

Scott Base celebration of 25th year

Flags of 13 Antarctic Treaty nations flew in front of Scott Base on January 20 when New Zealand, one of the 14 consultative members, celebrated a quarter of a century of scientific research in Antarctica. The occasion was marked by a simple flag-raising ceremony almost indetical with that which marked the establishment of New Zealand's presence in Antarctica on January 20, 1957.

Watched by more than 200 guests and visitors headed by the Prime Minister (Mr R. D. Muldoon), the first leader at Scott Base (Sir Edmund Hillary) lowered the old flag of one of the 12 original signatories of the Antarctic Treaty. The new flag was raised by an 18-year-old student, Kathleen Smith, of Wanganui. Like 20-year-old Able Seaman Ramon Tito, of H.M.N.Z.S. Endeavour, 25 years ago she was given the honour as the youngest person at the base.

New Zealand established Scott Base to support its contribution to the International Geophysical Year (1957-58) and also to provide a staging point for the New Zealand section of the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition (TAE) led by Sir Vivian Fuchs. The theme of international co-operation in Antarctica was emphasised again when Mr Muldoon, the first New Zealand Prime Minister to visit Antarctica while in office, addressed the guests and visitors. His audience included representatives of five countries — the United States, the Soviet Union, Japan, the People's Republic of China, and Uruguay.

An official party of 11 flew from New Zealand to attend the celebrations as guests of the Antarctic Division, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. Their host was the division's superintendent, Mr R. B. Thomson, who was on his 60th visit to Antarctica.

Headed by the Prime Minister the guests included Mr B. C. Beetham, M.P., leader of the Social Credit Party, the Minister of Science and Technology (Dr I. J. Shearer) and his private secretary, Mr G. Wallace. Five of the

guests helped to build the first Scott Base and also wintered there in 1957.

They were Sir Edmund Hillary, leader of the New Zealand section of TAE, Sir J. Holmes Miller, chairman of the Ross Dependency Research Committee, and deputy-leader, Dr T. Hatherton, director, Geophysics Division, D.S.I.R., leader of the IGY winter party, Wing Commander W. J. Cranfield, second pilot of the first Royal New Zealand Air Force Antarctic Flight, and Mr Harry Ayres, dog expert and mountaineer with TAE. The other two guests were Dr E. I. Robertson, former Director-General of the D.S.I.R., who played a leading part in the preparations for New Zealand's first summer of science, and his successor, Dr D. Kear.

Representatives of the United States research programme invited to the ceremony included Dr E. P. Todd, director, Division of Polar Programmes, National Science Foundation, Captain J. M. Pearigen, Naval Support Force commander, and Mr D. Bresnahan, N.S.F. representative in Antarctica. The seven guest scientists present were Dr Y. Lotov (Soviet Union) who is now wintering at the Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station, Drs T. Torii, Y. Yusa, G. Matsumoto and Mr H. Murayama (Japan), and Drs Wang and D. Ye (People's Republic of China). The last six were guest scientists with the New Zealand research programme.

Scott Base representatives for the occasion were Mr A. Newton, officer-in-charge for the summer, Mr L. P. B. Slatery, who is in charge of this winter's

team, and Lieutenant N. Gattsche. He was in charge of the New Zealand Army construction team which worked on the rebuilding project last summer.

Scott Base had a fine summer day for the occasion; the temperature was 6deg Celsius. As a result the New Zealand Army cargo handling detachment of 22 men and two women was able to parade in short sleeves. Some of the base huskies about 300m from the building probably did not appreciate the warmer weather; they played their part in the ceremony, providing their applause after it was over.

When Mr Thomas asked Sir Edmund Hillary to start the ceremony he said that the lowering of the old flag arked the end of an era. After Sir Edmund had lowered the flag Mr Thomson handed it to him as a memento of the occasion. Then Kathleen Smith marked the beginning of a new era by raising the new flag.

We have witnessed the successes of 25 years of international science and co-operation in Antarctica Mr Muldoon told his audience, which included men and women from McMurdo Station who had been invited to join their nextdoor neighbours 4km away. Today we seem poised on the threshold of a new era which will see the development of new activities, and no doubt will include exploration and exploitation for resources to meet man's increasing needs.

"It will be important to ensure that such developments are conducted wisely and that Antarctica remains a continent of peace where people from all nations may work together for the common cause," said Mr Muldoon. "As a main gateway to Antarctica New Zealand has an important role to play in its future. I am certain that New Zealanders will continue to accept their increasing responsibilities in shaping this future.

U.S. PRAISE

New Zealand, through its research programme, has an outstanding record of leadership in fulfilling the requirement of the Antarctic Treaty calling for a continuation of international co-operation in scientific investigations in

Antarctica Dr Todd said when he spoke on behalf of the guests from other nations . . . The United States, more than any other nation, has benefited from the co-operation and hospitality of New Zealand.

If all countries could exercise the statesmanship and co-operation that have characterised New Zealand's participation in Antarctic Treaty affairs the treaty group may prove capable of striking a reasonable balance between scientific and resource problems, and, we hope, prove equal to the problems of the next few decades.

A New Zealand chaplain, Father Gerard Creagh, who has assisted United States Navy chaplains at McMurdo Station for several seasons, gave a prayer of thanksgiving. He said Antarctica was a continent which had not seen the horror and bloodshed of war, and he prayed that the spirit of co-operation would be an example to other nations.

Later Mr Muldoon officially opened the third stage of the base rebuilding programme — an accommodation block for 42 people, and a new kitchen and mess block. Before he cut a white ribbon he said that the old mess hut built 25 years ago would be presented to the Ferrymead Trust in Christchurch.

GIFTS TO BASE

In the early evening a social function was held in the new mess block where the 25th birthday was celebrated more informally. Mr Muldoon cut a birthday cake made by the chef, Mr Graeme Morgan, and later presented to the base a large photograph of the first flag-raising ceremony. It was accepted by Mr Slattery.

More than 30 years ago the New Zealand Antarctic Society was one of the leaders in the move for the establishment of a New Zealand scientific station in the Ross Dependency. To mark the 25th anniversary a past president, Sir Holmes Miller, presented to the base a book which records the names of 357 men and one woman who have wintered at New Zealand bases and at the South

Pole since 1957. Another member, Dr Hatherton, presented society ties to Mr Muldoon, Mr Beetham and Dr Shearer.

While he was at Scott Base Mr Muldoon sent a message of greetings to be passed to all permanent stations maintained by 11 other Antarctic Treaty nations. In it he paid special tribute to the international co-operation which has become "so much part of living and working in Antarctica in the true spirit of the Antarctic Treaty".

Bad weather prevented Mr Muldoon and other guests from visiting Vanda Station and the dry valleys but they did make a brief visit to the historic huts at Cape Evans and Cape Royds. Before they left for Christchurch on January 21 the official guests also inspected McMurdo Station and were briefed on the United States research programme.

SLEDGE RIDE

Scott Base huskies gave Mr Muldoon his final Antarctic experience. Nine of them took him for a three-minute sledge ride to his aircraft. The base dog handler, Gary Bowcock of North Auckland, ran the team, and Peter Breen, of the summer support staff, acted as brakeman.

Footnote: January was a month of 26th anniversaries for other Antarctic bases. Davis, the Australian base 650km east of Mawson, in the Vestfold Hills, celebrated its birthday on January 13. The Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station was dedicated by proxy at McMurdo Station on January 23, 1957, and Syowa Station, the Japanese base on East Ongul Island in Lutzow-Holm Bay, dates its establishment from January 29 of the same year.



Behind the Prime Minister in the cover photograph are (left to right): Sir Edmund Hillary; Messrs A. Newton (summer OIC); Keith Clegg (information officer) and R. B. Thomson (superintendent), Antarctic Division; Dr E. P. Todd (U.S. National Science Foundation); Dr I. J. Shearer (Minister of

Science and Technology); Mr B. C. Beetham, M.P. (Social Credit Party leader); Mr Harry Ayres (TAE dog expert); Dr E. I. Robertson (former Director-General, D.S.I.R.); Dr D. Kear (present Director-General); Sir Holmes Miller and Wing Commander W. J. Cranfield (observed); Dr T. Hatherton (IGY winter party); Mr G. Wallace (ministerial secretary); Captain J. M. Pearigen (Naval Support Force commander); Father G. Creagh; Lieutenant N. Gattsche (N.Z. Army); Mr L. P. B. Slattery (winter OIC).

Survival course at Pole

Nearly 400 men and women took part in the Antarctic Division's basic snowcraft and survival courses last season. The courses were run from Scott Base by three New Zealand mountaineers, John Prosser (field leader), Lindsay Main and Nick Cradock (field assistants).

Last season's courses for 380 people included American and New Zealand research and support staff, guest scientists from the People's Republic of China and Japan, and Australian scientists who worked in Northern Victoria Land. Others in the courses were United States air crews, and the crews of Royal New Zealand Air Force and Royal Australian Air Force aircraft, and of two United States Coast Guard icebreakers.

Later in the season a survival course was conducted at the Amundsen-Scott South Pole station for the 15 men and two women of the winter party. John Prosser and Lindsay Main ran the course and were assisted by Rick Walshe, one of the Scott Base winter team, who is also a mountaineer. This was the third season that New Zealand instructors had run a course at the Pole.

