

Bering Bridge Expedition

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A Soviet-American Bering Bridge expedition took place from March to May, 1989. The team consisted of six Soviet and six United States team members; three from each national group were Eskimos, and two United States and one Soviet team members were women. The 61-day trek by dogsled and cross country ski started in Anadyr, Siberia; the group crossed the Bering Straits and completed their journey in Nome, Alaska. A major purpose of the expedition was to promote US-Soviet harmony and publicize the situation of native peoples on both sides of the international border who had been prevented from trading and freely communicating with each other since the border was closed after World War II. Planned stops at 14 villages in Siberia and five in Alaska enabled the team to interact with the local people.

Extensive psychological and biological research was carried out on team members by researchers from Minne-

sota and US Army Natick Research Laboratories in the United States, and the USSR Institute of Biophysics and Medicine in Moscow, Institute of Physiology, Archangel, and Institute of Biological Problems of the North, Magadan. The psychological studies assessed personality, mood, and coping characteristics, and group processes and team efficiency. The biological studies examined genetic and adaptational factors in peripheral blood flow measured through the cold pressor test, hormonal changes, and exercise physiological changes assessed through periodic testing during the trek. Scientists from each facility participated in conferences in Moscow in May 1990 and in Minneapolis, Minnesota in October 1990 specifically devoted to the expedition research.

The scientific manuscripts are currently being prepared for publication. A book has been published by the US team co-leader (Schurke 1989). Plans are being finalized between the United States and the Soviet Union to designate the Bering Straits as an international park, and international trade in that region has commenced.

Reference

Schurke, P. 1989. *Bering bridge*. Duluth, Pfeifer-Hamilton Publishing.

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British Polar Expeditions 1919–39: a final word

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The time has come to wind up the helpful comments and amendments to my article 'British Polar Expeditions 1919–39' (*Polar Record* 26 (157): 77–84). On the whole I came off quite lightly, and the main characteristics of these expeditions (which I listed as economy, self-reliance, good safety record, high level of scientific results, and subsequent distinction of expedition members) seem to have been confirmed. I am sorry that no-one has given more details of the important results in sciences that I could not cover. I thank Sir Alexander Glen for his helpful contributions (*Polar Record* 26 (158): 244). Although the death of Hornby and his two companions (described by Geoffrey Hattersley-Smith (*Polar Record* 26 (158): 244) gave rise to a classic account of their deaths, this was not a scientific expedition of the kind my article was intended to describe: so the death toll for scientific parties remains at the very low figure of four. I accept that Tom Manning

was travelling on his own on Southampton Island before his major expedition, which ended in 1941, not 1939.

Peter Mott has sent me some minor corrections to the accounts of his three expeditions to West Greenland in 1935, 1936 and 1938. There were nine members in 1936 (Dunbar was working separately) and seven in 1938. E. W. Etienne, a leading member of both these, was killed in World War II. Sugden and Mott were joint leaders in 1938, and photogrammetry was not used until then. One of the 1936 members, D. M. Steven, became a professor at McGill University, and Dr G. Vevers held a senior post at the London Zoo.

My worst omission was in failing to mention McCabe's expedition to Spitsbergen, an error picked up by Brian Harland (*Polar Record* 26 (159): 334 (1990)). I knew McCabe personally and supervised for a year Willie Balchin who, with Norman Pye, later became a Professor of Geography. McCabe himself became a war casualty in Hong Kong.

I am grateful to all who sent amendments or made corrections. We now have a reasonable comprehensive and accurate account of what was a major contribution by Britain to the study of the polar regions. Let us hope that privately organized expeditions, doing real scientific work, will continue to flourish.