

JAMES BROADWAY

Edited transcript of a recording of James Broadway interviewed by Jaap Verdenius on 6th February 1993. BAS Archives AD6/24/3/22. Transcribed by Andy Smith, 12th April 2014.

[0:00:00] Broadway: ... and then came back and spent some more time analysing it, and so the time out of clinical medicine in the hospital was three years. If I had taken another year in the Antarctic, that would have been four years, and I think they felt that most doctors wouldn't be prepared to spend that amount of time out of the NHS, and so that they wouldn't be able to get back into the NHS and so they wouldn't be able to recruit people. So they let the doctor go for a year, which is ... Well you get the full experience of a year but you don't get ... I think a lot of the people on the base felt that the doctor was a bit unnecessary. He was paid a lot, paid a lot more than they were and they were only there for a year, and I think some people felt that that was a bit unfair, if you like, but that was the way it was. I felt, and I think the Survey feel that it is important to have a doctor there because if things do go wrong, you need someone to sort them out. I think that's right and I think most of the doctors give good value for money, if you like, because more often than not, as far as I am aware, there are things that happen: people injure themselves or get sick and it's important to have a doctor on the spot, really.

[0:01:51] Verdenius: It's important to have a doctor on each base? Because if you aren't there, you can't be present everywhere?

Broadway: On each base, do you mean? Yes, well, they have a doctor at Signy, because they do a lot of diving and diving is likely to cause problems. They have a doctor at Halley because Halley is so isolated. It's right on the Antarctic continent and they like to make sure that ... It's completely isolated. The ship comes once a year and they can only fly aeroplanes in for three or four months of the season, in the summer, and for the rest of the time you are isolated. So they like to have a doctor there. And they have a doctor at Rothera because that is the travelling base, and there is lots of flying and they have people out in the field. So they like to have a doctor available for that. And when I was there (I don't know what the situation is now), when I was there, they had a specially trained nurse at Faraday, which was the other base, who was able to be in close radio contact with the doctors at the other bases if necessary. And we all had communications back to the medical base in Aberdeen, which is where the medical side of things was run from. So with a fax machine or a telephone we could get in contact with anybody that we needed to, and get advice and things if necessary.

[0:03:36] Verdenius: It's all different from the 1946 experience?

Broadway: I'm sure it is, yes. I think one thing that it taught me was the ... It taught me a great deal about being independent. It gave me a lot of self-confidence, about diagnosing things, treating things. It also gave me a lot of self confidence in my general lifestyle and the way that you have to make up your own mind as to what's going on down there and what you are going to do. And I think it was a very good lesson in discipline. It teaches you that you are important but you are also vulnerable.

You are important to other people and other people are important to you. I think that's an important lesson to learn.

[0:4:36] Verdenius: Which way does this personal discipline get realised? Which way does this come across?

Broadway: Well I think it just means that you are better able to make decisions, and weigh up what's ... what the argument is for the way that you want to do things. I don't know really.

[0:05:08] Verdenius: Do you remember your first impression when you got there?

Broadway: When I got to the Antarctic? Well you see one of the things that I think is difficult is that unlike arriving in a new place by arriving in a port or unlike arriving at an airport in a new place, you arrive there on the ships. Certainly on the way down to Halley, you arrive there on a ship via various different points. It starts in the Falkland Islands and then we went to South Georgia and from there we went to Signy Island, and then from Signy right down into the Antarctic to arrive at Halley. So everything changes very gradually. South Georgia is different from Signy and Signy is different from Halley and so each place is different. But I think that there was an amazing sense of sort of beauty and awe. It was a very awesome experience in that everything was so quiet and everything was so clean and white, and bright and it was just ... Perhaps I will just have a look and see what ... I mean I might have written something here in my diary. [sound of rustling paper] It's not down there in December.

[0:06:57] Broadway: Well I must say that one of the things that was absolutely fascinating was going through the pack ice in the ship. That was something that was really awe inspiring to see the ship going through miles and miles of this pack ice. [rustling paper] Yes, we arrived after Christmas. [pause] It says here [reading from diary] 'I am getting quite excited as I reach my new home for a year. Hopefully Mobster Creek is going to be workable, at least early on, so relief won't be as arduous as it could be.' 'Arrived at Halley at 6am, having seen the big oil drum H.' There used to be, I don't know whether there still is, a huge H made up of oil drums all welded together, up on the cliffs. I suspect that that has fallen into the sea by now but we saw that at about 3am, and had a bit of sleep in between. All very exciting.

[0:08:36] Broadway: 'Once the captain was up, a ladder was thrown over the bows as we nudged the ice to let the lonely group of people on the ice come on board for their mail and to let the mooring party off. The old Halley men came on board to read their mail and then had breakfast. It was amazing to see how they looked at and ate fresh eggs, which they hadn't seen for a year. They ate them with great gusto.' And then I went off and started doing things. I do remember it being terribly exciting because I knew, here I was, going to arrive at this fantastic place which I was looking forward to getting to. And there it was: all these ice cliffs and the sea ice and penguins and seals on the sea ice. The whole thing was unreal if you like, and yet there I was, actually there. It was something that you ... I had never seen anything like it before, and very few people have been there. It was a very great privilege to be able to go somewhere where so few people, relatively few people have been, and experience what was going on. [rustling papers]

[0:10:20] Verdenius: You arrived at Christmas?

Broadway: Yes, we did, yes. There's the ... I've got the *Bransfield* Christmas menu. We arrived just after Christmas. We had Christmas Day, Christmas lunch. 'It doesn't seem like Christmas.' [pause] Yes here we are: [reading from diary] 'We stopped for lunch today. The captain just pushed the bows into a huge piece of sea ice to wedge us in.' They switched the engines off. It says here: 'They pushed the bows into a huge piece of sea ice to wedge us in, and we all enjoyed ourselves. It was great. Moving again after 3pm, and then full steam ahead in virtually open water. Much sleeping done and I felt extremely bloated having eaten far too much or so it seemed.' Huh! Then we actually arrived at Halley on the 27th of December. Then we had – how many days? until – until the 1st of January, anyway. We were doing Relief.

[0:11:53] Broadway: And then on the 3rd of January we started ... We were moving into a new base, which hadn't been completely finished in the previous year. There was still quite a lot of building work to be done. So for the next month (I think it was; what day did the ship leave?) we spent just getting the base ready, getting ready to close down the old base and move into the new base. The ship left on ... [pause; rustles paper, consulting diary] must have left on the 13th of February, so it was there for a month and a half and we were just getting ready, finishing off the building of the base, so that all the scientific equipment could be moved from the old base, which was 10 miles away, to the new base. I don't know if anyone has ... Have you spoken to anyone from Halley?

[0:13:34] Verdenius: From the '60s.

Broadway: From the '60s, right. So that must have been in 'Grillage Village'. Has anyone mentioned Grillage Village? No? The base was originally built in 1957¹ in the International Geophysical Year, and it was just a hut. And after a year the hut had been buried in snow. I might not have got the timings exactly right. And then they built another base, and because Halley is where it is, it tends to get buried with snow and after about 10 years the weight of the snow on top of the base tends to crush the base and it needs to be evacuated and rebuilt. And 1984 saw the opening of Halley IV – that was the fourth base at Halley – which was again an underground base. It was built on the surface and then the snow builds up on top of it and so we were evacuating Halley III because it was 60 feet under the surface of the ice and basically the weight of the ice had begun to completely crush it and destroy it.

[0:14:46] Broadway: So everything had to be moved out to the new base and the new base had been built 10 miles away from the old base. So we had to close all the scientific research down and transfer it all to the new base. So that needed to be done; so we did all that in that month and a half that the ship was there, erecting all the scientific aerials and digging tunnels to put the magnetic instruments in; all these sorts of things that had to be done, as well as the building work that was still going on on the base. It was all terrible exciting and that all took quite a lot of time and a lot of physical work. It was very tiring too.

¹ It was actually built in 1956, so that it was ready for the IGY.

[0:15:40] Verdenius: It's sort of fascinating: this building that sinks into the ice over time.

Broadway: In fact there were rather a lot of problems with the base that I moved into and within a year the building was moving with the pressure of the ice on it. Its design life was 10 years and it lasted ... Well it did last 10 years actually because they have only just moved into the new base, and this time they have built the base on stilts and they raise it up above the surface of the snow, so that the snow can blow underneath it and not fall on top of it. There is not very much snowfall at Halley but there is an accumulation from blizzards, from snow blown from other parts of the Antarctic, an accumulation of about a metre a year. There is quite a lot of snow blowing about in a blizzard.

[0:16:40] Verdenius: What kind of equipment did you have?

Broadway: From what point of view?

[0:16:49] Verdenius: A medical point of view.

Broadway: Medical point of view? Well we had a very well-equipped surgery. All the drugs and medicines come down from Cambridge or from London. They are all renewed every year. Everything you pack into big aluminium packing cases and is sent out and they send in a completely new set of new drugs and equipment. So nothing is ever out of date. They provided us with surgical packs that were prepacked so that they were all sterile, so we didn't have to worry about sterilising instruments and things if we needed to do an operation. There was an operating table, anaesthetic machine. I moved into this new base which had really quite a nice surgery, which had a room for a hospital bed, a hospital-type bed in it although that was kept stored in a cupboard most of the time, which meant that I had quite a nice big room in which to work, do my research and actually have a room that was my own. I was fortunate; most people on the base had to share an office but I had this nice big room that was mine.

[0:18:18] Broadway: The backup was good; there was no problem with backup and the equipment was good. Fortunately I didn't have to use very much of it. We had an X-ray machine, which I did have to use, and there was very little that was, other things that I would have wanted, and the Survey was very good at allowing me, or any of the doctors, if we wanted any specific medicines to take down or specific instruments or specific drugs or whatever, they would provide a certain amount of things for our own use if we were particularly skilled. For instance, I'd had experience in anaesthesia and I wanted to take some special needles and things down in case I ... so I could have done a regional anaesthetic technique if necessary, rather than give someone a general anaesthetic. So yes, the equipment was no problem at all,

[0:19:30] Verdenius: Amazing. Did you know you could expect such ??? [inaudible] equipment?

Broadway: Oh yes, because prior to going down, we had some training before we went down, went up to Aberdeen and joined the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary Casualty Department. We went to the Bacteriology Department and went to the Dental

Department. I went to the Eastman Dental Hospital and got some experience in removing teeth and putting in local anaesthetic blocks for dental work because although there was a dentist on the ship, and he saw everybody who was going down and everybody who was on the base so everyone got dental care during their stay, obviously the dentist wasn't there for 12 months and so there was a possibility that someone would need dental treatment. So I went and learned how to take teeth out and things at the Eastman.

[0:20:47] Broadway: So yes, we had quite a good training beforehand. Everyone went on a first aid course. Everyone who went down to the Antarctic had been on a first aid course, so everyone had been trained in first aid, in resuscitation and in what to do in certain difficulties. Because a lot of people in the Antarctic are actually on their own for a lot of the time. At Rothera, for instance, people are out in groups of two, completely alone out in the Antarctic and should they fall down a crevasse and break an arm or whatever, then they have got to be able to treat each other. And there is a very good book called *Kurafid*, which was written by one of the BAS doctors² many years ago and it has been updated, but that's a modified first aid book which has got lot of instructions about what to do.

[0:21:59] Broadway: And then everyone who is out in the Antarctic always has a radio, is always in radio contact with their main base, so there is always the possibility of talking to a doctor and getting advice, and then of course the doctor can either go out to see them or they can be brought back into the main base. The only thing that was a bit disconcerting was when we went on our 'holiday' and went travelling. When I was the doctor, I was travelling with three other people on our expedition, and obviously I had to be in contact with the base every day. We all had to be in contact with the base anyway but if anybody had got sick while I was away, it would have meant that I would have had to go back to base, which would have been a bit sad, really. But there we are; it didn't happen so that was fine.

[0:23:05] Verdenius: I am sure that the doctor has to look after the other people?

Broadway: On the base, yes.

[0:23:14] Verdenius: The doctor should usually look after people and keep track of things so you have few ill people. So they have fewer people ...

Broadway: Yes, that's true.

[0:23:28] Verdenius: You told me about your research in your glands – circadian rhythms. Apart from the experimental research, you had some observation on it?

Broadway: Well that's right. I was doing this research on the pineal gland and the hormone that it secretes, and it secretes the hormone in relation to the light/ dark cycle, and that is something that people have thought, ever since the first Antarctic explorers, that people tended to get depressed during the night, during the long Antarctic night. Where I was, we had three months of continual darkness; the sun didn't come above the horizon, and I was expecting people to be "depressed" and I

² John Brotherhood.

was looking for it. But actually being there, it is quite difficult, because you are all involved with each other, and actually looking for it was quite difficult. We didn't have anybody who was so depressed that they needed treatment, for instance, but generally, during the winter, during the long winter nights, people weren't as lively, people weren't quite as enthusiastic as they were during the summer, and I put that down to the fact that there was no sunlight. And certainly I did this research with some very bright sunlight-simulating lamps and subjectively, those people that were in the bright light group, as opposed to the control group, felt better.

[0:25:32] Broadway: I was just reading my diary the other day about this. I just happened to open it and I can't find it at the moment but it just said one person ... [rustling papers] Here we are ... [quoting from diary] 'Someone said this morning that he was a fan of the lights. Although he is not sleeping any longer time, he is convinced that the quality of his sleep is much better. Like me and someone else, he is blaming me for not being able to get up because he is sleeping better. Getting up this morning was like climbing out of a crevasse, he said.' So, you know, I think a lot of people in the winter found it quite difficult to sleep, and there were three people who were in the bright light treatment group, who actually said that they slept better and they put it down to the fact that they were being exposed to some bright light. And certainly when the sun came back, the whole base was sort of joyful and enthusiastic. I wonder what day the sun did come back [rustling papers]. I will just go to the next book. [pause] I don't know. I ought to be able to tell you when the sun came back, shouldn't I?

[0:27:57] Verdenius: It should come back.

Broadway: Oh it certainly did come back. I can't remember which day it actually came back. It must have been before that. Sorry, are you running out of tape?

[0:28:14] Verdenius: No.

Broadway: [Pause, rustling papers] '27th of June. Still feeling up and down; but more up than down. Worried about people not getting enough light.' I must have still been doing the experiment then. [pause] Hmm! I found – I actually haven't looked at this diary since I wrote it 10 years ago. 'Discovered from the base commander that our talk last Saturday ...' I can't remember what that was about. '... had been extremely useful to him because he hadn't realised the bitterness and antagonism that was rife amongst some base members. I must admit that I thought he didn't realise. This morning, sitting in front of the lights, Colin said that he felt it must be significant that the bright light group were up before the dim light group. I hope he is right.' [Pause]

[0:30:29] Broadway: Mm. Here we are: 19th of July. Obviously the sun was beginning to come back again, yes. 'Realised today that the sun is coming back and got quite excited. It seemed quite bright but that's just because it has been so dark. Our cameras still think it is dark.' [Pause] This is just amazing. I can't ... 31st of July, I don't seem to be able to ... You would have thought I would have written a great big thing 'Sun comes back today!' or something. Ah, here we are. 'Saturday 11th of August. Sun up today, so a day off in celebration. Not that we saw the sun. It has been manky ...' That meant ... That's a Fid word for really sort of grey, miserable day. '... for ages now. Broke the old flag out. No one seems to have supplied us with a new one, even

though that is what we are here for. Some champagne was opened. We had a lazy day. It is nice to have a two-day weekend on a Saturday, when you don't have to work or feel that you've got to work, but so many other things to do.' [Pause]

[0:32:28] Broadway: Yes. 'Been glorious weather: clear, calm and cold but now it's blowing 30 knots.' Huh. Yes, sorry, I don't seem ... I obviously didn't ... The day the sun came up obviously wasn't quite as good as I remember, probably. 'The sun setting on the clouds was a superb magenta hue, to the whole sky. Quite beautiful.' Yes, that's one thing that I did remember very vividly actually was the colours in the sky. They were pastel colours that were just ... I don't know if you have seen any of Edward Wilson's water-colours of the Antarctic that he did when he was down there with Captain Scott, and he has got the colours absolutely right. I don't think any photograph, certainly no photograph that I have seen, quite captures the subtle colours that he was able to capture in his water-colours that are just there. They are just different from anywhere else that I have ever seen.

[0:33:44] Verdenius: They were like pastel?

Broadway: Yes, pastel colours. Do you understand what that ...? Yes? Very sort of subtle and ...

[0:33:58] Verdenius: You can't find out their ...?

Broadway: No, you don't tend to see them, or if you do they are only here ... When you see them here, they are only there for a very short time because the sun is rising and setting much more quickly at this latitude than it is in the Antarctic, where the sun is very low for a long period and so you tend to see the colours on the clouds, reflected. There is also a lot of reflected colour from the ice, which gets reflected up onto the clouds somehow, and you get these lovely colours.

[0:34:38] Verdenius: What kind of contacts did you have with the outside world?

Broadway: We had, on the base there was a fax machine and we got faxes every day from Cambridge. So we had contact with Cambridge every day for official business, and we had some contact with our friends and families at home. We got 200 words a month on the fax machine which was free. We could pay for more if we wanted. There was also a telephone which we could use if we wanted to but it was very expensive and a lot of people, when they came down to the Antarctic, came down there almost in a way to get away from civilisation, if you like, and I certainly felt that I had gone down there partly because it was exciting to be completely isolated and not have to be phoning home all the time. My parents and friends didn't actually know that there was a telephone that we could have phoned them from. Whether they would have been upset had they known that I hadn't phoned, I don't know but ... So there was that contact. I am very keen on keeping up to date with what is going on in the world and so I used to listen to the BBC World Service.

[0:36:21] Broadway: We had a big short-wave receiver which was part of the communications equipment, and I used to tune into the BBC World Service every evening to listen to the World News. And I used to transcribe the main headlines of the news so that anyone who wanted to, on the base, could keep up with what was

going on in the world. One or two people weren't at all interested; they really just wanted to ... They didn't want to know what was going on in the world but it was the year of the miners' strike and the news from England was all fairly depressing and I think we all felt that we were quite well out of it. Apart from that, we were in contact with the other British bases, and then the radio officer was in contact with some of the other bases in the Antarctic, collecting and collating weather information, and he used to speak to (I think) the Indians and the Germans and the Russians.

[0:37:35] Broadway: We used to have fairly ... Those were the radio links we had, and then in the summer we had a visit from the British Antarctic Survey aeroplanes. Some officials from Headquarters came and visited during the Relief period, and we also had a visit from the German aircraft. The German aircraft came and refuelled before going on to its own base. In the summer we had a visit from the German research ship who brought fuel for the German aircraft. So that was quite exciting, and we also had a visit from a Russian ship that was laying a depot of fuel for Russian aircraft, and they brought us fresh fruit and vegetables which a welcome relief after 12 months without, certainly 11 months without fresh fruit and vegetables. So that was good.

[0:38:50] Verdenius: How did you get on with the Russians?

Broadway: I hardly met them, actually, but no, everyone was very friendly. Everyone was very friendly and there was no problems at all. They came round and we gave them some good food and they gave us some fruit and vegetables, and they took away some magazines from the base and left us with some vodka. And some people went onto their ship. It was all very ... Everyone was very friendly. There was no animosity or anything. It was good.

[0:39:28] Verdenius: What kind of messages do you send home when you only have 200 words?

Broadway: Brief, brief messages. Now somewhere, and I don't know where they are [rustles papers] ... Somewhere I have probably got them, certainly somewhere. Ah, I know where they are; my mother has kept them all. My mother has got them all at home in a file, but ... What sort of thing? Well you know we told them, I used to tell them the sort of things that I was doing, and whether we were going off and visiting the penguin colony or whether people were upset. I honestly can't remember exactly what I was writing about. I mean it was always great to hear what people were doing at home but of course with 200 words, you cut out all the emotional aspects of what was going on. In order to get as much information across in the minimum amount of words, you cut out quite a lot of the interesting bits, but you tell people the news but not the background behind it really.

[0:40:54] Broadway: My father was very good. He wrote a letter every month knowing that I wasn't going to get it. Every month he wrote a letter to me telling me what had gone on in that month, so that when the ship arrived after a year away, I had twelve letters from him which I was able to open in ... I would open January then February and whatever, and it was nice to get background news. The other thing I did was, I made a tape, a bit like you are doing at the moment, but a tape. I had a tape recorder and I made a letter tape that I sent home. I sent one home just before the ship

left, when we were staying there, and then when the ship came back, I sent another one off so that people heard my voice and then that was sent home and re-recorded and sent round all the family and friends. So that was one way we communicated.

[0:42:12] Verdenius: How much did you get to see of the country?

Broadway: Erm. Well Halley is now a fixed base. I just want to put a jumper on. [Pause] Are you ready? In the 1960s Halley was a travelling base and they did a lot of travelling to the Trans-Antarctic Mountains. When I was there it was a geophysical base, and it was basically looking at the ionosphere and the magnetosphere, and the weather, the meteorology. So it was a fixed base and we didn't do a lot of travelling. But we all (all except one of us) spent quite a lot of time at the penguin colony which was about ten miles away, which was a journey that you could do in a day. Easily on a skidoo you could very easily get there and back, so when the weather was good, we would go off down there. Some of us would spend some time camping down at the penguin colony because it was THE place to go. There was something of interest there.

[0:43:32] Broadway: There was another place which was full of crevasses and it was an interesting place to go, called ... Well it was nicknamed Gin Bottle. I can't remember the name of the place, I have got it written down somewhere³. I know I have got a map, and we would go down there. What was it called? No, here we are: Gin Bottle. I can't remember what it was actually called. We would go down there because it was very interesting and one day when we were there, there were four of us down there, and we were camping and there was an awful lot of noise going on in the ice, as if the ice was moving. And I suppose the nearest I can get to it is: it must have been like what it is like to be in an earthquake. We were just walking about on the ice (not the sea ice, on the ice cliffs) and suddenly the noise began to get worse and worse and worse.

[0:44:56] Broadway: Then we looked up and there were some icebergs actually breaking off the edge of the cliff and we felt ... well we felt very small, very vulnerable and we ran back to where we thought was a much safer place, a bit further in from the edge of the ice cliffs. But it was absolutely fascinating to see these icebergs breaking off the edge of the ice cliff, and had we been perhaps half an hour earlier in leaving ... In fact we had been doing the washing up after breakfast, and had we not done the washing up, and we had just gone straight out, I think we may well have been on one of these icebergs and may not be here today to talk. So we called the new bay that was formed from these icebergs breaking off, we called it Washing Up Bay, which was just a thing between us on the base. Nothing special. But that was very frightening and something that I would not recommend and wouldn't want to experience again really.

[0:46:12] Broadway: So there was that, and we visited that area, and then during the year we each had two weeks where we were allowed to have time off from our work, and we went off travelling as a group of four. Everyone made a journey and there were ... We went to a place called Christmas Box Hill, which had first been

³ The official name is the McDonald Ice Rumples.

discovered on Boxing Day in the '50s or '60s⁴. I think we were the next people to go there⁵, and I think that was about 200 miles from base. Other people went to what was called the Hinge Zone. Basically people went travelling with skidoos and tents and sledges, to get away from the base and to have a bit of an experience of what it must have been like for Scott and Amundsen and people to ... I mean I think we had very much better equipment than they did, very much better equipment and much better food of course, too. So that was that. That was all quite exciting, the travelling.

[0:47:35] Verdenius: Let's look in your diary.

Broadway: Look up what?

[0:47:39] Verdenius: The trip to Christmas Box Hill.

Broadway: The trip: Christmas Box Hill. [sound of turning pages] Yes, we were going to go on the 15th of November I think. No, we were going to go on the 16th of November which was a Friday but there was a blizzard and the blizzard went on for one two three four five six seven days, and we in fact left on the 23rd of November, and I obviously took another notebook with me. It says here 'transcribed from notebook'. So: [quoting from diary] 'Beautiful sunny morning. 12-15 knots of wind. Leave just after 8am. Lovely soft surface after the blow. There are few sastrugi. Drive across the bondu' (That's just the surface of the snow.) 'for what seems like forever. N9.' (That was a depot.) 'by 11 am to refuel and raise the dump. Every time you came ... All over the Antarctic there are dumps of fuel and food, and they tend to get buried. They are marked with a flag. They tend to get buried and so every time you come across one, you raise it up onto the surface again and make sure that everything is there.

[0:50:00] Broadway: So: '12 hours driving. Arrive at the Stancomb-Wills Glacier. Find a seal colony with pups, Weddell seals. Covered 73 miles. That was the first day. Day 2. Up at 7am after an intermittent night's sleep. The water didn't freeze last night and we could spread the butter.' What a change from when I had camped down at the penguin colony during midwinter and what had changed from when it was -30°C camping ... Pretty cold -30°C. So first camp was at the Stancomb-Wills. Second camp was on the Stancomb-Wills, a further 46 miles, so we had travelled 134 miles from base. We then went in or beside the 'Grand Canal' 61 miles from camp 1. By day 3 ... Day 4 we were arriving near Christmas Box Hill but each time we tried to strike out we were foiled by thin sea ice or actual narrow leads. So we couldn't get the skidoos actually across to Christmas Box Hill which was a bit frustrating really. Day 5 so it must have been ... It is amazing how you don't remember, but it must have been about 150 miles from base that we went, not 200 miles. So and then: day 6, day 7, day 8 [turning pages; reading from diary] 'Day 11. A beautiful day Pack up quite quickly and get back to the base.' We returned home via the penguin colony, and had a time down on the penguin colony.

[0:52:23] Verdenius: When do you consider a place interesting on Antarctica?

⁴ By Bob Thomas and Tony Wilson, Christmas 1966.

⁵ No, it was visited several times in the late '60s and 70s.

Broadway: Sorry, do I find it interesting?

[0:52:30] Verdenius: No. Some time ago you said there you go to a place of interest.

Broadway: Right, well yes. I mean, you may find it difficult to imagine, but where Halley is built is completely flat and it is white and it is just ice, completely flat for hundreds of miles. So a place of interest is something different, either there is crevasses, or there is a glacier or there is a penguin colony or there is change in terrain. Christmas Box Hill, for instance, is a hill, that is something that you don't see around Halley at all. So you have to travel a hundred miles to see a hill. So that was ... and I suppose anywhere that is away from the base is slightly different, slightly more interesting. It is interesting because it is different I think really. I think one of the most amazing experiences I had when I was down there: I just went skiing for a morning and I went skiing out to the east of the base and the wind always comes from the east at Halley.

[0:53:53] Broadway: I skied out into the wind and there was only a very very very small amount of wind and I just skied out and I stopped and I couldn't hear a thing. There was absolutely no sound going on at all because the very very gentle wind was taking all the noises of the base away from me and there were no aeroplanes, there were no cars, there were no birds, there were no animals. The wind wasn't rustling in any vegetation, and it was completely silent and it was a very sort of eerie feeling. You could just hear yourself, that was the only thing that was there that you could hear. That was a very moving experience.

[0:54:49] Verdenius: How long did you stay there?

Broadway: At that particular point? I don't know. Half an hour or so? I sort of stopped, I suppose, until I got cold and then I started skiing again to warm up. It may have been ten minutes or something like that, but it wasn't a long time. I'm sure I wrote down something about it in my diary, but it would take me a long time to find it because I can't remember which part of the year it was.

[0:55:22] Verdenius: So about ... On the phone you told me about this sense of isolation and the fact that you were ..., when you were in the base you were making up your mind about what to do.

Broadway: Oh, what to do when I came back?

[0:55:44] Verdenius: If the ship didn't come back?

Broadway: Oh, if the ship didn't come back? Yes. Yes, that was funny really, wasn't it? I suppose I would really like to read what I wrote about it. I must have written something about it somewhere. I think we all had this little nagging feeling in the back of our minds, and I'm sure it was really only in the back of our minds, that suppose there was some catastrophe in the 'civilised' world where the ship was coming from, and suppose the ship wasn't able to come back. Or suppose some disaster had happened to the ship on the way down to us. We would have been stranded. We certainly would have been stranded for some time, and I suppose we wondered what would happen to us.

[0:56:53] Broadway: I suppose one of the things that struck me was: suppose there was a nuclear war and Western civilisation was wiped out, it would have been unlikely that we would have been affected by that, certainly in the short term, and we might have been able to have got back to somewhere where we would have been able to survive. We thought about depots, laying depots and if we had to we could have almost certainly have managed to get in contact with the other bases in the Antarctic and we could have travelled across to the Antarctic Peninsula, and I am sure, having got to the Antarctic Peninsula, I am sure that you have spoken to Ray Adie and people. They have travelled from Hope Bay down to ... right the way down the Peninsula and so it would have been possible to have travelled all the way back up to Hope Bay and from then, we know that Shackleton was able to go from where he was stranded in the Weddell Sea to Elephant Island and thence to South Georgia.

[0:58:10] Broadway: I am sure we would have been able to have done the same had we have got hold of some boats, or built some boats or whatever. I suppose we were trying to relive one of the heroic ages of the Antarctic exploration, Shackleton and people. Shackleton's boat journey is one of those fantastic stories of Antarctic exploration and perhaps we were all secretly hoping that we would be able to have a similar experience. I don't think any us would have enjoyed it and none of us would have wished it on anybody but it would have been ...

[0:58:56] Verdenius: It was like what you told about this journey to Christmas Box Hill? It was also sort of re-living ...

Broadway: Yes, I suppose it would have been, yes.

[0:59:03] Verdenius: How close do you think you can get?

Broadway: To reliving that sort of thing? Well I think you can't. With modern equipment, no-one would set off now on an expedition with the sort of equipment that people used in the Heroic Ages. We have got much better equipment and we understand a bit more about the food and the vitamins that are required and we understand much more about all sorts of things. We can't go back to the past and relive that experience, and who would want to? If you can live in a tent in the Antarctic much more comfortably than Scott managed, then that is the sort of thing you should do. So we did. We had ... We lived very comfortably in our tents. It was warm and we were able to dry our clothes out overnight and none of us, fortunately, suffered from frostbite or ... I think all of us suffered from frost nip. That is the sort of early bits of frostbite, especially on extremities. I had frostnipped my face, and my fingers and other people frostnipped their ears and their nose. You can't go back to the past. You have got to carry on living in the present, using the equipment that is available.

[1:00:52] Verdenius: Now you don't go out to relive this kind of hardship.

Broadway: No, no.

[1:00:59] Verdenius: But you also didn't stay at home of course?

Broadway: Didn't stay at home? No, no. That's right.

[1:01:05] Verdenius: You didn't stay England? You still went there.

Broadway: Why did I go? I don't know why I went.

[1:01:10] Verdenius: Now, what do you think about the human condition of this continent, I mean is it within reach to almost live there in a viable way?

Broadway: No, it's not because we had a very very comfortable existence, but at relatively huge expense. Everything has to be transported down there. Everything has to be transported back. There is nothing there. Certainly where we were there was absolutely nothing there, except ice, for hundreds of miles. So everything has to be imported into the place. So certainly not where we were you couldn't set up a ... I don't think anywhere you could set up a proper community that's viable, and I don't think I would want to see it. It's such an amazing continent. I would like to see it preserved. OK, explored. I don't want to be selfish and say no-one can go there, because I have been there; why shouldn't other people go there? But I think that we have to be very careful about how we allow it to be explored and exploited, because it is such a special place. Let's try and keep it as such a special place. There aren't many places in the world that are so special.

[1:02:55] Verdenius: Do you have a best day? I probably asked you on the telephone about sort of

Broadway: The best day?

[1:03:03] Verdenius: The highlight experience in Antarctica?

Broadway: Well, no, I can't. There were days that were. No there is nothing that Funnily enough, the human mind is such that it tends to remember the good things and tends to forget the unpleasant things and the bad things. I suppose one of the things, one of the good days, was the day the ship came back. Everyone was excited about being there, about going there but people were also excited about going home. [Pause, looking through diary] No, I was just thinking that one of the best days might have been the day that the ship came back, but I haven't written down here 'What a fantastic day!' No, I don't know. I don't think there was any particularly special day. I know that the day we left, and the day I joined the ship to go home, I thought to myself it was a funny day. I didn't really feel any emotion about leaving the place. I didn't feel sad; I didn't feel happy. We just left, and that seems strange in a way. We had spent so long, a whole year there and yet there wasn't any sadness about leaving. [Pause; looking at diary] I don't even mention that actually, no, in my diary.

[1:06:18] Verdenius: How did you explain that afterwards?

Broadway: Explain the fact that I didn't feel any emotion about leaving the place? I don't know. I have never really been able to explain it actually. It wasn't because I wanted to forget it. After all I wouldn't be talking to you now if I had wanted to forget it. If I wanted to forget it, I would put everything out of my mind and I would have probably thrown this diary away. I wouldn't have been excited about talking about it

now. I have given lots and lots of talks. I have got a thousand slides. I am excited about the place and I am still a member of the BAS Club and all the rest of it. And I would love to go back. I would love to go back to visit. I don't want to stay there. I don't want to spoil the illusion that I have got of it being a...

[1:07:14] Broadway: You know, that year that I had down there, with those people, I remember as being great fun, a good time, something that I enjoyed and I don't want to go back there and spend another year there because I am sure I would be trying to relive the experiences that I had with the people that were there and it wouldn't happen. It would be different. But I would like to go back and visit. There is no doubt about that. I would like to go back and visit. I would like to go back and just see where ... what has happened to our base. I would like to go back and visit the penguin colony again. But it is something that probably won't happen unless the Survey invite me to be a summer doctor for a couple of months or something and I happen to be able to take some time off, or whatever. I think it's got to be ... I have just got to just remember it for what it is, what I did.

[1:08:24] Verdenius: Do you think I forgot to bring up some things, some topic or so that you thought would be ??? [inaudible]

Broadway: It's quite difficult. I gather you are trying to get some sort of feel of the human element. Yes, that's right. I'm terribly busy at the moment and I just haven't had a time, for instance, to read this diary again. If I had some time, maybe I could bring some more things out, if I read my diary. I haven't read my diary because I haven't felt the need to. In some ways I haven't wanted to explore how I actually felt. Maybe now, ten years on, well nearly ten years on, it's the time to start thinking about looking at it. Maybe it would be exciting. There we are.

[1:09:32] Verdenius: All right.

[1:09:38] [End]

ENDS

Possible extracts:

- Arriving at Halley. [0:06:57]
- The move from Halley III to IV. [0:14:46]
- Medical equipment and backup. [0:16:49]
- Research: the effects of bright light. [0:23:28]
- Colours in the sky. [0:32:28]
- Contacts with the outside world. [0:34:38]
- 200 words per month. [0:39:28]
- Gin Bottle and Washing Up Bay. [0:43:32]
- Christmas Box Hill. [0:46:12]
- Complete silence. [0:53:53]
- Suppose there is a nuclear war. [0:56:53]
- Joining the ship to go home. [1:03:03]