

DEEP FREEZE 78

On 15 November 1977, GLACIER departed Long Beach, California enroute McMurdo Station, Antarctica. The equator crossing initiation on 23 November and Thanksgiving the following day preceded port calls at Papeete, Tahiti, and Wellington, New Zealand.

After refueling and replenishing food stores during a nine day stay in Wellington, GLACIER steamed for Antarctica on 19 December. Heavy seas and the fresh winds of the "howling fifties" made the trip uncomfortable and Christmas dinner was postponed for several days. Scientific stations were scheduled along the southbound trackline as GLACIER passed Scott, Franklin and Beaufort Islands. Stations were continued at the base of Ross Island's active volcano, Mt. Erebus, before steaming eastwards along the impressive Ross Ice Shelf. There, data gathering was suspended on 5 January, when a message was received ordering GLACIER to proceed directly to McMurdo Sound to assist in the annual channel breakout for the inbound supply ships.

With assistance operations completed on 9 January, GLACIER returned to the eastern Ross Sea to complete her interrupted scientific stations. On 17 January GLACIER reentered Winter Quarters Bay off Hut Point for scheduled refueling operations. With tanks topped off, we headed east through ice and fog across the Ross, Amundsen, and Bellingshausen Seas. A few days prior to entering the isolation of the southern Weddell Sea, GLACIER called at Palmer, a U.S. biological station, for logistics support. Here the crew was afforded an opportunity to get ashore, have a couple beers, and shoot up some film.

On the evening of 31 January, GLACIER left Palmer behind and rounded the rugged Antarctic Peninsula via the scenic protection of the Gerlache Strait. Transiting the ice-laden Weddell Sea, we arrived at the first scientific station 140 miles northwest of the Filchner Ice Shelf on 7 February. The following three weeks were filled with constant icebreaking and frequent flight quarters, all in support of the 120 CTD stations performed.

Refreezing polynyas became readily apparent throughout late February and, with our 6 March OUTCHOP date approaching, GLACIER steamed north on 26 February. Working the area of the South Orkney and South Shetland Islands, an unsuccessful attempt was made to tag a tabular iceberg with a transponder for future monitoring.

Our two day transit of the infamous Drake's Passage was smoother than expected and we passed within five miles of Cabo de Hornos on the morning of 7 March. Four day ports of call in Valparaiso, Chile, and Callao, Peru, filled the remainder of March. And on 5 April GLACIER steamed proudly into Long Beach Harbor with another Deep Freeze behind her.