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19/4/88

NEWSLETTER - MARION ISLAND  
MARCH 1988

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WELCOME, FOR THE LAST TIME, TO OUR WINDSWEPT ISLAND HERE IN THE ROARING FORTIES. OUR SOJOURN HERE IS ALMOST AT AN END AND WE WILL HAVE A LOT TO TALK ABOUT WHEN WE GET BACK HOME, THE MEMORIES OF OUR STAY HERE WILL REMAIN WITH US FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES. WE HAVE COME TO APPRECIATE LIVING AWAY FROM THE HUSTLE AND BUSTLE OF LIFE BACK HOME. WE HAVE ALL ACQUIRED PEACE OF MIND - SOME OF US HAVE ACQUIRED SOME EXTRA WEIGHT AS WELL - AND ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS AGAIN.

THE PAST MONTH WAS VERY PEACEFUL, THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH BEING OUR BASE CLEAN-UP AND OUR LAST PARTY. THE ARRIVAL OF THE S.A. AGULHAS WAS A HIGHLIGHT FOR SOME ALTHOUGH A FEW OF US WOULD BE QUITE HAPPY TO REMAIN HERE FOR ANOTHER FEW MONTHS.

DANIE, PATI AND JACO CELEBRATED BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH. THE USUAL MASSIVE BIRTHDAY CAKES WERE MADE BY ANDRE J, GARY AND JAN RESPECTIVELY.

OPERATION CLEAN-UP WAS LANCED ONE WEEKEND WHEN ALL TWENTY-SEVEN TEAM MEMBERS WERE IN BASE. THE BASE WAS CLEANED INSIDE AND OUT. THE FOUR SHORTER TEAM MEMBERS, NICO, PATI, GARY AND STEVE H, WERE AUTOMATIC CHOICES TO CLEAN UP UNDERNEATH THE BASE. APPARENTLY STEVE WAS ACTUALLY ABLE TO STAND UPRIGHT UNDER THE BASE. IT WAS A CASE OF MANY HANDS MAKING LIGHT WORK, THE GRASS WHICH WAS GROWING THROUGH THE CATWALKS WAS CUT AND GARBAGE WAS COLLECTED FROM ALL OVER THE BASE. CHRIS PAINTED THE GENERATOR ROOM AND JUG HIS OBSERVATION HUT. THE POSTBOX RED HUT NOW SERVES AS HIS BEDROOM. GEORG COMPLETED HIS WORK IN THE LOUNGE WHILE VOSSIE (AND A COUPLE OF HELPERS) RENOVATED AND PAINTED THE BAR AREA.

WE HAD OUR LAST TEAM GET TOGETHER ON THE NIGHT OF THE 25TH. ANDRE M WAS CHEF OF THE NIGHT AND TREATED US TO AN EXCELLANT MONGOLIAN BRAAI. OUR LAST BAG OF CHARCOAL WAS USED AND A FEW PIECES OF CHEESE WERE PRODUCED BY GARY WHO HAD BEEN HOARDING THEM ALL THESE MONTHS. AFTER ACTIVITIES AT THE FIRE WERE DISRUPTED BY THE INEVITABLE RAIN, WE PROCEEDED INDOORS AND ON TO THE NEXT ITEM ON THE AGENDA. THIS WAS A CONCERT AND HAD JUG AS THE MASTER OF CEROMONIES AND MUSIC VIDEOS AS A THEME. THE CONCERT WENT OFF VERY WELL APART FROM FREQUENT DISRUPTIONS BY THE NOISY AUDIENCE WHO KEPT ON DEMANDING MORE ACTION. THE COSTUMES AND MAKE-UP WERE EXCELLANT, NOT TO MENTION THE VARIOUS DANCE ROUTINES. IT WAS JUST A PITY THAT THE MUSIC COULD NOT BE HEARD ABOVE ALL THE RACKET THAT THE AUDIENCE WAS MAKING. THE ACTS IN THE CONCERT WERE MADONNA (IAN), BOY GEORGE (GEORG), THE SMITHS (JACO), STACEY Q (JUG), INDIANS IN MOSCOW (JAN), BILLY IDOL (RORY), JOHNNY ROTTEN (ANDRE J) AND DIVINE (VOSSIE).

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THE EVENING WAS ENDED OFF WITH A PARTY FOR JUG WHO WILL BE GETTING MARRIED IN AUSTRALIA IN THREE MONTHS TIME. NEEDLESS TO SAY AT THIS ADVANCED STAGE OF THE PROCEEDINGS, JUG HAD A RATHER ROUGH TIME.

AS FAR AS THE PERMANENT INHABITANTS OF MARION ARE CONCERNED, THE WANDERING ALBATROSS EGGS STARTED HATCHING. THE CHICKS WILL SPEND THE NEXT FEW MONTHS SITTING ON THE NEST BEFORE ATTEMPTING THEIR FIRST FLIGHT IN ABOUT TEN MONTHS TIME. THE KING PENGUIN CHICKS HAVE ALSO STARTED HATCHING WHILE THE MACARONI AND ROCKHOPPER PENGUIN CHICKS HAVE ALREADY LEFT FOR SEA.

AN UNUSUAL VISITOR THIS MONTH WAS A YELLOW NOSED ALBATROSS WHICH WAS FOUND ONE NIGHT BY JONATHAN. THIS BIRD DOES NOT NORMALLY OCCUR ON MARION. AFTER RESTING FOR A FEW DAYS IN JAN AND STEVE CHOWN'S LAB THE VISITOR CONTINUED ON ITS JOURNEY.

THE SHIP ARRIVED HERE ON MONDAY MORNING THE 28TH. IT WAS VERY EARLY FOR US ON THE ISLAND AS WE HAD HAD TO ADVANCE OUR CLOCKS BY TWO HOURS THE PREVIOUS NIGHT. THIS WAS SO THAT THE TIME ON THE ISLAND IS THE SAME AS THE TIME ON THE SHIP. AT PRESENT THERE ARE ALMOST 80 PEOPLE ON MARION. THE SEVEN MEMBERS OF THE NEW TEAM HAVE GOT A BRAND NEW UPPER AIR SYSTEM AND HAVE ALSO BROUGHT DOWN SOME RADIO TRANSMITTERS WHICH WILL MAKE THEIR LIVES SO MUCH EASIER.

OUR TIME ON MARION IS OVER. THANK YOU FOR ALL THE SACRIFICES MADE BY FAMILY AND FRIENDS. PLEASE START ORGANISING THE WELCOME HOME PARTIES AND ALSO STOCK UP THE FRIDGES WITH THE NECESSARY BECAUSE WE WILL SOON BE HOME. ALSO, GET THOSE SALAD RECIPES READY BECAUSE WE ARE GOING TO EAT A LOT OF SALAD.

WEATHER DATA - MARCH

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MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE .....17,9 DEGREES  
MINIMUM TEMPERATURE .....1,0 DEGREES  
AVERAGE TEMPERATURE .....7,6 DEGREES  
AVERAGE SEA TEMPERATURE .....6,5 DEGREES  
RAINFALL .....245,8 MM  
AVERAGE SUNSHINE PER DAY .....4,0 HOURS  
MAXIMUM WINDSPEED .....170 KM/H

WEATHER DATA BY: FRANK SOKOLIC  
NEWSLETTER BY: ANDRE JOUBERT

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