

Reflections on the First Biological-Geological Expedition to Marion and Prince Edward Islands - 50 Years of Success in Research and Conservation

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The year 2016 marks the 50th Anniversary of the First Biological-Geological Expedition to Marion and Prince Edward Islands 1. In celebrating the achievements of the half-century of research and environmental conservation on these Sub-Antarctic Islands, the ALSA project has published the first in a series of personal accounts on the early endeavours of South Africa's SANAP programme. The book 2 'Exploring a Sub-Antarctic Wilderness' is a personal narrative of life on the islands 50 years ago, and the challenges of research before the era of accurate maps, satellite imagery, pathways, field huts, the internet, digital cameras, cell phones and the comforts of a modern research station. This paper will present the human story of physical conditions and personalities as experienced at the commencement of South Africa's highly successful programme of research in the Sub-Antarctic 3, reflecting on the vast progress made in the decades since the first scientific expedition to the Prince Edward Islands.

1. Van Zinderen Bakker, E.M. Sr, Winterbottom, J.M. and Dyer, R.A. (eds). (1971). Marion and Prince Edward Islands. Report on the South African Biological & Geological Expedition / 1965-1966. Balkema, Cape Town. 427 pp.
2. Huntley, B.J. (2016). Exploring a Sub-Antarctic Island. A personal narrative of the First Biological-Geological Expedition to Marion and Prince Edward Islands. ALSA, Stellenbosch. 268 pp.
3. Chown, S. L. and Froneman, P.W. (eds). (2008). The Prince Edward Islands. Land-Sea Interactions in a Changing Ecosystem. SUN PReSS, Stellenbosch. 450 pp.