

## ANARE CLUB

### NATIONAL COUNCIL REPORT FROM THE ACT – AUGUST 2023

The ACT group has continued its busy program.

#### Mid-Winter Dinner



The ACT Region Midwinter Dinner was held in the Southern Cross Club in Woden on Friday 16 June. A record 70 guests were in attendance, including two reunion groups from Macquarie Island in 1968 organised by John Connelly, and from Mawson 1983 organised by Mick Willis. In addition to our guest speaker, Deb Holmes (photo), we also had our flying student, Naomi Leszczynska, and her mum Sue as our guests so that Naomi could listen to the tall tales and true that every expeditioner has to tell. Naomi is still reliving her flight over Antarctica in December last year and was more than happy to listen to the tales. Sadly, our other flying student, Toby Davis, was unwell on the night and unable to attend.

We were honoured to have the Club's new joint Patron, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Rtd) open our evening with a short video message. Mrs Hurley is also joint Patron. The Governor General wished us a pleasant evening and emphasised in his message how much the nation values the work done in Antarctica over many years by everyone involved in the Antarctic expeditions.

We had a terrific guest speaker in Deb Holmes. Deb has completed three summer seasons as a meteorologist and senior meteorologist at Davis and Casey stations since 2017 and is looking forward to completing a fourth season in the near future. Away from Antarctica, Deb works as an Aviation Services Improvement Lead with the Bureau of Meteorology, leading the training and competency program of new and current aviation meteorologists. Deb spoke about the important role that weather forecasting plays in Antarctica, particularly in support of the inter- and intra-continental aviation operations in support of the Australian Antarctic program.

#### Oral History Program

Our oral history project is still on our list of things to do. Our first interviewee was the legendary Tony Hall, DUKWs 1954-56, who was interviewed by Malcolm during June last year and which will appear on our website soon. Also appearing will be more detailed information about Ian McLeod based on an obituary developed by Patrick Conaghan for the Geological Society of Australia's journal. Our next candidate continues to be Dr Gilbert Wallace who lives in Cooma and was ship's doctor for one season in the 1980s, and John Zmood has also put his hand up to be interviewed.

## Antarctica Flights Project



Kit Scally and I were at Canberra Airport on 4 December last to wish Naomi Leszczynska, our second flying student, a happy flight over Antarctica. Naomi returned safely full of enthusiasm and, as mentioned above, was only too happy to come along to our midwinter dinner this year. Sadly, Antarctica Flights will not be offering flights from the National Capital this coming year and so the ACT group will not be chasing down any new participants. The cost of catching a flight from Sydney or Melbourne is too great for our limited budget as the flight participant most likely needs to fly from Canberra to the departure city the day before and return the day after, requiring additional flights and overnight accommodation.

Malcolm Robertson  
Convenor  
15 August 2023