Four Weeks in Antarctic Deserts
Dec 2014
Regina DeWitt
From Raleigh to McMurdo Station
Short stop at Sydney Airport
In Christchurch:
Get extreme cold weather gear and take a last look at something green and living
UNITED STATES ANTARCTIC PROGRAM
CLOTHING DISTRIBUTION CENTER
Where is McMurdo Station?
Zoom in on McMurdo
To McMurdo Station
At the airport
Get dressed...

FLIGHT REQUIREMENTS

The Following Must Be Worn or Carried on All Flights

1. Goggles
2. Balaclava or knit hat
3. Red parka or Carhartt parka
4. Mittens or gloves (your choice of hand wear)
5. Wind pants or Carhartt overalls
6. Bunny boots or blue FDX boots

Sunglasses and long underwear are recommended for comfort.

- Closed-toe shoes or boots must be worn.
- In the event of a ‘turn-around,’ only the boomerang bag will be returned to passengers.
The LC-130 (Hercules)
Sitting there for 8 hours...
... it was just a little tight
Landing at Williams airfield
Take bus and drive over ice shelf
The street
Finally there!
McMurdo Station
Observation Hill
McMurdo as seen from Observation Hill
View from Observation Hill
Mount Erebus (a volcano)
Discovery Hut, built by Scott in 1902 at Hut Point, re-used by Shackleton 1907/1909 and other expeditions
The sea ice is still pretty solid, but there is one lonely seal.
Here we packed our gear: tents, scientific stuff, food, sleeping bags, etc.
To the Dry Valleys
Across McMurdo Sound
The West Antarctic Ice Sheet and the Transantarctic Mountains
Ice flowing from the sheet down a gap in the mountains, forming a glacier
The Dry Valleys (Pearse Valley)
Pearse Valley, here we will be for the next three weeks
Looks like Mars!
Our camp
We did have to pee into bottles and collect the urine in barrels.
For bigger business... the view was great, but it was cold...
Pearse Valley from higher up

our camp
Taking OSL samples
That’s me!
A short excursion to Taylor Valley
We went here and looked down onto the glacier and the lake
I had a cold for the entire time. These saved my life!
Blood Falls
(meltwater stained by iron oxide)
My mother’s hand-knit socks kept my feet warm.
It was pretty windy
The wind shapes the rocks into “ventifacts”
This one looks so old, I named it Methuselah rock.
Leaving footprints...
Homeward Bound
I knew it was time to go home, when I looked at this mountain and could only think of....
Packing up camp
Flying back to McMurdo
The sea ice had started to break up
There are now many seals at McMurdo
Back to the airfield
The airfield
The Transantarctic Mountains from above
Where the continent ends and the ocean begins
Back in Christchurch: First green after one month without
On the way home