

**WELLMAN POLAR AIRSHIP WRECKS LOCATED ON DANSKØYA.** An expedition from Rutgers University has located the remains of two airship wrecks on Danskøya, in the Svalbard archipelago. The airship wrecks, believed to be the two oldest aeronautical artifacts ever found in the Arctic, are from the 1906 and the 1907 and 1909 North Polar expeditions of the American journalist Walter Wellman. Between 1894 and 1909, Wellman, a

correspondent for *The Chicago Record-Herald*, led five unsuccessful expeditions in search of the North Pole. The 1906, 1907, and 1909 expeditions were by airship.

For three weeks in July and August 1993, P.J. Capelotti, a doctoral student in historical archaeology under Dr Carmel Schrire of the Rutgers University Department of Anthropology, surveyed the archaeological remains at Virgohamn on Danskøya, including the site of Wellman's

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base camps, with a Topcon GTS-303 Total Station. The car of the airship used in the 1907 and 1909 flights was confirmed on the second day on Danskøya, and the wreck of the car from 1906 was discovered on the expedition's second-to-last day on the island.

The artifacts are the oldest American airship cars in existence, and rest within 200 m of each other on the rocky island, which lies 700 miles (1100 km) from the North Pole. Capelotti is now working with the Norwegian government on a management plan for the fragile artifacts and for Wellman's base camp, which is located near a shoreline visited by more than 1000 tourists on small cruising yachts each year.

The Rutgers expedition also located what appear to be parts from the motor sledges Wellman brought to Danskøya for the aborted 1906 expedition. Artifacts brought to the United States for further analysis included parts from the 1907 and 1909 airship car; a can of unidentified material with a label from 'Chicago, USA'; a bottle with raised lettering from the 'Lambert Pharmacal Company'; and a sample bottle that may have originated with the 1896 and 1897 North Polar balloon expeditions of Salomon A. Andrée, which used a site adjacent to that of the Wellman camp. Other notable finds included original ballast bags from the 1907 and 1909 airship, discovered underneath the wreckage of Wellman's hangar, which collapsed in 1912, and a large iron pit used to boil blubber, which appears to date from the late eighteenth century. A sample of the 'boil-off' found at the bottom of this pot was taken for mass spectrometer and radiocarbon dating analysis. Several soil and chemical reaction samples were taken from within the surviving machinery areas on both the Wellman and Andrée sites, where hydrogen gas was produced for their respective airships.

A history of Wellman's polar expeditions and an account of the 1993 expedition to Danskøya will be published in upcoming issues of *Polar Record*.

**ANTARCTIC MEDALS AWARDED.** Five awards of the Antarctic Medal were announced in June in recognition of the recipients' outstanding service to the Australian Antarctic expeditions. The five individuals receiving the medals were: Albert Bruehwiler, mechanic; James Hasick, who has almost 30 years of Antarctic experience; Knowles

Kerry, biologist and member of the Australian delegation for the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources; Paul Munro, senior electrical fitter and mechanic; and Ray Pike, foreman with the Australian Construction Services.

**NEW ANTARCTIC WASTE REGULATIONS.** The National Science Foundation has issued a final ruling governing waste management and waste disposal in the Antarctic. This amends the regulations under the Antarctic Conservation Act and applies to all US citizens in Antarctica. It prohibits the importation of a number of banned substances, including PCBs, non-sterile soil, and loose polystyrene packing material. Permits will also be required to use or release any of a long list of designated pollutants or to release any waste in Antarctica. The regulations became effective 15 August 1993 for governmental activities, and will become effective 1 March 1994 for non-governmental activities.

**INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR CRYOSPHERE ECOSYSTEMS.** A new organisation named 'ICE Geneva' and dedicated to the protection of the cryosphere has been formed by an international group of legal, scientific, and environmental experts based in Geneva. The committee will devote itself to 'regions of ice, sea ice, permafrost, or long-duration snow cover' in the Arctic, Antarctic, and high mountains.

ICE Geneva was established with a view to seeking consultative status with the United Nations and other inter-governmental agencies. It has already applied for accreditation to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development. Its purpose is to follow developments of a political, scientific, and environmental nature in the cryospheric regions, and to seek to preserve not only the natural ecosystems, but also those involving the fauna and flora, including marine living resources; to appreciate the rights and concerns of the indigenous peoples in the regions; to identify the elements likely to have an effect on global climate change; and to put forward suitable policies to assist humankind in its preservation of the environment.

Further information may be obtained from the president of ICE Geneva: Dennis Thompson, 8 rue des Belles Filles, 1299 Crans, Switzerland.