

the book will be familiar with the genre. Indeed, out of a total of 27 photographs, one is included. So much for the 'history of the Arctic and its explorers.' Matthew Henson is, of course, given prominence, and he merits two individual photographs. The chapter entitled 'A town called Resolute' is a politically correct account of the relocation policy. Ignoring the Russian Arctic enables the authors to avoid mention of gulags, in comparison with which the Inuit relocation in Canada, unfortunate as it might have been, was a mere picnic.

It would be tiresome to list all the errors in the text, as they are legion. To illustrate the general inadequacy of the attention devoted to their task by the authors, one is informed on page 130 that the British Arctic Air Route Expedition of the early 1930s was the first British expedition that 'had successfully adapted to Eskimo methods of travel and hunting.' This overlooks the fact that, on page 30, the same honour had been awarded to John Rae. A further example is on page 132, where the reader is informed that 'For the first time in its history, the Arctic was dragged into a modern war.' This is with reference to World War II. The authors have underestimated the serious hostilities between the English, French, and Dutch in Svalbard in the seventeenth century, which were, of course, 'modern' then. These culminated in one full-scale battle, at Sorgfiord in 1693. Even with regard to World War II, they are inaccurate, claiming on page 133 that the United States declared war on Germany. It was actually the other way around. Germany (and Italy) declared war on the US in the aftermath of Pearl Harbor.

Comment has previously been made on the illustrations. There are 27 photographs, very few of which were specially taken. There is a picture purporting to be of Spitsbergen, although it could have been of almost any mountainous polar region, while another is of a signpost along the route towards Resolute from its airstrip. There is a picture of Atle Gresli, a Norwegian active against the Germans on Svalbard during the war, and another of Minnie Allakariallak, an Inuit relocatee in her comfortable sitting room.

The low point of the book is the map; there is only one, and it is of 'Canada's Arctic Archipelago.' It is the most useless map this reviewer has ever seen in a published work. It is, however, typical of the book as a whole — cheap and cheerful, designed to secure a certain number of sales from persons who were interested in the television series. It would have been far better, and more honest, if the producers of the programmes had referred viewers to, for example, Clive Holland's recent book *Farthest north* (Holland 1994), which covers most of the included material and much more, is entertainingly written, and has an author who is an acknowledged expert in the subject. (Ian R. Stone, Laggan Juys, Larivane Close, Andreas, Isle of Man IM7 4HD.)

Reference

Holland, C. 1994. *Farthest north: a history of North Polar exploration in eye-witness accounts*. London: Robinson.

WAITING TO FLY: MY ESCAPADES WITH THE PENGUINS OF ANTARCTICA. Ron Naveen. 1999. New York: William Morrow and Company. viii + 374 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-688-15894-3. \$US26.00.

I had a memorable encounter with Ron Naveen in 1985 aboard *World Discoverer*, when he was a staff naturalist and I was a hitchhiker traveling to South Georgia to conduct a study of diving behavior of king penguins. When it came to putting us ashore in strong winds and rough seas, Naveen volunteered to accompany the boat operator and me during a very wet ride, which got wetter. As we approached the beach, Naveen unhesitatingly leaped over the side in water much deeper than his waders. Such enthusiasm for polar seas and penguins has not been dampened through the years. This book is an autobiography, as the subtitle indicates, by an unmitigated penguinophile.

This book has nine chapters plus an introduction, epilogue, and section of color photographs. The chapters are titled with colloquial expressions like 'Stonecrackers,' 'Slick chicks at the Copa,' and 'The burial pool,' which is not much help for someone checking out the table of contents for an idea on what the book covers. The text does include a substantial amount of information on the three brush-tailed species of penguins occurring in waters and islands around the Antarctic Peninsula. Woven into the author's numerous accounts of adventures in the sub-Antarctic and Antarctic are many details about the breeding behavior, diet, and other aspects of gentoo, Adélie, and chinstrap penguin biology. The cover jacket gives a clue to the main title 'Waiting to fly,' and the answer is on the last page of the epilogue. The color photographs are all of penguins, and mostly of Naveen's favorite, the chinstrap, so do not expect any Antarctic scenery of historic interest except as background for the penguins.

The text is dynamic and exudes the enthusiasm of the author. His heroes are some of the best. Everyone familiar with sea birds knows about Robert Cushman Murphy's book on oceanic birds. Anyone that works on penguins knows of Wayne and Susan Trivelpiece. It is clear that some of Naveen's best moments have taken place while working with them at King George Island. Much of the grit and hardship of their work and living conditions are far better described in this book than can be discerned from the technical papers written by Wayne and Susan. The methods are described in exceptional detail and provide informative reading for anyone wondering how some penguin research is conducted.

Perhaps at times there is too much anthropomorphic exuberance and literary license. Is the molt painful? Do penguins frolic at sea? Can penguins have a demonic rage? And, in the trendy vernacular of our time, Naveen could not resist being politically correct by suggesting that emperor penguin females are liberated feminists on a lark to the north while the males incubate the egg. Therefore, he proposes that maybe they should be called 'empress' penguins.

Generally the biology described is accurate, but there are some problems with dimensions. About the only way one will ever see a 90 lb emperor penguin is as an overfed resident of Sea World, or as a male that is arriving in late fall at the colony and is prepared for a 120-day fast during the ensuing breeding season. As for a four-foot-tall penguin, I do not know where one might be found, but probably in the same place as a little blue penguin with the mass of a starling. Issues of another scale are those of the population status of penguins. Naveen says there are only three species that are 'in environmental difficulty and none in the Antarctic.' Such a view is optimistic considering that recent studies show that several populations of Antarctic penguins have been declining for the last several years. There is further cause for concern regarding a dozen of the temperate species of penguins. These are minor criticisms of a book that would be an entertaining prelude during the crossing on a tour ship bound for the Antarctic, or just some light reading in biology. If one wants details of penguin natural history presented in a more orderly and succinct way, then some of the technical books would be more useful. And by the way, what is a group of penguins called? Naveen tries a 'gaggle of gentoos.' The alliteration is catchy, but so it is for geese as well. (Gerald Kooyman, Scholander Hall, 0204, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, CA 92093, USA.)

FOOTHOLD ON ANTARCTICA. Charles Swithinbank. 1999. Lewes, Sussex: The Book Guild. viii + 260 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 1-85776-406-4. £18.50.

This book is the third volume of the author's record of the polar operations in which he took part, and it may be hoped not the last. In the previous volumes (reviewed in *Polar Record* 34 (189): 153–154 and 34 (190): 265–266), tantalizing hints were to be found of his role on the Norwegian–British–Swedish Antarctic Expedition, 1949–52, but now we have the full story. The expedition was to serve as inspiration and indeed model for the organization of the International Geophysical Year, 1957–58. For Charles Swithinbank, the youngest member of the expedition, it provided an entrée to a career in polar research, from which he never looked back.

In January 1939, on the strength of exploration by Norwegian whaling expeditions through the years, territory between longitudes 20°W and 45°E in the Antarctic was annexed by Norway as Dronning Maud Land, in order to forestall any possible claim by Germany, following the despatch of the German Antarctic Expedition in 1938. Professor Hans Ahlmann of Stockholm University had studied published German air photographs of the region, and had noted wide areas of ice-free land, suggesting retreat of the ice sheet through climatic change. He decided that this was a region to be investigated further. Already the father of modern glaciology, he now became the father of this new expedition, which was organized by a directing committee drawn from Norway, Britain, and

Sweden. The selected 14-man team was finally composed of four men from each of these countries, plus an Australian and a Canadian, under the leadership of Norwegian John Giaever.

With his usual thoroughness, Swithinbank prepared himself as assistant glaciologist by taking a crash course in crystallography and an army course in driving and maintaining Weasel tractors, which had been developed during the war and, with dog teams, now provided the expedition's transport. He also spent three weeks at a field station on Kebnekajse, Swedish Lapland, where he was instructed in glaciological techniques by Valter Schytt, the expedition's chief glaciologist.

In late October 1949, Swithinbank and some expedition members sailed from Sandefjord in a whaling factory ship for a rendezvous with the expedition ship *Norsel* in the Scotia Sea; the reader is spared no gory detail of activities on the factory ship's deck in the whaling grounds. Following the rendezvous, all members of the expedition were united aboard *Norsel*, which headed south for Dronning Maud Land, where, by the end of February 1950, the base Maudheim was fully established on an ice shelf just south of 71°S and not far northeast of Kapp Norvegia.

Swithinbank provides a full account of life at Maudheim and of the travels in the 1950–51 season of the glaciological, geological, and seismic survey parties, ranging southeast among the inland mountains to 74°S and beyond. He frequently records his sense of awe and wonderment at the Antarctic landscape seen for the first time. He felt this especially during his work from the base, often at night in temperatures as low as –40°C, when he was skiing alone on the ice shelf to measure snow depths and to survey the network of stakes, set out to measure ice movement. 'The many long hours that I spent alone away from the base were some of the happiest I can remember...it was the silence that moved me the most' (page 106).

For the main journeys, an advance base with food and fuel depot had been established 300 km south of Maudheim, and from there Weasels and dog teams supported the field parties — tractors being used successfully for the first time in the Antarctic. It was at the advance base that Swithinbank and his companions learned of the terrible accident at Maudheim in late February 1951, claiming three lives, after a Weasel had fallen over an ice cliff in a whiteout. The work of the seismic survey party was temporarily curtailed, as two key men were needed back at Maudheim. Only the high morale that characterized the expedition carried it through the tragedy.

Then, in mid-March near the advance base, misfortune struck the geological party, when Alan Reece was blinded in one eye from a flying splinter, while collecting a rock specimen. Common sense might have dictated Reece's immediate return to Maudheim, but the decision was made — in which Swithinbank played no part — not to disrupt the geological plans. Thus, the geological party remained in the field for a further two and a half months, with Reece bearing himself with extreme stoicism. They eventually