

JAMES ANDREWS

Edited transcript of interview with James Andrews, medical officer Hope Bay, 1946, conducted at his home by Jaap Verdenius on 4th of February, 1993. BAS archives AD6/24/3/14. Transcribed by Allan Wearden, December 2019.

Andrews: *Trepassey and Fitzroy* had sailed together at 4 am so we were the last to leave. Soon after leaving harbour we ran into a fairly strong breeze from the south west with a beam sea that set the old duck the *Scoresby* rolling over 50 degrees each way! I eventually gave up the unequal struggle and retired to bed as did also the met officer Nidery and went off duty, the second officer did so as well. I was bunked on the wardroom settee and the water kept pouring through the skylight till we were soaked, even the first officer's puppy, a chow, got fed up! January the 10th still rolling like a log and feeling awful, spent all day in bed sleeping fitfully. The sea settled a bit in the evening and I was able to take sufficient interest in things to read a book. January 11th: Sat up and took a little breakfast this morning; got up for lunch was pretty calm all day but is getting much colder. Had a look at the second officer this evening, he has the makings of an epiplocele, a right epiplocele, but was very difficult to examine owing to the ships rolling. We sighted Graham Land about 6pm; it was rather awe inspiring to view this distant silent snow capped peaks to realise how few had seen them before and fewer still trod them! On review these appeared to be the mountains of King George V Island - my geography was wrong [laughter]!

[0:01:39] Andrews: January the 12: Got up at 3am to find we were in amongst loose pack ice. There was two medium sized icebergs about, the pack ice stood two to three feet and more out of the water. We hove to for a while because it was rather thick, so I went back to bed till about 8 o'clock. The captain, Marchesi, came down then to say that he had been unable through Antarctic Sound on account of the pack ice, and that we were steaming west to try and find a lead into the coast and so make our way back again. We steamed along for some time like this. The sky was cloudy at first but later the sun came out and it was quite warm out of the slight wind. I saw a few whales blowing and also Wilson petrels and Cape pigeons and about 10 am we found a bit of a break in the ice and Marchesi steamed into it, but soon found his way blocked again after about a mile or so by thick pack. He sent a wire through to Bingham to say he could not get through and was making for Deception Island. It was a wonderful sight to see the snow covered mountain of King George V and Livingston Islands with the South Shetland group on our starboard bow all brightly sunlit; they seemed only one or two miles away on account of the rarefied air, but were actually about 15 miles off. I sat on a chair on deck and wrote letters. We reached Deception at about 5.30 pm and I saw my first penguins on the rocks close to the entrance to the harbour. It was a beautiful sight coming in through Neptune's Bellows to see the inlet opening out, first into Whalers' Bay and then Port Foster. The mountains formed a ring all round the port and the old derelict whaling station lay to the right as we entered. In spite of our hooter we did not see anyone appear, however a dog soon appeared at the water's edge and we made fast to an old fuel barge, which the *Fitzroy* had towed down the previous year. Soon a boat put off with three

bearded chaps in it who turned out to be Reece the Met man and magistrate, Farrington the wireless chap and Smith the cook; they said they were a bit fobbed by having so many people to talk to all at once. The *Scoresby* began taking on oil from the barge pumped by a diesel engine there, which started at the first attempt after one year's lack of use. After a bit of chatter I went down to the wardroom for dinner, and then went ashore with Reece and Farrington to see their domain. I saw the old chap Sam Bonner about whose illness had been such a kerfuffle; he looked thin and wasted and ill. We had a cup of tea with him while Farrington sent out wireless telegraphy messages and then I was taken over their house. It's a converted part of the old whaling boats officers' quarters and very spacious, with a large galley, a library-come-messroom and engine room for the wireless, and odd spare rooms, cellars and attics, while each chap has his own bedroom plus paraphernalia. They then took me out to see a bit of the island. We had a close look at the ring penguins they're funny little chaps(!), about 18 inches high, not in the least frightened of one. We wandered up over the hill at the back of the hut to get a view of the hills and further side of the bay, I found two brown or mottled green tern eggs the first seen on Deception this year. Two skua's were baiting the dog Crown all the time by swooping low down and over him. Back to the hut a cup of cocoa before bed at midnight, that was my first day!

[0:05:49] Verdenius: You were writing letters?

Andrews: Yes writing letters for home, they were posted there and picked up by the relieving ships. There were three ships that came down that year and they took them back with them, and of course brought any for us from Port Stanley that had been written earlier.

[0:06:14] Verdenius: So you could get post there?

Andrews: Well only during the summer, only during when the relief ships went down; there was one visit a year - well that's not strictly accurate there was one visit but they visited a number of bases down there. Do you know about the Falkland Islands Dependence Survey?

[0:06:40] Verdenius: Yes.

Andrew: So you know that it consisted of, I went down with about 40 men altogether, there were two medical officers, I was with one group and the other medical officer further south was with another and there was various individual stations set up around the Graham Land Peninsula as it was called then, or the Palmer Peninsula, I've forgotten what it's called now? I've got a map should I get it?

[0:07:05] Interviewer: I've got a map [Sound of map being opened!]

Andrews: Yes well Deception Island of course is, (where are we?)It isn't marked! It was the only habitual place it was, it's been blown up since by a volcanic eruption. Ah, it used to be off here, George V Island.... Ah yes there it is Deception Island, that's it!

[0:08:55] Verdenius: How long did you stay there?

Andrews: Well I was really only there very briefly. I went in to see this chap who was ill, he'd got cancer, and to speed up his return back to the Falkland Islands, but off the track - where are we, Heard Island?...This is quite a nice map isn't it!?

[0:09:25] Verdenius: Yes.

Andrews: Who made this map? [Still sounds of inspecting the map]

[0:09:39] Verdenius: I bought it in Amsterdam [And still sounds of inspecting the map] If somebody got ill what had to happen to get him to a place where he could be treated?

Andrews: Well we didn't have any specific method of getting somebody who was seriously ill out of the bases on the mainland, for the reason that in the first place it was unexplored land it was literally unknown territory. I mean the names of the geographical points all down here on the outside and the few islands had been given by people from ships, none of this land had been explored territorially and what we spent our time doing was mapping and exploring all this territory, looking at the geology of it, the palaeoecology, the studying the wildlife and everything else that you can think of. And from that we developed ionospherics, and as you know this was where our expedition, the British Antarctic Survey were the first people to discover the hole in the ozone layer over the Antarctic! Those are the sort of things that we were doing, but chiefly when I was down there it was exploratory and we - where's Stonington Island? - Stonington Island down here somewhere.....can't see it....Marguerite Bay, here we are Stonington Island, just off here there's one of the bases there - oh you've got them marked in! And what we were planning to do was to survey all this territory down here on the east coast including if possible to establish an overland route, because occasionally the Larsen Ice Shelf broke up and moved out, or parts of it did, and it became impassable along the coast road, the coastline, which is the way we were going, it's the easiest way to go. So when we set out we started to explore the whole of this hinterland here, down the centre of the peninsula. This about 800-1000 miles long that peninsula they're just that bit and it goes on to another 1000 miles there!

[0:12:43] Verdenius: Seems quite high?

Andrews: Oh yes, it goes up to about 6000 feet and there are mountain peaks above that too, could be very rough territory that!

[0:13:00] Verdenius: How far did you go in that?

Andrews: In here?

[0:13:05] Verdenius: Yes.

Andrews: Oh we didn't get down here, I was only there for a year, just over 18 months and some of that time I spent here and some of that time I spent at Deception Island. Deception Island the base hut got burnt down and I went there after I had completed a year at here, to go and build a new base and start it up again. While I was there they had the first earthquakes

indicated the place was eventually going to blow up! Which it did, I think it was in 1958
[Verdenius: '67!] '67 when was it I can't remember?

[0:13:46] Verdenius: '67 till '70.

Andrews: Yes it would have been that's right, yes that's right!

[0:13:59] Verdenius: As a doctor you were in lots of bases on one side?

Andrews: Yes I was. I was based up here at Hope Bay the whole time, but you see there were eight of us at that base and some of the other bases there were only four people there for example and here I think there were 12 men at Marguerite Bay and they had another doctor there. But there was no way, after the ice closed in there was no way we could get any help from anybody, there was no feasible way of getting to us, no air, no aircraft support after the war it just wasn't available, you were down there for a year on your own(!), with two years' supplies because the relief ship might not be able to get in at the end of the second year because of the pack ice. Indeed it happened at one base if I remember, so it was quite, we were quite isolated!

[0:15:13] Verdenius: What medical supplies did you have?

Andrews: The same equipment and gear as they had on a submarine during the war! I took down the first penicillin that had ever been taken down to the Antarctic with me; it had to be taken down in refrigerated conditions of course. Down there was no problem about keeping it cold enough but that the first antibiotic, that was penicillin, ever taken into the Antarctic. I took enough to treat one man, never needed to use it fortunately! Apart from that we only had the chemotherapeutic agents including the German difloxacin stuff, the sulphonamides MB693 you've probably heard of it, the proteus albumin that the German manufacturers produced for treating infections.

[0:16:23] Verdenius: No.

Andrews: No well so ancient history now!

[0:16:29] Verdenius: But it was special at the time?

Andrews: Oh yes, we'd only just started using it during the war for infected wounds from battle injuries and bombing and the like. We were using it at Bart's, 1944 I think it became available, '43 maybe, we had the first few samples of it but '44 or thereabouts we started using it.

[0:17:11] Verdenius: Did you have the possibility to do an operation if necessary?

Andrews: Yes, I had facilities to. I had anaesthetic agents I had surgical equipment and would have had to operate on the patient on my own, with either local anaesthetic or spinal anaesthetic, or I could have given an inhalation anaesthetic if somebody else had been taught how to use it. I did have to do a few things down there mostly on myself, they said if they hadn't had a doctor they wouldn't have needed one, but I fractured a couple of ribs they heal

up on their own by and large, then I had my head split open by a wind generator propeller which I inadvertently walked into! I think what actually happened was I was picking up dog the getting too close to it and the wind altered slightly and swung round hit me on the back of the head, which knocked me out! And I had to, I was brought to by the dogs licking the blood as it came out of the wound! I stumbled down into hut, because this was on top of the hut and the other chaps realised all was not well and I ended up lying on the floor of the kitchen by the Esse stove, which was the warmest place in the hut! And I kept on passing out and they had to, and I said 'Let's have a look at the wound', and they got a couple of mirrors set up so that I could see what was the matter! And it was split right through the scalp and I said 'Well you'll have to seal it up,' and the dog handler, a chap called Tom O'Sullivan who I spent many hours in a tent sledging with, I'd had to sew his hand up from dog bite earlier on and he took one look at this and he said 'Well I'll try and do it for you if you tell me what to do! [Laughter] So we, I tell him what to do and explained how it was to be done and then watched him do it through the mirrors; but the trouble was I kept on passing out from....from the effects of the blow you, went unconscious every now and then, and then he had to wait till I came to again and told him what to do next [laughter]! But he sewed it up very nicely - I'm still intact, not the man I was perhaps but still in one piece!

[0:20:01] Verdenius: And do you think there is truth in this when they said like, 'When we don't have a doctor we don't need a doctor'?

Andrews: Well you mean what they said to me? [Verdenius: Yeah] No. One of my, Tom had a fracture of his tibia and another fellow had a radial fracture of his humerus and there were various problems that developed, needed attention one time another dog bites and things of that sort!

[0:20:39] Verdenius: Does that mean?

Andrews: And of course when I first went down one of the men had developed cancer and had to be, fortunately that was, well it was largely handled - he was at Deception Island and there was a doctor at Hope Bay before I got there, whom I relieved, who had wireless telegraphic communication with Deception, and he was able to tell them how to manage the man and what to do and I was the first doctor to see him when I went there on the relief vessel the aboard the *William Scoresby*, and had to make urgent arrangements for his return while it was still possible to do it! No, fortunately we didn't run into any great troubles, although down here in the south a man fell down a crevasse and had some rather nasty injuries to his nerves of his arm following it, which when he was hauled out - because he went about 200ft down I think - and he had to be hauled out and that took some time, because he was in an awkward position and his arm was getting pulled on and then he got a lot of nerve injury which needed treatment subsequently which they managed to achieve for him down there. But, no, it's like being in the north of Canada, if you go into inaccessible places you don't get medical treatment unless you're very fortunate!

[0:22:43] Verdenius: I was just wondering if people get self-reliant?

Andrews: Oh yes, you had to be very self-reliant. Everything we did we had to do ourselves. There were eight of us in our base. [Come in darling! Andrew's wife enters the room and says, 'I'm not a coffee drinker so I don't know what the coffee's like, I'll leave it to you shall I?' 'Yes alright, would you like to pour it out while I just go and get....?'] Done in the old fashioned way with triangulation points and chronometers and literally by dead reckoning and sledge wheel and compass and traverse, that was the only way we could find our way around here, especially when the weather was bad!

[0:23:46] Verdenius: How do you get....your name on a glacier?

Andrews: Well I, because I did some research work, some survey work The only reason for that, it was quite accidental really, but they decided anyone that did survey work down there if there was a spare bit of land that needed a name, they'd use the name of the chap who's, in part responsible! [He now seems to be showing the interviewer some pictures] And that in being able to walk around in shirtsleeves with open neck, and my friends coming down, you can see on these pictures on the relief ship are all covered up with...anoraks and sweaters and the like! [Laughter]

[0:24:53] Verdenius: Yes this always interested me because they say it changes your body?

Andrews: Yes that's right, yes acclimatisation is a process that takes place over a period of two to three months I suppose? I've forgotten all the physiology of it now, but...it's one that involves laying down a layer of fat, given that you've got enough calorie intake to do it, which we had of course, and also, half a part of it is psychological, because you get used to living at temperatures and accepting a degree of discomfort which you wouldn't accept here. For example the temperature in this room, I'm not quite what it's set at but I've got the central heating slightly on, well it's set at 15, yes 15. The temperature here is much the same, this is an old Victorian thermometer, a spirit thermometer, it's just over 16 you see? I expect you find this reasonably comfortable?

[0:26:30] Verdenius: More or less [laughter] yes this is quite comfortable.

Andrews: But you see we were living in that sort of temperature 45.

[0:26:45] Verdenius: It's too cold!

Andrews: Ah well that's for our Victorian forbears! It's a very old thermometer that one, don't know who made it.

[0:27:03] Verdenius: So people live at that sort of temperature, what about lights?

Andrews: We had things called Tilley lamps, which were paraffin lamps and very effective, and candles of course. Well we had a certain amount of electric light because we ran a wind generator which charged up the batteries and we ran a certain amount of electric light from that, which was quite useful.

[0:27:34] Verdenius: And did you see any changes in people there, their physiology and their psychology as a result of the polar winter?

Andrews: Colder winter?

[0:27:48] Verdenius: Polar winter!

Andrews: Polar winter, well.

[0:27:51] Verdenius: About lights and daylight?

Andrews: Well yes, things were different at every different base. Where you got a very small group of people, four people, it is more difficult to live together because you....the points of contact are more frequent. There not enough people to spread any arguments around and people can occasionally get upset by this, but you had to be careful to choose people of appropriate equable temperament when you took them down to live for year away from anyone else in those sort of circumstances. I give full marks to Commander Bingham, Captain Bingham who was in charge of our expedition, for the way in which he selected the people that came down with us in 1945/46/47. They were, on our base when had eight people and we had a magnificent man, Captain Victor Russell, who was the surveyor in charge and he ran the show, with very great wisdom, and we had no real problems or troubles at all down there! [laughter]

[0:29:31] Verdenius: How did he run the show?

Andrews: Well, basically I think we all got on very well together, we were a very mixed bag There was a scientist from the British Museum, Bill Croft, now dead sadly, there was a meteorologist who was in the air force, Alan Reece, there was two surveyors, Victor Russell, he was a captain in the Royal Engineers I think, and Francis, who was a captain I think...in the (I've forgotten what corps it was in) but he was a surveyor too; and then we had Sam Small who was the wireless operator, an army wireless operator, Stuart Small and Tom O'Sullivan the Irish bloke I told you about, Dick Wallin who was a Falkland Islander who came to help as general factotum and dog handler and myself as the medical officer! I originally went down, to do a research programme in bacteriology but I wasn't able to put it into effect because my equipment got left behind in the dock strike, so I turned my hand to doing everything else. I did the meteorology for three months, I did a certain amount, well I did quite a lot of survey work we were out sledging for oh....nigh on three or four months away from base altogether! And I was responsible for keeping the ornithological records and such wildlife records as we were able to keep, seals and whales and sea leopards and the like and a certain amount of work had been done by our predecessors down there on lichens. We had a lichenologist down the previous year and he did a lot of work! [Some more coffee?]

[0:32:01] Verdenius: No.

[Andrews: Do help yourself, it's got a bit cold now! Then sounds of coffee cups

[0:32:18] Verdenius: *Do you want more coffee?*

Andrews: No I won't have any more thank you very much, is that hot enough for you?

[0:32:22] Verdenius: *That's fine.]*

[0:32:24] Verdenius: But you told me about the Captain keeping the morale high, can you tell me - you've been in Antarctica at Christmas - [Andrews: Yes] - how did you spend Christmas for instance?

Andrews: Oh Christmas Day on the way down I spent looking after the dogs in the hull of.....the hold of the *Trepassey* where all the dogs were, looking after them! Found that one of my, yes went down to the *Trepassey* at 11 o'clock with Croft; I was on watch there over the boat's dogs, this was in Montevideo in Uruguay; that was that year - now what happened the following year? June the 15th - wait a minute. [Sounds of pages being turned in his journal] Ah! 25th Monday 29th December the 5th, 19th 20th, 24th December the 25th this is December 25th 1946! *'Tempo of life was a bit slow this morning, my meringues had all gone soft overnight so I made a few more after lunch doubling the amount of sugar and proved a much better success! No one had any Christmas messages except a general one to all bases from Captain Bingham. In consequence everyone was a bit browned off. [laughter] The radio programme, a cynical Christmas review of world affairs, was eventually turned off and we played dominoes and cards I made a rum punch of which Dick and I were the only participants. We had a good dinner in the evening and Sam produced a delectable plum pudding. The weather is showing [coughing fit] and the weather is showing signs of clearing up, they have been having bright sunshine at the other bases. It had been a pretty terrible night the night before I think....' December the 24th Tuesday. Sam announced this morning that the BBC had broadcast a reference to our existence down here! He also heard from Ken that Americans were going to Marguerite Bay, now the fun will start! Sambo still looks puffy around the neck (that is one of the dogs) but is taking a bit more interest in life! Bill helped me open an abscess on his neck the previous day. Bill helped me clear out gubbins on the darkroom floor during in the afternoon he printed a number of films. The wind rose gradually during the day to reach force 7 in the afternoon. Dick in the galley had a bad time making cakes which did not obey the usual laws! I attempted to make some meringues with penguin eggs - was successful in making them but unfortunately they all stuck hard to the tin and most of them broke when removed. In the evening we listened to the news and we heard the BBC announcement as follows: "The British Foreign Office said there is no truth in the reports that the State Department have asked for the withdrawal of a British Expedition in Marguerite Bay. This expedition is a survey party from the Falkland Islands and Marguerite Bay and is a British possession!"* This was before the Antarctic treaty was signed of course. *'We were fortunate in hearing the carol service broadcast from King's College Cambridge. During the evening we put up the decorations that I had brought later, also dug out some flags which are now hung up all round the mess and gives the place a very cheerful experience. When I produced my twig of holly I was astonished to hear say it was the first he had seen for over 20 years, he was a Falkland Islander!'* [Laughter]... He came from originally somewhere near Southampton or Reading, I can't remember which now, so that's what we did on December the 25th 1946!

[0:38:17] Verdenius: Did Sundays, Christmas Days things like that ??? [inaudible]?

Andrews: Well at the base we used not to do anything very active on Sunday. *'December the 15th Sunday, Sam came in my cabin shortly his WT schedule at 8.00 with a wide grin on his*

face, having read our note'. I wonder what note that was, let's see. Oh that must have been, we obviously came back that day, the day before, from a sledging trip now having got in there. *'Bill and I got up.....Bill and I will be doing the cooking for the next six days and this should leave us free at the time the ship is expected Dick and I are doing three days each of the Met work turn and turn about, started to pick up some specimens in the evening pack up some specimens in the evening, while Bill did some developing'*. Yes I was packing up prior to departure but that went on for quite a while. We didn't actually leave there till - when was it [turning more pages of journal] - January the 20th! When oh?

[0:40:47] Verdenius: You said January 20th smiles and....?

Andrews: What was it? Yes, this was the *Trepassey*. It was grand to see her coming in, but it was sometime before she saw the huts although we were in contact by WT. She steamed alongside a floe to which she anchored in response to a question by her captain. Vic asked for a boat to put off, Tom Allen and Vic took the dinghy out to them, they were on board for about an hour. Just as we saw them returning the *Trepassey* hauled up her anchor and steamed out into the sound again, which surprised us considerably! However it was explained as the boat came ashore, when the boat came ashore, that she'd gone to bring in the *Fitzroy*. Captain Burden had very kindly sent us a bottle of whisky. Much talk ensued while this was consumed [laughter], that's what I was smiling about! Tom told us the story of the fire at Deception Island, and the three months following it they'd had a pretty sticky time but had fortunately been housed and warmed, and warm. Yes, then I went to Deception; I was rather busy there and didn't keep any further records.

[0:42:45] Verdenius: Do you have the records from the propeller incident?

Andrews: Ah now when was that? [Sounds of turning pages and long gap] Third stage journey, July 27th:..... I wonder when that was? [Lots more page turning and long gap] Becca had pups it must have been after that. *'Confirmed Tom's fracture this morning, poor chap, it was his birthday, June the 9th. Spent some time in the morning putting a plaster on him - plaster appears to have got damp before, is not setting well. Cut off some rubber from one of Sam's valve casing to make a heel for him. Ah, still feeling bad and head is worse mainly frontal and post orbital, temperature 99.9, pulse 104, respiration-24. Went to bed early. Vic suggested a day in bed tomorrow'* [more page turning].....Yes, you see this sort of thing happened: *'Head felt a bit better and still feeling ill Got up to repeat the plastering of Tom's leg; used baked Sloan's bandages this time. Just finished when Dick came in with an eye damaged by his whip, he'd been driving a team! I stained it with Fluorescein and found a large traumatised area in the middle of the cornea. Vision on this side was all hazy and limited to appreciation of light, being normal on the right side. Castor oil drops instilled on a pad and bandage applied retired to bed again with a bad headache!'* That was Vic, he was the head, the captain of our base - no that was Dick actually, not Vic, sorry, Dick. *June the 15th not too well, Tom's plaster not set. Dick's eye much better cornea nearly healed vision improving. Head better June 16th taking Sulphur Fisdal taken a total of 30grammes, Dick's eye practically well, cornea has healed, sight normal, got up in the evening as was his birthday'*Yes,. you see. *'Got up at 10am this morning, still had a bit of a head on*

waking. *Baked some more plaster for Tom, with poor success*'. Yes, I couldn't get them to set. *'Had a call from Port Lockroy base A. re: a fractured ankle query but Slessor from base E at Marguerite Bay was found before I was contacted*'. You see they were three or four hundred miles away across the sea! [Laughter] There was no way we could get to them. *'Finished reading Neal's history of Elizabeth*'. No, were was that had blister....that was when we were, yeah June the 6th that was after - bear with me a moment will you? I'm not very well organized here am I?

[0:49:09] Verdenius: Maybe at that moment you were not able to make diary notes as it must have been quite short?

Andrews: Yes, that's right. I wasn't, not quite sure what that was about I'd forgotten about that. *'Sledging up to Andrew.*' [Lots more page turning, long gap]. It's not quite what I wanted though I'd - sorry about that, I thought?

[0:50:53] Verdenius: How much time did it take for this information to get across?

Andrews: Well we had a daily - no twice daily - link ups with the meteorological base at Port Stanley because we were responsible for keeping them informed of the meteorological records that we kept each day. You see we were taking temperature readings and various other things: temperature, wind force, precipitation, cloud cover, barometric readings and when possible balloon ascents and sending them back twice a day to the Falklands for incorporation in the South Pacific forecast. Just let me have a look - I have got another book here? [More page turning]. I may have written it in this, May the 3rd - no that's not it, it must have been, yeah sent out a dog on a sledging expedition without realising it was pregnant and she produced pups on the way! [Laughter]

[0:52:37] Verdenius: What happened to the pups she had?

Andrews: Well, we had to put them down because no way she could look after them, nor could we.

[0:52:51] Verdenius: You wrote in pencil and still there after all this time?

Andrews: Pardon?

[0:52:59] Verdenius: Pencil and it's still there?

Andrews: Yes of course, and it ran out and sometimes you couldn't use them they froze! Yes that's why I've got to put it in, excuse me a minute, in on tape? [Large gap]....*'Fracture of the 5th left rib near the costochondral junction decrepitation and pain on natural compression*' - it was from hitting the sledge with my chest I think, terrible! The longest journey I think I did in one day was 50 miles and the shortest was a 100 yards! Long sledge journey, no 30 odd miles our longest day our longest run yet. Oh I know what happened it's the 4th sledge journey. I haven't been through these things really since I wrote them 40 years ago, so I've rather forgotten when some of these things happened. It was when out when I was doing that survey work. September the 14/15th....November the 6th, there's a big gap

there. August the 14th. [Lots more sorting of papers]. I should have looked out all this before you came shouldn't I?!

[0:56:30] Andrews: Yes this was an interesting episode that might amuse you. 'Sent off a greetings letter telegram to my sister Catherine for her birthday: *'During the morning the wind rose to a force 6 and by 16.00 it was force 8 from then rapidly increasing in strength and when I went out to take the obs at 19.00 it had reached force 11, while gusts of hurricane force over 65 knots per hour were recorded 1 gust was 71 knots! I took a long ski stick with me to cross to the screen'* (this was the Stephenson screen for the meteorological observations, as we did every three hours). *Visibility was under 50 yards; I had crawl out of our tunnel on my hands and knees, it took me sometime to stand up with the aid of the stick! I was blown over twice on the way to the screen in spite of the stick and got swept several yards each time. The only way I could stop was by falling on to my hands and knees and clawing at the ground, the whole trip about, 50 yards each way, took me about 20 minutes. I was so long that Sam gave up his WT schedule to see what had become of me!? The chimney of mess room Esse got blown off the ceiling. Sam went out to take the 21.00 observation but was unable to reach the screen and had to retreat after getting halfway across, which took him 10 minutes. Fortunately I'd put Maggi and her pups in a kennel early in the afternoon and chained Hobbly up to the safe side. The storm raged all night, was still force 10 early this morning. September the 11th. - I found that Maggi had again transferred her pups from the kennel to the tin galley, which in a force 10 or 11 gale is some feat'*. I must have got it here I can't remember when it was?

[0:59:28] Verdenius: Can you close the curtain?

Andrews: Oh, I'm sorry. Pull the other one or I'll do it. You alright then?

[0:59:49] Verdenius: Some questions in my mind for a few minutes now.

Andrews: Yes go ahead!

[0:59:53] Verdenius: You talk, in when you first got interested in Antarctica by reading a book by a doctor - written by a doctor?

Andrews: No I was first interested in it actually when I was at school. We had a member of Scott's expedition who came to give us a lecture and what they'd been doing out there and it absolutely fascinated and thrilled me! And I was, from then on I was interested in it and read his books, Scott's books, of the Antarctic, and then because I got busy doing, working for my medical degrees and during the war one wasn't really thinking about anything much except dealing with problems immediately to hand, and it was at the close of the war when the Japs surrendered that it became possible to think about doing something else. And most of us as I say were going into the services, I with a view to the navy, and sitting round the dinner table one night, somebody had said he was going to go down to the Antarctic - he had an opportunity to go. We'd both been at Cambridge together and he was my junior actually, my immediate junior, but was going to get married, and so he said he'd had to give it up and would probably try and go the following year, and I said 'Well, was there still a place

vacant?’ and he said ‘Yes’, so I saw the chap he’d seen in the Colonial Office and before I knew what had happened it was all fixed up, [laughter], and I was delighted!

[1:01:43] Verdenius: You weren’t married?

Andrews: No I wasn’t married, I didn’t get married till 1955, rather later on when I’d got all my degrees and become, well no hadn’t become a consultant then it was the following year.

[1:02:04] Verdenius: You got to Antarctica?

Andrews: Yes that’s right. Yes I’ll have to try and find out the date when that happened, it will mean reading this through rather carefully and you know I’m taking up your time unreasonably!

[1:02:22] Verdenius: Oh I’m here, it takes patience, but to carry on you saw somebody from the Scott expedition is that so?

Andrews: Yes, I can’t remember who it was! You must remember that this was back in...1932/33!

[1:02:45] Verdenius: But what fascinates me is that to have all these stories from Antarctic expeditions until 1922/23, Scott’s and the story about well *The Worst Journey in the World!*

Andrews: Yes, Apsley Cherry-Garrard, yes.

[1:03:05] Verdenius: Cherry-Garrard yes, these are stories hardly with a happy end!

Andrews: With hardly a happy end!?! Well that’s right they were, but I think ours had a happy end? We had a very happy year down there, we did a great deal of work a tremendous amount of survey work. I initiated a programme of research work into the penguin rookeries because nobody knew for example whether they came back to the same nests, whether it was the same birds that came back to the same nests and whether they did it year after year? So I carefully located some sites where birds were nesting, observed from observations male and female, marked them both, and recorded the nest sites with compass bearings and photographs and all the rest of it so that the following year when my successor came they were able to find the same nests, and see if the birds came back to them, and they did for several years. I can remember for how long and quite a lot of work was done on it, but that I think I must have tabulated about half dozen to a dozen nests altogether and they were all being followed up closely and we learnt a lot from it, which we didn’t know before John - no William Sladen was the man who did the subsequent follow up work on that; he was my best man at my wedding!

[1:05:00] Verdenius: Did you know him before?

Andrews: Not before I went down there, no, not before he went down there rather, although I think I had met him on the athletic field at one stage because he used to run and I used to jump and run for Cambridge and at London University as well. But those things rather took

second place during the war years, there wasn't much, it wasn't as active as it was subsequent to the war.

[1:05:45] Verdenius: But when you went to the Antarctic you didn't consider it to be a risky operation?

Andrews: When I went down there, I never really gave it a thought actually! [Laughter]. One is young and adventurous and the prospect of going down there so thrilled me that I really wasn't, and anyway as a doctor I knew how to handle most things with a reasonable degree of care and attention. But what I didn't bargain for was that I might have to do it by myself - I nearly decided to take out my own appendix at one stage!! But I got windy from two points of view I think and decided it was probably not very wise!!

[1:06:30] Verdenius: How would you do it?

Andrews: Well local injection - and it's been done before - and you open it up and just take it off, but local anesthetic!

[1:06:46] Verdenius: With a mirror or something?

Andrews: Well you might need mirrors, yes, and you'd need some help. Trouble is if you'd got somebody holding it who didn't know what they were doing and probably faint in the middle! And anyway I decided that I wasn't going to and had not got appendicitis and I wasn't going to take my appendix out! [Laughter]. But one never really thought about those things before we went.

[1:07:27] Verdenius: Your relatives, family and friends?

Andrews: Did I have any?

[1:07:36] Verdenius: I mean your family or friends and people who stay at home did they consider it a risky?

Andrews: Oh yes I think so. I know my mother did she was most unhappy about my going! [Laughter]

[1:07:55] Verdenius: That's usual.

Andrews: Yes but I was headstrong! [Laughter] Oh yes this was an interesting session which I'd forgotten about. *'November the 6th Wednesday, November the 7th Thursday this morning after a big breakfast of penguin eggs I bet Tom that I could beat him over a 100yards and the silly ass took it up! I think he was the more surprised when I got my things on to do it, it was decided to run the race from the front door down to the winch on George Rocks and back. John Francis started us with a gun and Alan timed it everyone watching! It was hard going over soft snow, Tom fell over halfway there, the return run uphill was even worse. However we both completed the course, myself leading in by 45 seconds. Thereafter we sat in chairs by the fire until recovered!'* [Quite a while!] [Laughter!] *'Another fry up of eggs this evening'* [Verdenius: eggs?] Yes, penguin eggs, yes that's right.

[1:09:25] Verdenius: Did you also eat penguin?

Andrews: Yes we did, chiefly the livers and breasts but there was much else on them really. But it made a nice change from the tinned stuff we had available.

[1:10:01] Verdenius: I've never seen a cook book with penguin recipes in!?

Andrews: I don't think there is one! [Laughter]

[1:10:10] Verdenius: Did you get the recipes?

Andrews: No, the only cooking book we had was one called the *Edinburgh Cook Book* largely based on wartime, on the availability of wartime materials, foodstuffs. Apart from that we had to rely on our past knowledge such as it was. Fortunately I'd spent a bit of time watching my mother cooking and got interested in it when I was lad so that I knew a bit about it, but I had to cook the bread when I first went down there and didn't get it to rise very well at the start of it, but of course it was dried yeast.

[1:11:01] Verdenius: I always thought or I read somewhere that to the 50s or so that Antarctic expeditions suffered from vitamin deficiency?

Andrews: Yes that's right. Well I went down there - it's interesting you should say that because I went down there and on the way down we went through South America. We had loads of oranges and fresh fruit and all sorts of thing like that, and I reckoned that we were, although I had no means of measuring it apart from clinically I reckoned we that were full of ascorbic acid. I therefore from then on kept the members of my base on 50mg of ascorbic acid a day after we'd used up the initial fresh food and vegetable that we had that we'd taken down with us, which didn't last for very long of course! But I then didn't any personally for some three months I think it was, and eventually began running into symptoms suggesting ascorbic acid deficiency, vitamin C deficiency, after which I thought it was wise to start taking them myself so I did! But it took about three months for that to happen.

[1:12:45] Verdenius: In the 17th century on ships?

Andrews: That's right yes that's right.

[1:12:51] Verdenius: In the 17th century.

Andrews: Well we weren't different from that really because we had to rely entirely on our own abilities, on the food and things we'd taken with us, our own capacity to add additional supplies which was not very extensive. Seals were usually available and we used to eat seal liver, as well as the seal brains, very good they were too, and occasionally seal meat, but we didn't like seal meat very much, it was very, very fishy, still it was edible and if you're hungry you don't worry! [Laughter] And we had a few penguins and when the penguins

started laying eggs there were a great joy to us; we were very glad of them, they kept very well you see, you could, in the cold, we kept them for ages.

[1:14:12] Verdenius: What kind of links were there with the outside world?

Andrews: Only wireless telegraphy, radio - you don't call, it wireless telegraphy now do you? Only radio links. Yes, the wireless officer had I think it was twice a day links with Port Stanley.

[1:15:00] Verdenius: The role when you were there for instance 1945/1946, just after the war, a lot of political situations, new situations developing?

Andrews: In the world at large do you mean?

[1:15:26] Verdenius: Did it play any role?

Andrews: Well no, we were pretty well cut off from all that you see. There's a blank in my mind about all that happened in the best part of two years that I was away, but we used to hear occasionally about floods in England and about the - occasionally we got things coming through about the Munich trials, about Göring and Goebbels and others at the Nurmberg Trials that's right! And the evacuation from India, the handing over of the Indian, the British Raj to the Indian government and all that took place while I was away. I still have gaps in my knowledge about what went on then; well I've read all about it since but it's not a memory that I have, as you would have had it?

[1:16:50] Verdenius: Did you hear things happening on the radio?

Andrews: Yes we could and did, but it was so meaningless. We used to suffer from what we called, we dubbed Hope Bay disease! You'd hear about the most terrible disasters at home, of people being flooded and rivers bursting their banks and people being washed out of their homes and all sorts of things, and we'd collapse in ridiculous laughter because it was so meaningless to us, we hadn't got any contact with rain let alone floods! And so we eventually gave up listening to it because it didn't really seem to matter very much. We were too busy anyway, and let me tell you this, that it was very hard work living out there! For example if you wanted to have a bath, the first thing to do was announce at breakfast time that you were going to have a bath that day and everybody commiserated with you, and then after breakfast you went and cleared out the bathroom from the debris left by the previous occupant, then the first thing you did was to go down to the wood store and dig out some wood from the snow and then down to the coal store and dig out some coal or anthracite and bring that back and start the bogie fire going in the bathroom. Then you went out with a sledge and collected together as many big tins as you could fill them up with clean snow, preferably away from the penguin rookery or the dogs, because you didn't like washing in penguin odour or dog mess either, and it was quite difficult at times to find decent snow to do that with. Anyway we used to do that, melt it on the fire, on top of the fire, and leave it there

to heat up by which time you were ready for lunch! And then after lunch you'd go and have your bath, peel off all your gear and have a good tub, and discovered I could get my shoulders underneath the water, I remember, by lifting my legs in the air [laughter]. We just had a round tub, a galvanised one like we've got out there, then we'd put all your clothes in afterwards and stamp on them and gave them a bit of a wash, hang them up to dry over the fire while it still burned and dried yourself off and got into something new! Then collapsed in the chair waiting for dinner by which time you'd had a day's work - that was bath day!

[1:19:58] Verdenius: Bath day, of course a long day's work meant that you had no room in your mind to keep a check on the things that were happening elsewhere in the world?

Andrews: Well yes.. I suppose so, but we were usually catching up with things that had to be done around the base. There were always dog harnesses to repair, traces to mend, sledges to build up or repair - they were getting broken - sledge runners needed to be replaced, and dogs had to be looked and fed and treated. We only fed them every other day at base, every day out sledging, and they always had to be looked at and to keep an eye on to make sure they weren't getting into difficulties or troubles. We kept them on wire spans because they'd tend to run off during the summer months anyway, and here you see *'September the 14th another day of bright sunshine. Sam again went to Nobby with the dogs, I again cleaned out the passage to the mess room a bit and fed the pups and bitches. After 11 o'clock Sam and I started to dig a pit for the seal buried out somewhere near the anthracite dump. We continue after lunch with successive layers of ice and, and then we now have a pit about seven feet deep, 10ft by 6ft, so far no sign of seal! I suppose we shall have a blizzard tonight we will fill it all up again!?' Sam took the pups up to Nobby while I did the chores and dug a hole in the bay ice and took the sea temperature - after 11 o'clock it was 29.5°F. We had lunch on the roof today with all the pups around us angling for tit bits! Very pleasant in the sunshine with the air temperature at 21°F. After lunch as the tide was out I went down on to the bay ice and tested its thickness, three inches about 50 yards out from the shore. Thought I heard a penguin cry while I was down there but could find no sign of one'*. We had a penguin rookery of 120,000 birds, 50,000 nests just, oh, half a mile from us.

[1:22:50] Verdenius: Noisy!

Andrews: Oh terribly noisy when they were there!

[1:23:09] Verdenius: Let's go back to the radio operator for news and you also get news from home?

Andrews: We had occasional cables from home, birthdays and things like that. Let's see, I had a problem with one of the dogs.. *'One of the dogs had a fracture of the right ulna band. The following day after tea I got Hobbs in the kitchen and anaesthetised him with chloroform given through lint and muzzle of rubber covered wire - he behaved surprisingly well! Although he reacted a bit during the second stage I reduced the fracture and put a wooden splint behind and a cardboard support in front, padded and bound firmly on. Took some half*

hour to come round properly from the anaesthetic, seemed very fit. Unfortunately his splint soon worked loose and came off. Today we had the first meteorological report to be transmitted from a sledging party to the base from Tom at Saddle Island'. They'd gone out, - this was while I was recovering from...I don't know what that was, the business of actually living down there was very time occupying! 'September the 20th Friday: Once more went into the galley for a day's cooking. I made a canvas cover for one of John's maps, Vic did some printing and developing and John was busy making a new box to hold a theodolite. Alan finished off his jobs on the sledges, I gave a huge feed in the evening of omelettes, something pancakes and a steamed date pudding and the gannets wanted and had tinned fruit afterwards'! I got quite famous for making sponge cakes while I was down there, sponges.

[1:26:34] Verdenius: Sponge cakes?

Andrews: Yes from penguin eggs. It was a bit like Mrs Beaton really, you take six penguin eggs - it's the equivalent of 12 hens' eggs - I used to make very good sponge cakes! Yes you see: 'I forgot to coal up the Esse last night and it was out this morning and in consequence Sam and I decided to repaint the heat accumulator surround with asbestos to prevent the leak of gas. It proved to be a much bigger job than we expected as you could not get the plate off, the screws being tightly jammed. In the end we had to remove the whole of the enamel top. I plaited some lengths of asbestos fibre however to make a rope for the top and we finally got the thing going by midday. Snowing hard most of the day and 08.5% of precipitation last night. I had to dig 2 of the puppies out of a box this morning, they were quite content and unharmed! Tom's got as far as Vortex Island with Bill but they are having to relay over soft snow only making about three miles a day, so we shall not expect them till next week! [gap]'.

[1:28:43] Andrews: Oh here we are! *'October the 6th Sunday. Tom took over the cooking today, I went out to feed scraps to the puppies and was collecting one from the roof when I got hit on the head by the propeller of the wind generator! I was knocked off the roof and brought too by Maggie pawing at me. I managed to get down into the mess room where Bill took me on to the kitchen. I was bleeding freely from a two and half inch cut on the right obseverical region. I had some tea while the bleeding was being arrested - had to lie down for an hour or so for it to properly cease, and also because I was in no condition for much else! Tom got the surgical gear together and Bill cut away the hair around the wound. I had to tell Tom how to do everything and he picked it up very quickly. I drew him a picture of what to do then he scrubbed up and began to stitch it. I made brief examination but could neither prove or exclude a fracture! Tom described what sounded like a slightly torn aponeurotic layer. He gave me an injection of novotox around the wound and I had what appeared at the time to be a novocaine reaction, but in retrospect it may have be due to me sitting up! Put in four silk worm gut sutures and then bandaged me up. I took one grain of phenobarbitone and went to sleep while Sam informed Bingham of the proceedings. As a force 5 wind was blowing when I got hit I think I was fortunate to have got off so lightly! Sam, Tom and Bill took it - next day October the 7th, Sam, Tom and Bill took it in turns to do a three hour spell in the galley while I slept on the floor rather fitfully. No more bleeding occurred and I felt a bit better today. Gale blowing outside, October the 8th Tuesday.*

[1:30:51] Verdenius: I'm going to change my tape.

Andrews: Yes. You see, that was on October 6th that happened. By October the 10th I was back, October the 17th, October the 16th I'd had, Tom took out two of my stitches today. During the morning...Sam had a long talk with Widger on RT; it appears that the penguins have been back at Port Lockroy for some weeks. They also have two shag rookeries there and feeding off the birds. I tottered round the kitchen after dinner making biscuits. October the 17th Thursday: Got up after lunch and Bill showed me how to make photographic prints. During the afternoon Tom and Sam went to Seal Point where the former reports that some birds appear to be occupying the rookery. Temperature between 0 to 10° F. Retired to bed again after tea as I was feeling a bit sick! October the 18th Friday: Sam took over the cooking and after breakfast Tom took out the two remaining stitches in my head and cleaned up the wound area. Appears to have healed quite well he says. Got up after this and spent the day cleaning and putting away all the surgical instruments which had been used. Tom brought Hobbs in after lunch for me to see his leg which has not yet healed, the process is still mobile. Tom broke the kitchen window while digging the snow away from it this morning. There was four penguins outside the front door when he took the 1800 observations. I beat Bill at two games of chess and Tom at one in the evening. Also tried my hand on the accordion again - I was obviously getting better then!

[1:33:07] Verdenius: The what?

Andrews: The accordion, yes. I'd bought one from a chap who'd been down the previous year called David James, bought it off him, think I gave him a fiver for it, something like that, and I tried to learn how to play while I was down there. I could play a few things but not very well. I still have it actually somewhere!

[1:33:30] Verdenius: What did you play?

Andrews: Some Scottish reels and one or two Falkland Island songs.

[1:33:39] Verdenius: Falkland Island songs?

Andrews: Yes they had songs, largely derived from the gauchos in the Argentine, but done in English – (how did they go?) [Starts whistling then into song] *He's a toughest wild pony that roams on the range the little black horse with the long shaggy mane!* I can't remember, can't sing now I've only got one and half lungs! Ah, well there we are. Now what else can I tell you sir? Has that been of any interest?

[1:34:29] Verdenius: Yes. Was it the only instrument on the base?

Andrews: I had a mouth organ, used to play the mouth organ, I think we had a tin whistle down there too. Nobody else was terribly interested in things like that there. We used to

have, we used to get music on the radio - I can remember lying out on the sea ice in the Crown Prince Gustav Channel with Tom O'Sullivan and we had a little field receiver, a little six pound telegraphic wireless receiver, which we used, well we used them also to keep in contact with the base but they didn't work very well! But I can remember one night we lay down there on a bright moonlight night with the moon shining down, we'd just had a nice meal of seal meat and I set it up and we put it in a billycan to produce a resonance, and as I said, Tom and I leant back and listened to the promenade broadcast from the Albert Hall! [Laughter]. Promenade, the Henry what do you call them broadcasts, they were great fun, but it was only rarely we could get that, it was freak opportunity I think, no interruption. We ran into a lot of, whenever it was low cloud it was impossible to make contact with anyone, we had a certain amount. There were times when you could even from where we were you could see the aurora borealis which was a magnificent sight! Great sheets of curtains rolling round, green curtains rolling around!

[1:36:55] Verdenius: Have you ever been in a whiteout?

Andrews: Whiteout! Oh frequently yes, yeah not a very nice feeling specially if you don't know the land around, as we didn't. We were out sledging frequently in territory that had not been mapped, well nobody had been over, literarily nobody at all, so we didn't know what it was like and the only way that we could progress in a whiteout - you know what a whiteout is of course? - and if you see a black spot in front of you, you don't know whether it's a stone a yard away or whether it's a mountain top a mile away.

[1:37:40] Verdenius: Of the contrast it becomes so low you can't distinguish it?

Andrews: Yes that's right and the only way we progressed in those circumstances was, and we had to going on a compass course, so we had our 35 foot long leather whips for controlling the dogs and you throw that out in front of you and if it lay flat on the ground you walked to the end of it and that was that! If the last ten feet say collapsed in a huddle you realised there was a cliff wall there, so you couldn't get that way, and if the last 10 feet just disappeared from view you didn't go that way either because it was a dip going down! And we used, when we were up in the mountains trying to cross a col or something that was the way we used to progress, throw out the 35 foot long leather whip on what compass course we were going on and follow it for as long as we could.

[1:38:49] Verdenius: Do you remember, when going back?

Andrews: Yeah, well I did it by degrees because I went to Deception Island after I'd finished at Hope Bay, and I spent some time there with ships coming and going all the while and people coming and going so I got used to meeting people again! But then eventually we, and then we also did a tour a trip round in the boat looking at various things like Paulet Island, where Nordenskjold hut was as I showed you in a picture, and we visited one or two of the other bases to help relieve them and help to get things going for the subsequent year, so that I did a fair bit of travelling around in the boat there. And then eventually when we went back

to Port Stanley the thing that I noticed first was that before Port Stanley, before the Falkland Islands, came into view over the horizon I was standing in the bows, and suddenly I said I can smell grass! And sure enough a bit later they came into view, the islands came into view, and you could smell this wonderful smell of grass - that was my first introduction! And then coming down into the sound of course we saw people running up and down on the quayside, one of who was a lady wearing a skirt - that opened our eyes a bit! [Laughter]. And then when we'd done our various chores back at the base, at Port Stanley, three of us Vic Russell, Alan Reece and my-self got permission to go back through South America, and we did a trip from Montevideo to Buenos Aires, and then up on the Chaco hills through there to the north of Argentina. Across into Bolivia and to Peru we drove, we went over the Andes on the train 16,000 feet and down the other side, hired an old Ford V8 and drove it for about two or three hundred miles across the desert up into....? Oh the other thing we did before that in Bolivia we crossed Lake Titicaca in that boat to Cuzco, and from Puno to Cuzco and that was fascinating, and we visited Machu Picchu long before it was opened up to tourists, climbing up on the backs of mules. That was long haul! Then we came out through British - that's interfering with you thing isn't it!? [Sounds like a vacuum cleaner is running!]

[1:43:00] Verdenius: Yes, I'll try and get up close!

Andrews: It'll stop in a minute [No it didn't!].....sorry about that!

[1:43:32] Verdenius: OK.

Andrews: Then we flew out to British Columbia [note: may have meant British Guyana and not Columbia] and then eventually Jamaica and we came home in a banana boat from there!

[1:43:53] Verdenius: So then straight back to England, yes?

Andrews: Well no we didn't, they wouldn't let us do that again in subsequent years!

[1:44:05] Vedenius: I was just wondering, what some people have told me on the phone sitting in Halley Bay for instance talking out what it was like to go back, because you've been there for two years or three years will you fit in society again?

Andrews: Well I don't think those thoughts crossed our minds because we'd had a very busy year what with one thing and another and a lot of work had been done, and we'd all got on very well together. There'd been the occasional squabble but nothing, all very terribly short lived and we're still great friends all of us actually. Only four of us alive still, and four of us have died. And it never occurred to us that we wouldn't fit back, at least it never occurred to me that we wouldn't fit back into society, wasn't any reason why it should!

[1:45:38] Verdenius: You told me about self-reliance. I think if you'd been there for some time working in those conditions you get this kind of independence?

Andrews: Yes, you get an independence.

[1:45:44] Verdenius: You learn about yourself?

Andrews: Yes that's right.

[1:45:57] Verdenius: You can improvise?

Andrews: That's right, you get to know what your own capabilities are and what you can do and can't do. There was one occasion we were going back and we lost our camp - I showed you those pictures - when I got stuck. In the end we had three teams of dogs, mine was the biggest team of ten dogs and the other two in front were lighter, and mine was the heaviest sledge carrying the greatest weight and when we got back down on to the sea ice. We'd been up on the Plateau for months and we'd only seen the sky on two occasions, most of the rest of the time it was blowing a blizzard and all the snow that had fallen was being blown on to the sea ice, and when we came down on the sea ice it was very rough going! And we travelled along in it and I got stuck on a sastrugi, one of the sastrugi, and it took me some time to get clear. By the time I got clear the others had gone on and I didn't know what direction they'd gone in, hadn't got a compass bearing to go on, so I sat and waited for a bit which was the thing to do really. And then I started going out on compass traverses from the sledge to see if I could improve my chances of meeting up with them and it was on one of these that I met Vic Russell coming back to find me, because he knew where he was which of course I didn't! [Laughter]. And we all caught up again but I'd reached the point where I'd decided I'd have to put up the little tent. We all carried a little pup tent on our little thing, you could put up and crawl into if you needed to, to spend the night there till the weather improved. However we spent the night, we got our tents up eventually and come the morning Tom rolled over in his sleeping bag and said 'My feet are wet!' so I said - [you're not recording this are you?]

[1:48:23] Verdenius: I am!

Andrews: Oh just watch my language! We, never mind, I said 'You silly ass you've knocked the pee can over!' and he said 'No I haven't', so I turned over to see what he was at and I discovered that my sleeping bag was wet at the bottom end, and we looked down at the tent entrance which is a round hole and were horrified to see water coming in(!), and it was at about a quarter of the way up the hole. So I said to him 'Look, we better get out of here quick!' So we scrambled out through the hole and through the snow and up on to a surface, because the snow had been coming off all night long from the Plateau and pushing down and we'd parked near a tide crack which we didn't realise, and the weight of snow had pushed the ice down and the water was coming up over the top of it! So we scrambled out of that and hurriedly went to tell the others what had happened in the other tent, John and Vic Russell, and they said 'Oh dear well you better come in here.' We couldn't dig the tent out it was still blowing a force 10 gale, and we hadn't been in there very long before water started coming into that one. So Vic said 'We've got to get out of this!' So we started trying to dig it out,

and you try standing up in a force 10 or 11 wind and dig it out the snow that's halfway up your tent and it's like trying to cleanse the Augean stables - for every shovelful you dig out seven more go back in! And it took us, we'd broken up in the morning and it took us till late in the afternoon to dig that tent out and to try and put it up on firm snow above! And we had, I remember we had of these four they were pyramidal tents with double walls and you had four poles and the technique was to put one pole up into the wind and then to spread the two diagonal from it and then put a third out at the back, the fourth one out at the back, and we managed to get the tent up in a force 10 gale and we'd just about got it there and the flaps covered when the, one of the poles snapped, and it was the only time I ever heard Vic Russell swear! [Loud laughter]. And we eventually strapped that to an ice spear and put it all up again and we crept into it absolutely exhausted and Dick said 'Well we better try and have something to eat now, it's getting dark', and he went to try and find the dogs and we then discovered that one of them had been suffocated!

[1:52:23]Andrews: And we'd been on half rations for the best part of a week because we'd been up there longer than we intended on the Plateau journey, and we were going to pick up two other chaps who were man-hauling, Bill Croft who was doing some palaeontology studies on one of the islands, so we were going round to pick them up, that was that leg of the journey. And when we found this dog dead we hurriedly dig the rest up because they were on wire spans next to the sledges, the sledges had disappeared from view so we had to dig those out as well! And we got the dogs clear and they hadn't been fed for several days and were getting a bit weak and the dead dog I was commissioned to carve while it was still warm or warm enough to carve into meat for all the others! And we had I think 22, well was it about 28 dogs I think, something like that with us and I had to carve this dog up into 28 pieces, and I remember being so hungry that I looked at this dogs liver as I carved it up and I thought to myself 'A bit of that that'd go jolly well in a frying pan!!' [Laughter] Then I had a sort of feeling that dogs' liver was not very good for one, I can't remember why I think it was something to do with tape worms so I thought better of it, in fact I don't think it would have mattered but anyway. I succeeded in carving it up into a piece for each of the dogs and left them to get on with it so they had a bit of a feed. And we ended up from that, with one sledge practically empty and one bit of a tent, well in fact we had to leave both tents behind because come the following morning we had a terrible night, we were shivering and shaking all night long in wet sleeping bags with, we had double wall sleeping bags and ours had been lost in the tent and were useless anyway, and the other two they took apart so we had one half each as it were, zipped up. And we lay head to tail in this tent shaking and shivering all night long, it was a very uncomfortable that night I do remember. And in the morning Vic Russell said, look it was still blowing half a gale, he said 'I think we better get back home with dogs', which we set loose, and the one sledge that we'd got, and we did just that! Got back to, and that was hard work, got back to the base. We had a 1500 foot pass to climb over crevasses to get there and it was about 30 miles away, well it was here you can see. [Note: They must be looking at a map].

[1:56:01]Andrews: All that took place there I'll show you, View Point, here we are! We'd gone up here - where's Summit Pass? - yeah. No we'd gone up here along Broad Valley, Mischief Pass that's right, we got up to there and then across to here and we tried to cross this

Col here - anyway we didn't get very far, we got a little way along here I've forgotten exactly where, somewhere about here, then we eventually came back and came round, no came round here to View Point....and I think we lost our tents somewhere along this coastline there, so we had to come back here and up over the pass here, Last Hill, then we are up over the pass here which is a rise of about 1500 feet and then down across the end into Hope Bay where's your thing?

[1:57:49] Verdenius: It's here. [Sounds of map being opened more].

Andrews: Which was a journey of about 30 miles I suppose [more map sounds] and only when we'd recovered sufficiently. Yes came over the top here, see, over there down to Hope Bay across that little tip and we had, we arrived eventually looking like scarecrows! We'd lost a lot of weight and when we got in Sam Small and Alan Reece, bless them, had just made a huge big - we were overdue incidentally we should have been there a day or two before - they'd made a huge big trifle in big basin. I can remember we fed off that, four of us, and it just vanished! I said 'Listen chaps you mustn't eat too much it'll hurt your stomach!' and they said, 'We'll be blowed to that!' and I said the same thing. And we ate the available loaves of bread they'd got and any meat that was available and our tummies were out like balloons, and we lay back on our bunk groaning, but feeling very full! It was an interesting experience being that hungry I can tell you, because we'd been on half rations for a week I think, and we weren't really getting sufficient rations to maintain body weight at the time, although we didn't know it. Anyway after 24 hours or so to recover we got the gear together, no we got another team of dogs organized and another sledge and were just going out to collect the two chaps that had been man-hauling when they walked in through the door! [Laughter]. They'd come back under their own steam and managed to do it without any trouble so they'd done rather better than we had. I hope that interested you!

[2:0:37] Andrews: I wonder when that was? That would have been the winter journey wouldn't it, the first winter journey sledge journey 1946? Where's 46, April? [much turning of diary pages] Yeah that's it, things sprung up during the night, [long gap, pages being turned] yet once again, May 13th

[2:02:31] Andrews: Ah that's right! There was very little to do but wait till someone came back for me, or night fell. Fortunately I had a pup tent with me, just started setting out on a compass course for my sledge in various directions to increase the chance of meeting the others, when I sighted Vic. The others had gone on about a mile before missing me! Then we got back: *'I am Tom and I horrified to find water rising in our tent two or three inches above the ground sheet. May the 18th'*. Yes I'd forgotten we'd spent a night on the sea ice there before we went up - yes there we are, that's the story..Oh yes I'd forgotten: *'At Summit Pass we fed the dogs from some pemmican depot'd there earlier; it was wonderful to see how quickly the picked up after the meal! Even Sidney was able to walk after it, [that's my dog there, I'll show you afterwards]. We ourselves fell ravenously on the ration box there and ate two bars of chocolate each and some biscuits, and moved on for 14.30 hours and were able to ride on the sledge as the dogs pulled well, made good time to Nobby where we lose three of*

our 9 pulling dogs at the crest, we lose them, leaving Hobbs, Scotty and Schooly to pull us. They tore down the fast surface and we had several spills! Sam and Alan came out with lamps to greet us as it was quite dark at 17.50 hours; be a long time before I lose the impression of that meeting and the cheerful welcome they gave us! They had food already for the dogs and we fed as soon as they had been spanned out, Sam soon had a wonderful meal of roast lamb going for us and he made a huge trifle which we nearly made ourselves ill over eating! John, Tom and my frost bitten fingers and wrists I had to dress, got up very late the following day May the 20th and revelled in a fine breakfast'. There we are. 'I made some fudge by the Esse', I shall have to put all this into better English! Well sir, I don't know whether that is of interest to you?

[2:06:21] Verdenius: Yes, I think it's sort of.

Andrews: I'm sorry it's been a bit incoherent but I haven't, to be honest I haven't read those things since I wrote them, and that's 40 years ago!

[2:06:47] Verdenius: Well I'm still incoherent since I started this research interviews into this series!

Andrews: Well I!

[2:07:00] Verdenius: One thing, would you ever consider going back?

Andrews: Oh I'd love to go back yes, I would. I was given the opportunity to go back in fact with Bunny Fuchs on the Trans Antarctic Expedition that he was running, and I encouraged several of my junior colleagues to go down afterwards, to follow in our footsteps, but I would dearly liked to have gone, but my just having married my wife and having taken my exams she wouldn't let me! She said, 'No you're not going again!' Well she didn't actually say that but I knew that's what she didn't want me to do, and we got married rather late in life. She and I were both 36 when we got married and we wanted a family and I couldn't do that and hold down the job I was doing! But I would have given my ears to go again, especially when I was offered the opportunity!

[2:08:21] Verdenius: When what?

Andrews: When I was offered the opportunity. I maintained a very active interest in it all since given lots of lectures about it. Curiously I've not read those diaries forever, what?

[2:08:39] Verdenius: Not for the lectures?

Andrews: No, well I didn't need to, my memory of it all was still very clear. Dates were not important it's the events that mattered and those I remember in startling detail!

[2:08:57] Verdenius: I find this very interesting to hear that things, the whole thing seems to take place under a sort of bubble?

Andrews: Bubble yes!?

[2:09:16] Verdenius: The outside world becomes irrelevant?

Andrews: Well it has to when you're in that sort of situation,. You can't stop and think about the problems of Russia and the Cold War developing, and all the things that happen back in the civilised existence when your battling with a force 10 gale and trying to put up a tent, soaked to the skin, shivering like anything, hungry as could be and everything collapsing around you! You don't have time to worry what people are doing in the rest of the world and you're not really very interested either! No, it was very fascinating time, it was very formative time in character terms and we all, I think all of us grew up quite a bit. One chap found it a bit hard I know....he left a wife at home but he was a good soldier and he did, he was very good really - I was fond of him poor chap, he's dead now! He had bronchitis badly. Yes there are only four of us left now, Vic Russell up in Scotland, he's the leader of our base, Tom O'Sullivan who lives here in Purley, and Sam, Stewart Small, who's in Norway. We're all a bit the worse for wear even Tom, and he's the youngest of us, he's got bad joints, but I hope we shall all meet again at the Antarctic Club dinner on the 30th of April this year which I'm looking forward to, and they've honoured me by asking me to be President!

[2:11:31] Verdenius: The BAS Club?

Andrews: No that's the Antarctic Club!

[2:11:36] Verdenius: The Antarctic Club?

Andrews: Which pre-existed the BAS Club. The BAS Club is the British Antarctic Survey's club and that was instituted following the handover of it all by the Colonial Office to the British Antarctic Survey, when it all started out. I forget which year that was and it goodness knows and it, and we all got on terribly well, still firm friends half a century later! Now sir, good gracious is that the time!

Some interesting clips:

- Talks about the very limited and basic medical supplies and him taking the first penicillin to the Antarctic. [0:15:13]
- Talks about all the other base members and their roles in the base life. [0:27:51]
- Talks about Christmas 1946 and how it was celebrated, and hearing about the US party going to Stonington. And the government being asked by the US to remove the British party already there, which didn't happen. [0:32:22]
- The problems of doing Met observation in a force 11 gale. [0:56:30]

- Challenged to a foot race by Tom which was run from the back door in soft snow, which he won easily! [1:07:55]
- The so called 'Hope Bay Disease' which meant you had for one or two years no idea of World events because of the isolation! [1:16:50]
- Operating on one the dogs called Hobbs. [1:23:09]
- Being hit and injured by the propeller of wind generator which was on the roof of the base hut, then stitched up one of the other base members! [1:28:43]
- Of learning to play the accordion, and sings part of a Falkland Island drovers song! [1:33:07]
- The trip home via South America with two of the other base members. [1:38:49]
- Getting left behind with his sledge during in a whiteout. [1:45:57]
- The drama of finding you are in a flooded tent when waking up in the morning and how it all happened! [1:48:23]
- Over eating on the return to base after being on half rations! [1:57:49]
- Being offered the chance by Fuchs to be the doctor on the Trans Antarctic Expedition 10 years later, but had to turn it down. [2:07:00]

[Note: Some very interesting stuff covered, but some long gaps in the dialogue when looking at a map and reading his old diary. AW.]

