

AV 17: John Heap oral history summary

Recorded at John Heap's home, Harston. Interviewed by David Walton, 20.10.2000.

Track 1 [00.57.56]. Introduction to interview. [00.00.30] Description of John Heap's [JH] childhood including memories of his mother reading to him about Scott's expedition. [00.01.45] Description of Undergraduate years reading Geography at Edinburgh including leading an expedition to Lyngen, Norway; anecdote about asking the Hambro Brothers for money; memories of being introduced to Bunny Fuchs [BF] via Wordie and the Royal Geographical Society. [00.07.00] David Walton's [DW] memories of Edinburgh. [00.07.21] Description of meeting with BF including anecdote about him using a dog whip; mention of meeting Charles Swithinbank at Oxford; anecdote about being invited to stay with BF over new year; memories of BF asking him to study sea ice distribution in Antarctica based at the Scott Polar Research Institute (SPRI). [00.12.30] Description of JH spying for BF at SPRI whilst BF was planning the Trans Antarctic Expedition (TAE). [00.13.40] Description of Raymond Priestley organising for him to write up his research on sea ice at Clare College, Cambridge; memories of college interview with Sir Henry Thirkhill. [00.16.30] Description of Brian Roberts (BBR) personality; memories of a supper at BBR's Causeway-side flat ending in an argument about the TAE; mention of four Antarctic ventures at that time [1950s]. [Break in recording]. [00.20.00] Further memories of supper with BBR; mention of spending two years at University of Michigan Ann Arbor with Charles Swithinbank and Jim Zumberge; Description of his recruitment to the Foreign Office (FO), October 1964; mention of BBR's influence. [00.22.25] Description of friendship with BBR including comments on his personality and memories of working with him at the FO; anecdote about Wednesday lunches at Bianchi's in Soho; mention of Elena [Salvoni]. [00.26.10] Description of UK government interest in Antarctica including comment on Operation Tabarin; JH joined Falkland Islands Dependency survey (FIDS), 1955; anecdote about being seen off on the John Biscoe by a Colonial Office minister; comment on the UK trying to reach a settlement with the Argentines and Chileans; comment on the Antarctic Treaty originating in the Foreign Office with BBR proposing Antarctica should be internationalised. [00.33.00] Description of BBR's long-term strategy for the Antarctic treaty negotiations including mention that he thought talks would fail if minerals were found; mention of permit negotiations; mention that BBR thought non-contentious issues should be solved first to establish working relationships; mention of nature conservation, sealing and krill. [00.39.00] Description of how the UK and others dealt with the issue of mineral oil extraction on Antarctica. [00.42.10] Description of why the Antarctic treaty does not have a formal secretariat including mention of range of international opinions on article IX; comments on Argentine – Chilean – UK relations; mention of tendency for secretariats to develop their own agenda; comments on treaty success depending on nobody pushing their territorial claims and all parties having mutual respect. [00.50.30] Description of attending the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) in Canberra, 1978. Mention of re-drafting articles at request of Russian delegates; mention of British delegate Dick Law championing an ecosystem approach to conservation that was adopted in article 2 of the convention. [00.55.00] Comments on issues with the treaty system including mention of an argument with the Russians regarding how they dealt with scientific advice. [00.57.56] END.

Track 2 [00.59.35]. [00.00.00] Description of why CCAMLR was established as a separate convention to the main Antarctic Treaty. Mention of conflict of interest with the Food and Agricultural Organisation fisheries committee; Comments on CCAMLR scientific committee operating purely as a scientific committee without interference from UK politicians. [00.06.25] Description of relationship between NGO's and the treaty system including mention of the Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral

Resource Activities (CRAMRA); mention that BBR excluded NGO's from early treaty discussions; mention that JH admitted Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition to CRAMRA talks but no other NGO's; comments on collapse of CRAMRA talks and changing political views on NGO's in the mid-20th century; anecdote about Jacques Cousteau and French CRAMRA delegates. [00.14.50] Description of why the UK didn't include NGO's in their delegations including comments on the working relationship between UK ministers of parliament and their civil servants. [00.17.20] Description of reasons behind the collapse of CRAMRA talks including mention of conflict in Australian delegation; mention of high intellectual standard of debate and continuity over 6 years'; Comments on CRAMRA environmental provisions being much tougher than those in the later Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty (Protocol). [00.22.45] Comments by DW on the effectiveness of the Protocol. [00.23.45] Description of Protocol negotiations including comments on JH's frustration with them. Comments on Environmental Impact Assessments not being a familiar process to some nations; comment by DW on cultural differences between nations. [00.27.35] Description of UK post-world war II relations with Argentina including conflict with George Brown; mention that Treaty talks were often used as cover for other talks; comments on poor British Antarctic Survey funding in the early 1980s leading to reduction of staff on South Georgia; comments on Argentine invasion Falkland Islands and South Georgia; mention of Margaret Thatcher and increased investment in BAS after the war. [00.36.40] Description of moving from the Foreign Office to be Director of SPRI including conflict with the University. Mention of friends John Payne; Nigel Vice[?] and Drummond Matthews; comments on achieving an agreement of terms with the University and gaining funding for the Shackleton Memorial Library. [00.44.30] Memories of working in the Foreign Office including comments on the continuity of his role; anecdote about Henry Darwin, FO legal Advisor; comments on the failure of CRAMRA. [00.52.10] Thoughts on the future of the Antarctic Treaty system including importance of maintaining BAS and ensuring continuity of UK delegates; comments on private expeditions and visitors to Antarctica. [00.55.36 interview END] [shots of DW questions and other brief snippets of conversation] [00.59.35 END].