

MARION JULY 1966

Jim Lilly

On Marion one wet and stormy Sunday night,  
The wind was blowing with all its might.  
When for some reason James awoke,  
To find his room filled with smoke,  
Rushing out there met his gaze,  
The most fearful thing - the place ablaze.

Without the time to don more attire,  
He ran along and shouted fire!!!  
This awoke Braam and his crew,  
Of Cornelius, Koos and Lourens too.  
One thing too would be a cert,  
They were closely followed by Gert and Bert.  
Then and there the fight began,  
To stop the blaze the wind did fan.  
To go inside you would surely choke,  
As the whole darned place was full of smoke.

Fight and struggle as they could,  
But not a hope, the house was wood.

Their wireless silent as a tomb,  
Filled them all with untold gloom.  
But far away in their fatherland,  
This silence was brought to high commands.  
There on an airfield in the gathering night,  
A Shackleton was being prepared for flight.

Then into the gathering night it flew,  
On an errand of mercy known to so few.  
Flying from dawn into the light,  
To take their first navigational sight.  
When upon their radar screen,  
The form of Marion could be seen.

No beautiful maiden as may appear,  
But a sight to raise a thankful cheer.  
And down below in their island home,  
The men all heard that steady drone  
Of engines throbbing with all their might,  
To bring relief from their fearful plight.

So help came to them from the skies,  
From men who through silence heard their cries.  
The aircrew gave them all they could - and more,  
With things they dropped upon that shore.  
And when at last they turned to go,  
Braam and his men did surely know,  
That where 'er you go on this earthly sphere,  
Friends and help are always near.

The end is yet nowhere in sight,  
They now call in the Navy's might.  
The Kruger on a peaceful cruise,  
On wireless waves is told the news.  
So forget your fun there's work instead,  
Batten down my boys full speed ahead!!!

On and on though wind did scream,  
With decks awash she lay abeam.  
None of this did her captain heed,  
One thing he wanted - that was speed.  
In less time than it takes to say,  
That ship did off the island lay.  
To bring them in the wind and snows,  
The thing they wanted most - was clothes.

Without the might of sea and air,  
Some of them may have perished there,  
But who will help them come what may,  
Our gallant friend the R.S.A.!!!  
For loaded up with men and stores,  
She set sail from S.A. Shores.

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On she went at a steady pace,  
Though not the speed to win a race,  
Eventually to our great delight,  
The hills of Marion came in sight.  
Without more ado we went ashore,  
Quickly followed by the stores.

What a sight met out gaze,  
Marion house had vanished in the blaze.  
But through it all by some kindly act,  
All other buildings stood intact.  
So we set to work with a will,  
Mossie, Leon, Dan and Bill.  
To give them lights so they could see,  
Was yours truly little me.

Assisting to prevent despair,  
Ray and Rhodie put them on the air.  
Working hard without even tea,  
Were Gustof, Piet, Van and Gawie.  
Struggling too to move the junk,  
Were boys from the ship and Mr. Funk.

But work we did with might and main,  
Through day and night, in wind and rain.  
To given them who must stay behind,  
The comforts they would expect to find.  
And so at last our work was done,  
A job well done by everyone.

Now came at last the time to go,  
Hurry said the captain before it blows.  
So wishing them "Good Luck and Cheer",  
We left Braam and his men for another year.  
Now here we are upon our way,  
With a good job finished by the R.S.A.