

NEW GEOLOGICAL MAP OF ANTARCTICA. The Circum-Pacific Map Project Geologic Map of the Antarctic Region, on a scale of 1: 10 million, in colour, was published in late 1989. It was prepared under the supervision of the Antarctic panel, chaired by Dr Campbell Craddock, and is accompanied by a booklet of explanatory notes. The map and booklet may be ordered from American Association of Petroleum Geologists, PO Box 979, Tulsa OK 74101 USA, price US\$14.00; add shipping costs \$3.80 in US, \$5.75 foreign surface mail, \$15.00 foreign air mail. (Source: Campbell Craddock, CPMP brochure.)

ACCIDENTAL DEATHS AT INDIAN ANTARCTIC STATION. Four members of India's ninth annual Antarctic expedition are reported to have died from carbon monoxide poisoning in a hut in the Weddell Sea sector; two others were incapacitated. The Antarctic community responded promptly; one survivor was flown to Amundsen-Scott station, South Pole, and on to McMurdo and Christchurch, New Zealand, by West German and US expeditions. A US aircraft attempted to drop medical supplies, and Soviet aircraft was standing by to take a second survivor to New Delhi. The poisoning is thought

to have been due to exhaust fumes from a diesel generator. Sources: *Pravda* 14 January 1990, *Nature* 34, 8 February 199.)

EXXON VALDEZ DISASTER: BIRD DEATHS ESTIMATED. Observers from the Alaska Fish and Wildlife Service, Anchorage, Alaska, report that between 100,000 and 300,000 seabirds — up to half those present in the area — died in Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska as a result of the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill on 24 March 1989. In a letter to *Nature* John F. Piatt and Calvin J. Lensink estimate that the areas contacted by oil had a total pre-spill population of 600,000 birds. The 35,279 recovered dead are estimated to represent between 10 and 30% of the total kill. Of those dying 70.8% were alcids, predominantly guillemots, and 13.2% were petrels, including fulmars, shearwaters and storm petrels; sea ducks, loons, grebes, gulls and cormorants were also affected. Magnitude of losses exceeds any other record of oil-related mortality known to the authors: by comparison the *Torrey Canyon* disaster off southern Britain, one of the largest previously reported, killed an estimated 30,000 birds. (Source: *Nature* 342, 21–28 December 1989: 865–66.)

Obituary

Group Capt. John Lewis AFC*, a distinguished Antarctic pilot, died in January 1990, aged 67. Born on May 23 1922 and educated at Warwick School, he joined the Royal Air Force early in World War II, qualifying first as a wireless operator-air gunner and later as a pilot. He served in Europe, North Africa and, after the war, in the middle East. While instructing at Cranwell he was appointed to lead a small combined RAF and Royal Canadian Air Force unit, on detachment to the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey, which in summer 1949–50 flew from the Argentine Islands to Stonington Island, Marguerite Bay. The objective was to relieve five members of Base E who, because of sea ice conditions, had spent three successive winters in Antarctica. John's choice of personnel and planning ensured that this was accomplished successfully. In 1955 he was recruited as chief pilot to lead the RAF group flying in support of the Trans-Antarctic Expedition, led by Dr, later Sir Vivian Fuchs. His forethought in planning operations from the Weddell Sea side, his leadership in the field, professional skills as a pilot, and not least his courage and cheerful disposition, contributed hugely to the success of the crossing and the wellbeing of the expedition. A personal triumph was his 11-hour flight in the single-engined Otter, in January 1958, from South Ice to the South Pole, and on non-stop to Scott Base.

John's first Air Force Cross was awarded for investigating the causes of a crash, his second (together with a Polar Medal) for his Antarctic flying. His subsequent RAF

career included command of a transport squadron (in which he achieved a flight over the North Pole) and service in south-east Asia and Berlin. John's collection of short stories in the verbal tradition was unmatched, his good humour boundless. We shall miss him; all who knew John and enjoyed his company will be saddened by his untimely death in the prime of life.

Bernard Stonehouse

DOROTHY WRIGHT, a former Assistant to the Director of the Scott Polar Research Institute, died on 4 December 1989. As Dorothy Fetherstonhaugh, a Cambridge graduate in geography, she worked in the SPRI 1938–1942, marrying in 1939 John Wright, a surveyor on several Arctic expeditions, whom she met at the Institute. Apart from keeping the Institute going (sometimes almost single-handed) during the early war years, Dorothy helped to prepare handbooks on Iceland and other polar localities for naval intelligence. She left to join her husband, first in the Sudan and later in Egypt; in Cairo she worked in Army topographic intelligence until the birth of her first son in 1944. Returning to England in 1955 Dorothy became an enthusiastic member of the Women's Institute, achieving the presidency of her local branch, membership of the National Education Committee and becoming chairman of the County Education and Public Questions Committee. She died two months after the Wrights celebrated their golden wedding anniversary.