

ANTARCTICA 2000. Anonymous. 1989. Swindon, Natural Environment Research Council. 28 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-85665-1354.

BRITAIN IN THE ARCTIC. Anonymous. 1989. Swindon, Natural Environment Research Council. 28 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-901875-73-2.

Two glossy, colourful brochures publicizing the interests of Britain's Natural Environment Research Council in polar regions. Neither acknowledges an author. Together they point what many regard as a curious anomaly — that the British government spends a deal of money in Antarc-

tic research but very little closer at hand in the Arctic. The first tells us triumphantly what Britain has done and is about to do in the south; the second says what might be done if more funding were available for research in the north. Both brochures are of interest to all who want to know what Britain (largely NERC) is already doing at either end of the world, also to scientists who may want to get involved in the future. A few copies are available free, *Britain in the Arctic* from NERC, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon SN2 1EU UK, *Antarctica 2000* from BAS, Madingley Road, Cambridge CB3 0ET UK.

## In brief

AMERICAN POLAR SOCIETY NEWS. The American Polar Society and its semi-annual journal *Polar Times*, have been relocated from New York City to the Byrd Polar Research Centre, Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. Following the death of August Howard (see Obituary, this issue), Peter J. Anderson, historian and assistant director of the Byrd Center, was named editor of *Polar Times* and also became secretary of the society. August Howard founded the society in 1934 to provide a means by which friends of the polar regions could meet to exchange information and to share experiences. *Polar Times* arose from *Little America Times*, which Howard published from December 1933 to May 1935 for friends and families of the current Byrd and Ellsworth expeditions. Recently *Polar Times* has fallen behind schedule owing to Howard's final illness. His last issue, No. 101–02 (Vol. 11), was dated December 1985—June 1986: No. 103 is planned for late 1989 and the journal should be back on schedule by early 1990. Society dues including a *Polar Times* subscription are US\$5.00 per year for 1989; from 1990 dues will be \$5.00 per year within North America and \$10.00 per year elsewhere. The new mailing address for journal and society is 125 South Oval Mall, Columbus, Ohio 43210-1308 USA.

RECENT WARMING NOTED FROM TIBETAN ICE. Cores from Tibetan high plateau glaciers, which include ice that is possibly over 100,000 years old, reveal continuous warming during the past 6000–8000 years. A team led by Dr L. Thompson from Ohio State University, in cooperation with scientists from the University of Copenhagen and Chinese Academy of Sciences, has analysed samples for relative abundance of dust (revealing dry climates) and oxygen isotopes (indicating mean environmental temperatures). From much colder, wetter conditions toward the end of the last glacial period, due to proximity of northern ice fields, there has been considerable warming, with the last few decades warmest of all. These results accord with

similar evidence from polar cores. (Source: *Science* 246: 474; *New Scientist* 25 November 1989.)

NEW AIRSTRIP FOR BAS. British Antarctic Survey has announced plans for a new hard runway at Rothera, its major research station in southern Marguerite Bay. The runway, over 900 m long and built close to sea level, would replace a skiway currently in use, which is some 275 m above sea level and frequently made dangerous by strong winds and low cloud. The new airstrip, including hangar facilities, will allow use of larger aircraft than the Twin Otters at present employed for transporting field parties; it is expected to enhance operational safety and reduce the need for expensive intermediate fuel dumps. An environmental evaluation document, drawn up by W. Nigel Bonner and R. I. Lewis Smith, has been circulated to all Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties, and comments have been invited from non-governmental bodies. The area, part of which is already occupied by station buildings, is not regarded as biologically unique; Rothera has few birds and limited vegetation. (Source: article by D. Walton in *NERC News*, May 1989.)

POLAR MEDAL AWARDS. The following awards of the Polar Medal were recently announced: (Scott Polar Research Institute) Michael Ray Gorman, Michael John Hambrey; (British Antarctic Survey) Brian Gerard Gardiner, William Charles Block. (Source: *The London Gazette* supplement, 6 September 1989.)

TOUR APPLICATIONS INCREASING FOR NEW ZEALAND'S SUBANTARCTIC ISLANDS. Applications to the New Zealand Department of Conservation by tour operators hoping to visit the subantarctic islands are increasing rapidly. In 1988 only one cruise with 18 passengers was listed. For 1990–91 applications have been received for nine cruise ships and five tour boats with a passenger total of 1700. (Source: *Antarctic*: 11(11): 438.)