

BACK FROM THE ANTARCTIC



Mr Tony Autenboer, leader of the Belgian antarctic expedition



Miss Jeanette Sutcliffe gives brother Pieter's beard a playful tug

After an absence of more than a year, the 15-member team of the South African antarctic expedition have returned home on the Research vessel *RSA*.

According to the *Vaderland* the body of a South African technician, Mr Gordon Mackie, who died in an accident approximately 40km from the team's Sanae headquarters, was also on board. Mr Mackie's parents live in Scotland.

Early last year the team left for the antarctic, where four of them spent the year up in the mountains, while the rest were stationed at Sanae.

On arrival at Table Bay Harbour each member sported a long flowing mane. It had been the coldest winter in the last three years, and at times the mercury dropped to 50 degrees below zero. Thanks to special clothing all members were able to resist the cold. The trophy for the team-member with the longest hair went to Mr Barry de Kock, of Edenburg in the Southern Orange Free State.

Perhaps the happiest member to return home, was Mr Dries Niemand of Rustenburg, near Pretoria. During his absence he became the father of a strapping baby girl, Lynette.

According to Mr Tony Autenboer, leader of the Belgian expedition, who also travelled on the *RSA*, many questions will remain unanswered. Mr Autenboer's team stayed in Antarctica for a month. Six of his team members had a narrow escape when one of the light aircraft, which they used for surveys, caught fire near Sanae a week after their arrival. The aircraft was completely destroyed.

PHOTOGRAPHS: VADERLAND

East West Home's best. From left to right are expedition members Leon Wolmarans of Potchefstroom, Pieter Sutcliffe of Pretoria, Schalk Engelbrecht of Grahamstown, and Barry de Kock of Edenburg who won the trophy for the longest hair

