

message from Vivian Fuchs, who was now getting ready to head south. On 14 January 1956, nearly a year after Goldsmith and his seven companions had been left on the icy shores of Vahsel Bay, Fuchs and party arrived on the newly built Danish vessel *Magga Dan*. For Goldsmith it was the end of his 356-day adventure in Antarctica. I suspect that he wasn't too upset at having to leave on the *Magga Dan* when she headed east and north through the Weddell Sea.

The publication of Rainer Goldsmith's diary provides us with an important addition to this mostly forgotten chapter in Antarctic exploration. Although the story could have been broadened in scope, the extraordinary circumstances experienced by the eight men during the 1955–56 Antarctic wintering are sufficient to recommend the book to anyone interested in polar expeditions.

#### REFERENCE

RICHARDS, R.W. 2003. The Ross Sea shore party 1914–17. Norwich and Huntingdon: The Erskine Press and Bluntisham Books.

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UNKNOWN WATERS: A FIRST-HAND ACCOUNT OF THE HISTORIC UNDER-ICE SURVEY OF THE SIBERIAN CONTINENTAL SHELF BY USS *QUEENFISH* (SSN651). By ALFRED S. McLAREN, Captain U.S. Navy (Retired). Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2008. ISBN 978-0-8173-1602-0. xxii + 243 p., maps, b&w illus., glossary, bib., index. Hardbound. US\$29.95.

The reviewer must start by declaring some special circumstances. The first is that he and Fred McLaren are old shipmates from expedition cruises on Russian icebreakers in Arctic waters, including voyages to the North Pole, so much of this tale has been discussed in lectures on board, over drinks in the bar, and at the dinner table. This is the first time, however, that this retired icebreaker captain has had the opportunity to live the experience in its entirety, albeit vicariously—which brings me to the second circumstance, which is that no inducement would be sufficient to get me into a submarine, especially one going under the ice.

Captain McLaren has produced an account of this hazardous adventure so detailed that either he must be blessed with a prodigious memory if not total recall, or he has kept meticulous records and done exhaustive research—or more likely, all of the above. The book will certainly be of most

interest to those readers who have some knowledge of navigation and seafaring—especially submariners—but much of it is somewhat technical in nature and may be beyond the understanding of a casual reader without a background in nautical matters. As a professional ice navigator, I can empathize with the *Queenfish* crew every mile of the way—it is difficult enough to penetrate the ice on the surface, where one can see what is happening; it must be doubly nerve-wracking to be doing it blindfold underwater. The book gives a valuable insight into the U.S. Navy's nuclear submarine program and the process of selecting and training those qualified to serve as officers and crew. It is obvious from the narrative that the crew complement of *Queenfish* was a very close-knit team, and while it is admirable to give credit where credit is due, I found it somewhat redundant to give name and rank (only the serial number was missing) every time anyone on board executed an order, turned a valve, pressed a button, or even made a remark.

The story begins with a rollicking tale of “Man Overboard!” as *Queenfish* sets off on her momentous voyage, but the next five chapters give a much better indication of what kind of book this is: much more academic in nature, with the footnotes to prove it. As an absolute sucker for footnotes—I have to read every one of them in case I am missing something—I find that they rather break the continuity of narrative. There is also great emphasis placed on the make and model of each piece of equipment in the vessel, which left me reeling with an alphabetic overload, intelligible to some perhaps, but not to most of us. I presume this level of detail was included for the record, as this book is certainly intended to be the definitive account of Operation “SUBICEX 1-70,” forming a basis for historians to study for generations to come. With the start of chapter 7, when Captain McLaren and his crew have taken over the submarine and begun their mission, the story changes to an adventure, and from then on it holds the reader's attention without too much footnote distraction.

The composition and literary style of this book are delightful, with nary a typographical error or phrase that grates upon the ear to be detected. As for factual errors, not being U.S. Navy trained I failed to notice any, apart from an editorial lapse on page 120, where Amundsen's *Maud* voyage along the Northern Sea Route (1918–20) is characterized as going from east to west, when the text indicates (correctly) that it was in the opposite direction. I am sure that the thoroughness with which this book was put together would naturally have captured any serious errors before they got into print; however, I was surprised that Dr. McLaren (being a well-respected polar scientist as well as a USN Captain) opted to use the old imperial units of feet and inches when quoting the International Ice Code for ice thickness, which the World Meteorological Organization has promulgated in metric units. Somehow “2.0 to 4.0 m thickness of ice” seems much tidier than “6.6 to 13.1 feet” (p. 84; and Notes: Chapter 16, #5 for example).

Plenty of black-and-white photographs throughout the book set the scene and introduce us to the crew, and some very useful drawings illustrate the submarine and her operations under the ice, where obviously no photography was possible. The bathymetric chartlets are conveniently placed in the text of each chapter so that the reader does not have to turn many pages looking for positional information as the voyage proceeds. The small-scale chartlet of the entire Arctic Ocean (Preface, p. xix) is difficult to read; I suspect the original was in colour. The remainder, however, are on a much larger scale and clearly indicate the track of *Queenfish*.

The glossary (p. 221–227) will be very useful for the readers without naval or nautical backgrounds, and it is particularly useful when ice terms generally understood only by the ice-navigating fraternity are being bandied about. The bibliography appears to have tapped a variety of sources, which have enabled the author to give very valuable historical and background information. The index is very thoroughly put together; it contains sufficient entries to locate almost any reference a reader might need. The Russian entries have been transliterated from the Cyrillic original into Roman script, using accepted spellings.

As *Queenfish* emerges from under the ice of the Chukchi Sea and heads for home on 28 August 1970, the relief is palpable, not only on board, but for this reader too. It is hard to realize that all of that excitement took place in a mere 28 days. But I'm certain it seemed like a whole lot longer to Captain McLaren and his men—and my resolve never to embark in a submarine remains unchanged.

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## BOOKS RECEIVED

- ARCTIC FOX: LIFE AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD. By GARRY HAMILTON; Photographs by NORBERT ROSING. Richmond Hill, Ontario: Firefly Books, 2008. ISBN 1-55407-341-3. 231 p., map, 80 colour photographs, bib., index. Hardbound. Cdn\$39.95.
- CLIMATE CHANGE AND GLOBALIZATION IN THE ARCTIC: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT. By E. CARINA H. KESKITALO. London: Earthscan, 2008. ISBN 978-1-84407-528-7. xi + 254 p., b&w illus., notes, references, index. Hardbound. US\$70.00.
- ISUMA: INUIT VIDEO ART. By MICHAEL ROBERT EVANS. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008. ISBN 9780773533783 (paper). xiv + 236 p., glossary, notes, references, index. Softbound. Cdn\$32.95; US\$29.95.
- LE(S) NORD(S) IMAGINAIRE(S). Edited by DANIEL CHARTIER. Québec: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2008. ISBN 978-2-923385-11-2. 340 p., b&w illus., footnotes, 20 contributors. Softbound. Cdn\$40.00.
- THE LOST CANOE: A LABRADOR ADVENTURE. By LAWRENCE W. COADY. Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 2008. ISBN 978-155109-658-2. xi + 243 p., maps, b&w and colour illus., appendices, endnotes, bib., index. Softbound. Cdn\$21.95.
- A PASSION FOR THE POLE: ETHOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN POLAR REGIONS. Edited by LOUWRENS HACQUEBORD and NIENKE BOSCHMAN. Groningen, The Netherlands: Arctisch Centrum, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 2008. Circumpolar Studies, Vol. 4. (Available from the Arctisch Centrum, [www.arctic-centre.nl](http://www.arctic-centre.nl).) ISBN 9789077922408. x + 149 p., maps, b&w illus., references, 14 contributors.
- TOWARDS AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE NAIN REGION, LABRADOR. By BRYAN C. HOOD. Edited by WILLIAM W. FITZHUGH. Washington, D.C.: Arctic Studies Center, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, 2008. Contributions to Circumpolar Anthropology 7. ISBN 978-0-9816142-0-5. xvi + 366 p., maps, b&w illus., references, index. Softbound. US\$34.95.