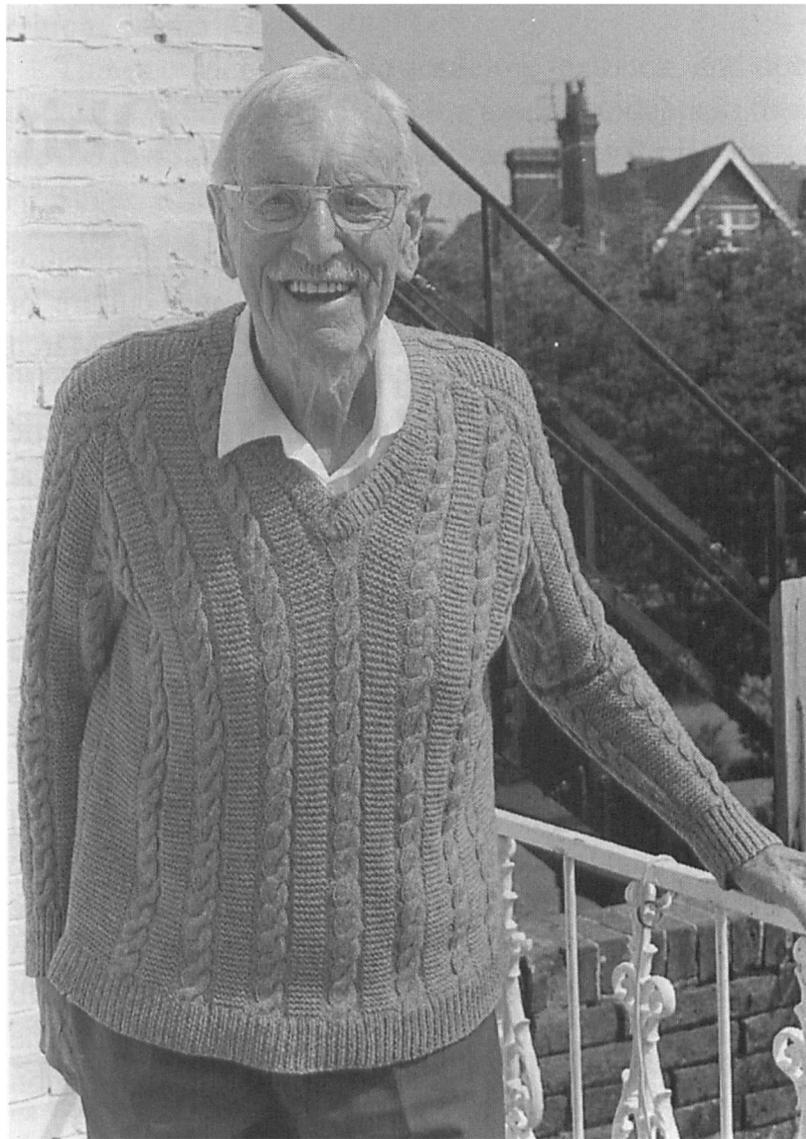


Fig. 1. The Reverend Harold Duncan in 1990.

panying the Church services on his accordion, is well-remembered, as is his dedication to pastoral care, which on one occasion involved carrying out an eight-hour operation on a young child who had been mauled by a husky. In 1992 Bishop Christopher Williams presented Duncan's private communion set to St Timothy's Church in Pond Inlet, a gift still treasured.

*Shirley Sawtell*

**John Blyth**, a member of Operation 'Tabarin,' died in Stanley, Falkland Islands, on 1 May 1995, aged 71. Blyth was born in Stanley, where he spent most of his childhood. In January 1944, as a member of the Falkland Islands Defence Force, he heard that a team of British scientists needed a cook for an Antarctic expedition. He immediately volunteered his services, as a relief from the sentry duty in which he was mainly engaged. On being accepted, he found himself a member of the then secret Royal Navy Operation 'Tabarin,' launched to safeguard British sovereignty in the Falkland Island Dependencies (now British Antarctic Territory) and commanded by Lieut Cdr J.W.S. Marr, RNVR.

Sailing from Stanley in HMS *William Scoresby* in March, Blyth joined Marr's nine-man party at Port Lockroy (Wiencke Island, Danco Coast), where they established a base known as Bransfield House. Although he had been engaged as cook, in fact he acted only as cook's assistant, for much of the cooking was taken over by the stores

officer, old (47) Tom Berry, who had served as chief steward in RRS *Discovery II* before the war. In the best Antarctic tradition, Blyth adapted himself to the role of handyman, assisting in all the activities at the base, including carpentry, photographic work, and collection of scientific specimens. At the end of the year, Marr was invalided home, and Captain Andrew Taylor, RCE, took over command of the entire operation.

Blyth returned to Stanley in December 1944 and, the following month, sailed south again for a further year, bound this time for Hope Bay, Trinity Peninsula, where he was a member of Taylor's 13-man party, working hard in February–March to establish a new base, known as Eagle House. Again he found himself as Berry's assistant in the kitchen and as handyman about the base, with the chance to take part in a few short sledge journeys with the newly arrived dog teams. He later recalled that on 8 May 1945 (VE Day) he heard George VI and Churchill on the radio and drank a toast to the end of the war in Europe. He was a good man to have at base on such an occasion, and on party nights, for he played the accordion and had a good singing voice, although according to Taylor not everyone appreciate his crooning in Bing Crosby style!

A busy year at Hope Bay had passed quickly when Blyth returned to Stanley in January 1946. However, he had not finished with the Antarctic, for, towards the end of 1947, he signed on for a further year with the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey, returning to Port Lockroy as handyman in a four-man party. His final year in the south was not without adventure. He achieved a record fast-descent of Jabet Peak, above Port Lockroy, when a slip on ice launched him down the mountain at a speed that safely carried him over a four-foot wide crevasse. On another occasion, he and two others from the base rowed over to the neighbouring Doumer Island for a one-night visit, and then found that their return had been cut off by drifting sea ice. As a precaution, they killed two seals to augment their food and fuel, but they had no radio to tell the base leader, alone at base, of their predicament. On the sixth day, a change of wind dispersed the ice, and they were able to row home, to the intense relief of the base leader.

After his return from the Antarctic in early 1949, Blyth worked until his retirement in various jobs, including lighthouse-keeping, gardening, shepherding, and security guarding, in and around Stanley and, for four years in the 1970s, in the United Kingdom. He looked back on his Antarctic years as the happiest of his working life, among some of the best friends he ever made.

Johnnie Blyth was justly proud to receive the Polar Medal (with Antarctic clasp 1944–45) in 1953, and of being later commemorated in Blyth Spur, a geographical feature on James Ross Island. He also received the Long Service Medal of the Falkland Islands Defence Force. He is survived by his second wife Paz from the Philippine Islands (which, with her, he visited for the first time in the last year of his life), and by a son and a daughter from his first marriage.

*Geoffrey Hattersley-Smith*

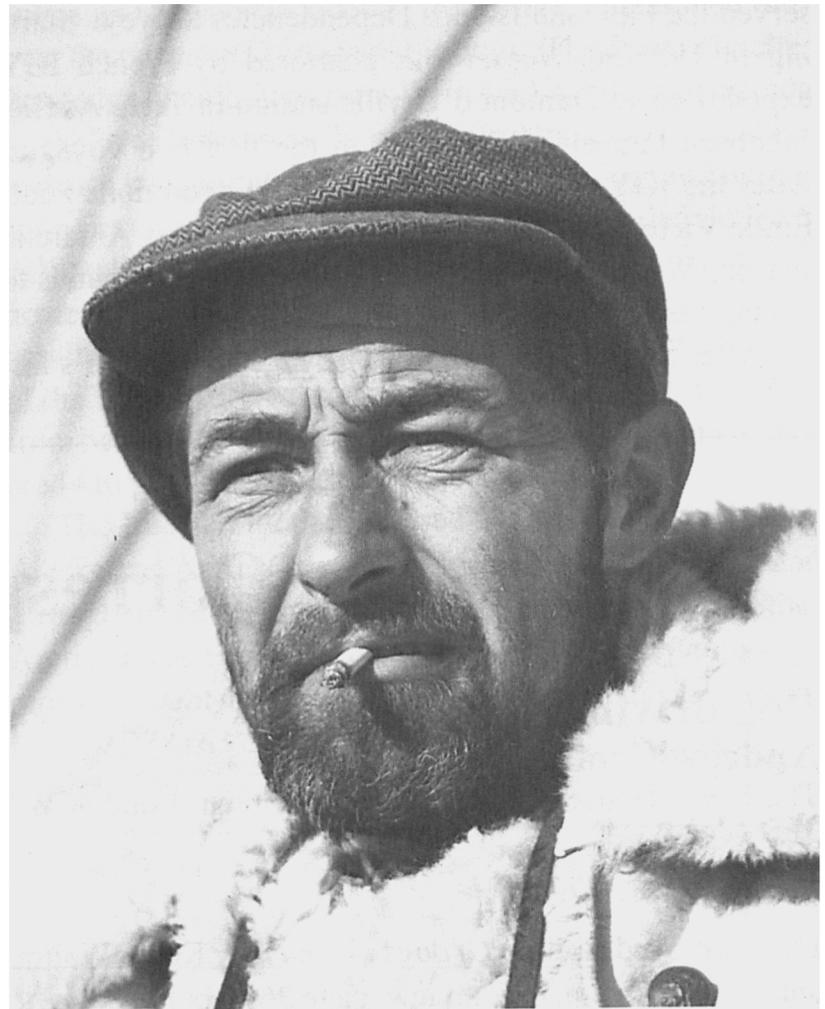


Fig. 2. Guttorm Jakobsen.

**Guttorm Jakobsen**, shipowner, skipper, sealer, and ice pilot, died in Tromsø, Norway, on 19 December 1995. Born in 1910 to a family of sealers, he first went to sea at the age of 15. By the time war broke out in 1939, he had years of experience on the sealing grounds and had acquired both master's and radio operator's licenses. During the war he was injured when the freighter *Vito* was bombed, but he recovered in time to help save some of the crew from the sinking ship. For part of the war he was master of a tanker. Later he survived the sinking of *Herøyfjord* while she was carrying 25,000 sealskins on a homeward voyage from Newfoundland.

Jakobsen's polar career began in 1949, when, as master of his own 600-ton sealer, *Norsel*, he carried the Norwegian–British–Swedish Antarctic Expedition to Dronning Maud Land. A U-boat diesel engine fitted into her ice-strengthened hull made *Norsel* not only powerful but versatile. Jakobsen's tenacity as an ice pilot took him — for three years in succession — through 1000 miles of pack ice to establish and then supply the expedition's base at Maudheim. Beset for weeks at a time, he was a model of patience even when others were losing theirs — or perhaps pondering the fate of *Endurance*. *Norsel* was uninsured: loaded to the gunwales with supplies for a three-year stay, everyone who saw her could understand why. Both holds were jammed and her upper decks were covered with fuel drums, three Weasel tractors, two Auster aircraft, a drilling machine, dogs, crates, and some tons of rotting whalemeat.

Jakobsen's skill as an ice pilot and willingness to take risks that no underwriter would accept set the pattern for *Norsel's* Antarctic charters. In the 1954/55 season, she