

Sydney Midwinter 2017

1 July 2017

Not exactly Sydney. For the second year the NSW Branch travelled to the Blue Mountains for Midwinter Lunch, this time to Leura and the restaurant *Flemish Flavours*. After the AGM and the obligatory group photo outdoors on a crisp winter day, the party, numbering 31 expeditioners and guests, adjourned to the cosy indoors.

The toast to ANARE was given by our MC David Ellyard (M66, Club berth 03/04, 11/12) and responded to by Jeremy Smith (SLQ96 10, D01 03, C05 07/08), who celebrated being able to explore new places or work he'd never heard of as well as new areas of work and of course new people. The Toast to Expeditioners was given by Trevor Olrog (Q65, W67) and responded to by Graeme "Chompers" Currie (M60, 77 W63,67 C69,74 South Pole 81 Q83,85,89 Bunger Hills 84/85 RV Hero), who has chalked up 11 winters (pipped, now, by one chap and equalled by another) and seven summers and who regaled us with his job interviews by Phil Law. One of the big differences he noted in the modern expeditions is that you can be in Hobart in the morning and, with two flights at Mawson that afternoon!

Lucinda Coates (PCM91/92, Club Berth 01/02,17) gave a well-received presentation on her trip as the Club's representative on V3 of the 2016-17 season, visiting Mawson and Davis (See Autumn 2017 issue of Aurora).

David recalled the various anniversaries that fall in 2017; the 70th anniversary of ANARE and of the base at Heard Island, the 60th anniversary of Davis Station, opened for the International Geophysical Year, and the 30th anniversary of the loss of the Nella Dan off Macquarie Island. She dragged her moorings, ran aground and was holed, and an often questioned decision made to scuttle her. David also reported on the gathering at Newcastle Cathedral to mark the centenary of the loss of the SY Aurora with all hands while carrying coal to Chile.

Our enjoyment of the excellent video provided by the Division on the year past was impaired by a computer that could not quite keep up, but we could certainly see how varied and successful the year had been.

A minutes silence was called to recognise the NSW based recently-departed expeditioners Bill Storer (MI51 M54), Arthur Giese (HI53 M85 and MI85) and Eddie Davan (W63 67). Following recent tradition *Call of the Years* was done by decade. Just three expeditioners represented the "teens"; 2010-17 and we're trying to do something about that! The other decades had better representation: ten for 2000-09, 13 for 1990-99, nine for 1980-89, eight for 1970-79 and six for 1960-69. "Chompers" Currie was "the last man standing" for his winter at Mawson in 1960. Sadly we had no representatives for any years prior to that.

We were however graced by the company of two LARCies, Scott Dempster (HI87-88, V6 88-89, Vs 91-92, C11-12) and Kevin Mauger (HI87-88, Vs 88-89 91-92, C 89-90) and it was great to see them along. One of Scott's trips to HI was the longest deployment of Army

LARCies on record – six months from September to March, which was a lovely surprise to Scott at the time.

Less than a year till we gather again on 30 June 2018.

Lucinda Coates