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NEWSLETTER ---- FEBRUARY 1987

THIS MONTH HAS SEEN MANY A CLEAR SUNNY DAY AND ON SUCH DAYS THE HELICOPTER PAD BECOMES THE LORD S CRICKET OVAL OF MARION. THIS RECTANGULAR WOODEN PLATFORM THEN BECOMES THE ARENA OF DESPERATE AND FEARSOME TUSSELES BETWEEN STUBOURN BATSMEN AND ARROGANT BOWLERS. SKUAS BECOME SPECTATORS TO THIS UNUSUAL GAME OF HURL AND HIT THE EGG WATCHING WITH EAGER EYES AND STEALING THE BALL IF GIVEN THE SLIGHTEST CHANCE. THEY FLY OFF WITH IT IN THEIR BEAKS BUT FORTUNATELY DONT MANAGE TO CRACK IT OPEN OR SWALLOW IT WHOLE. AFTER CHASING AND TERRORISING ANY SUCH AUDACIOUS BIRD THE GAME IS CONTINUED ON RETREIVAL OF THE BALL.

MISTY, RAINY NIGHTS SAW MANY A NIGHTBIRD BROUGHT DOWN BY BASE LIGHTS AND DESPERATE RESCUE ATTEMPTS BY BASE PERSONNEL WERE THE ORDER OF THE DAY. ONCE AGAIN THE HUNGRY SCAVENGING SKUAS HOMED IN TO DEVOUR ANY SMALL BIRD SHOULD RESCUE ATTEMPTS HAVE BEEN EVEN SLIGHTLY DELAYED. NATURE HAS A CRUEL WAY OF ENSURING THE SURVIVAL OF ITS CHILDREN....DEATH CRIES FROM THE SMALLER BIRDS BROKE THE SILENCE OF THE NIGHT.

THE OLDEST, TINIEST AND MOST ECONOMICALLY SPACED SLEEPING QUARTERS ON THE ISLAND, THE SQUATTER PASSAGE AS IT IS AFFECTIONATELY KNOWN TO IT S INHABITANTS BECAME HOST TO A DAY FOR THE PEOPLE WITH A FESTIVAL TYPE SPIRIT ENHANCING THE OCCASION. SQUATTERS OF 43 WERE SEEN WEARING SPECTACLES (SHADES) AND BARBEQUED FROM AS EARLY AS TEN THAT MORNING WITH MOST FOLK JOINING THEM ALSO DONNING SIMILAR ATTIRE FOR THE OCCASION. THE DAY ENDED MUCH MUCH LATER WITH THE PLAYING OF SONGS OF NOSTALGIA WHERE TEARS WERE SEEN TO FLOW DOWN MANY A CHEEK AND LUMPS APPEARED IN MANY A THROAT.

THE BIOLOGISTS HAVE SPENT EXTENDED PERIODS DILIGENTLY PROCESSING THEIR DATA AND GATHERING NEW DATA THROUGH THE MONTH AS WAS THE CASE IN PREVIOUS MONTHS. ONE CAN ONLY HAVE GREAT RESPECT FOR THE EXTREME DEDICATION AND EFFORT THESE FOLK HAVE AND PUT INTO THEIR WORK.

THE CAT PROJECT IS PROGRESSING SUCCESSFULLY AND MANY INTERESTING AND AMUZING ADVENTURE TALES CAN BY NOW BE TOLD BY THE FELLOWS INVOLVED. CONSIDERING THAT FAR MORE THAN 72 000 SMALL BIRDS HAVE BEEN SAVED FOR THE NEXT YEAR WHICH MEANS THAT THESE BIRDS WILL BE ABLE TO BREED NEXT SEASON, THE WORTH OF THE EFFORTS OF THESE YOUNG MEN BECOMES VERY OBVIOUS. THEY CAN FEEL PROUD OF BEING AMONG THE PIONEERS OF RE-ESTABLISHING THE BALANCE OF NATURE AS IT WAS MEANT TO BE. THESE CHAPS TRUDGE AND STUMBLE MANY MANY KILOMETRES AT NIGHT TO ACHIEVE THEIR DIFFICULT OBJECTIVES. THEY SPEND TEN DAYS AT A TIME IN FIELD HUTS STRATEGICALLY PLACED AROUND THE ISLAND AND EXECUTE THEIR DUTIES IN SOMETIMES VERY POOR WEATHER CONDITIONS. THEIR MOTIVATION AND ENTHUSIASM MUST BE COMPLIMENTED AS THEY UNDERGO MUCH CHARACTER BUILDING WHICH IS SAID TO OCCUR WHEN EXPERIENCING PAIN .

37/02/02

NEWSLETTER-(CONT.)

OUR RADIO TECHNICIAN HAS HAD A FIELD MONTH WHAT WITH CAMERAS
RADIOS, TELEVISION, VIDEO MACHINE AND LABORATORY ELECTRONICS
ALL PLAYING UP AT ONCE. HIS SUPER BRAIN POWER HAS ENABLED SEVERAL
WORRIED FOLK TO ENDULGE IN THE EXEPTIONAL PLEASURE OF SMILING
AT THE THOUGHT OF CONTINUED USE OF THEIR EQUIPMENT. WHAT WOULD
WE DO WITHOUT HIM????

EARLY THIS MONTH SAW THE ARRIVAL OF A SIGNIFICANT GROUP AT MARION.
IN TWO DAYS WE SAW TWO SHIPS IN OUR COVE WHICH IS SUCH A RARE
OCCURRANCE HERE AT THE BUSIEST OF TIMES. THE VISITORS CONSISTED
OF SCIENTISTS AND OTHER SPECIALISTS IN VARIOUS FIELDS . DURING THEIR
STAY THEY GREW TO LIKE THE ISLAND AND ALSO GOT A VERY GOOD IDEA
OF WHAT ISLAND LIFE ENTAILS. THEY HAD A VERY IMPORTANT TASK TO
PERFORM AND WENT ABOUT THEIR WORK BUSILY. THIS INCLUDED A CON-
SIDERABLE AMOUNT OF WALKING INCLUDING THE CROSSING OF SOME OF
THE MORE INTERESTING MIRE AREAS ON TH ISLAND. THE N.S.R.I.
(NATIONAL SEA RESCUE INSTITUTE) SUBSEQUENTLY ALSO ATTAINED AN
AFFILIATE BODY IN THE FORM OF M.M.R.I.(MARION MIRE RESCUE INSTI-
TUTE. SOME OF THESE ADVANCED IN YEARS GENTLEMEN WERE SEEN
AND HEARD TO BE CRAWLING AND PADDLING THEIR WAY THROUGH SOME
VERY SOGGY TERRAIN . THEIR SMILES SHOWED PRIDE IN A FEELING
OF REJUVINATED YOUTH AND AN EXPERIENCE HAD AT AN AGE WHEN SUCH
THINGS ARE NO LONGER CONSIDERED POSSIBLE.

OUR MEDICAL ORDINANCE WAS FOUND TRAINING AN ASSISTANT
RECENTLY IN THE ART OF PRESERVING TEETH THE DENTIST'S WAY.
FOLLOWING A SOMEWHAT LENGTHY SESSION THE MEDIC WAS FOUND
SEATED IN THE DENTIST'S CHAIR HAVING A CHECKUP , CLEAN AND
MASSAGE ON HIS TEETH. THIS MEDICATION HAS BECOME MOST POPULAR
AS THE RELAXING EFFECTS OF LYING DOWN AND STARING AT THE
PICTURE FILLED CEILING OF THE SICKBAY IS SPOKEN OF WITH MUCH
ENTHUSIASM.

BY NOW EVERYBODY'S HAIR IS LONG, BEARDS AND ATTEMPTS AT
BEARDS ARE COMMING ON CONSIDERABLY WELL AND ADDED MUSCLE
WITH THE ODD ROLL OF ADDIPOSE TISSUE HERE AND THERE AND WE ARE
ALL A SIGHT TO SEE IN OUR OWN WAY. SO FOLK BACK HOME MUST PLEASE
BE WARNED NOT TO EXPECT THE SAME PERSON YOU SAW LEAVING WHEN
YOU ARE LOOKING OUT FOR HIM ON OUR RETURN. TRYING TO
IMMAGINE THESE APPARITIONS WOULD EVEN BE DANGEROUS.

IN CLOSING WE WISH ALL FOLKS BACK HOME EVERYTHING OF THE BEST
AND WISH TO LET THEM KNOW WE ARE ALL VERY WELL AND ENJOYING
THE LAST FEW WEEKS OF OUR MEMORABLE SOJOURN ON THIS UNSPOILED
SUB-ANTARCTIC PARADISE. SEE YOU ALL SOON.

MET DATA FOR FEB

MAX TEMP	13,4 DEG C
MIN TEMP	0,0 DEG C
AVERAGE	8,1 DEG C
AVERAGE HUMIDITY	83
TOTAL RAINFALL	180,9 MM
HIGHEST RAINFALL	46,5 MM ON THE 2ND
NR OF DAYS WITH 1MM OR MORE	19

NEWSLETTER BY:- MARK BENNETT (METEOROLOGICAL ASST.)
MET DATA BY:- ADRIAAN VAN ZYL (SEN MET)