



**Update #15**  
**UNCLOS Continental Shelf Project**  
**Ward Hunt Island Ice Camp**  
**April 2<sup>nd</sup> to April 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Weather: -38°C, sunny with no wind

Operation ‘*Ward Hunt Island Cleanup*’ continued today for several of us. Many of the full fuel barrels were frozen into the hard soil, and considerable effort was required with shovels, picks and ATV ‘encouragement’ to break them free. By the end of the day, every intact barrel we could find<sup>1</sup> had been recovered and hauled down to the airstrip. There are still numerous open barrels on site that are full of scrap metal and other refuse, and we will attempt to recover them as well if we get the opportunity.

The helicopters arrived in the early afternoon. With the addition of five Pilots and two Helicopter Engineers, camp now has a complement of 27 personnel. Once everything is fully operational we should be a total of 24, as we presently have the Twin Otter crew staying with us while they set fuel caches out on the ice.

This evening Tom Kiguktak built an igloo for us. There was a certain sense of awe amongst us southerners, as we observed the calm and efficient manner by which he demonstrated this traditional Inuit life-skill. Once completed, four of us crawled in and found that it was surprisingly spacious inside. In the event we get any visitors, we now have room to accommodate four more.



*Tom Kiguktak building an igloo*

**Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Some barrels may be buried under snow drifts, out of sight.



**Update #15**  
**UNCLOS Continental Shelf Project**  
**Ward Hunt Island Ice Camp**  
**April 2<sup>nd</sup> to April 6<sup>th</sup>**

Weather: -38°C, sunny with no wind

The first day of helicopter sounding is also known as ‘*de-bug day*’. Productivity is nice but not expected, as various technical difficulties are undoubtedly identified and then in need of a solution. Not being ones to break with tradition, *de-bug day* did not disappoint; various problems were experienced by all four helicopter parties. The working environment we face poses many challenges on the electronics equipment<sup>2</sup> we use. When your computer freezes-up, it is not due to the fact that your software has hung-up and your cursor won’t move on your screen anymore. Rather, the cause is due to the fact that your computer is truly frozen.

The Buffalo hauled its’ last load of fuel into camp today. In total, it managed to transport just over 500 drums from Eureka to camp.

**Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup>**

Weather: -39°C, light overcast (-28°C at the North Camp – go figure)

Through-ice sounding operations began in earnest with the helicopters today. The area being surveyed (100Km to 470Km north of camp) is a featureless terrain with the exception of continuously meandering ice ridges<sup>3</sup> that randomly criss-cross the sheet-ice.

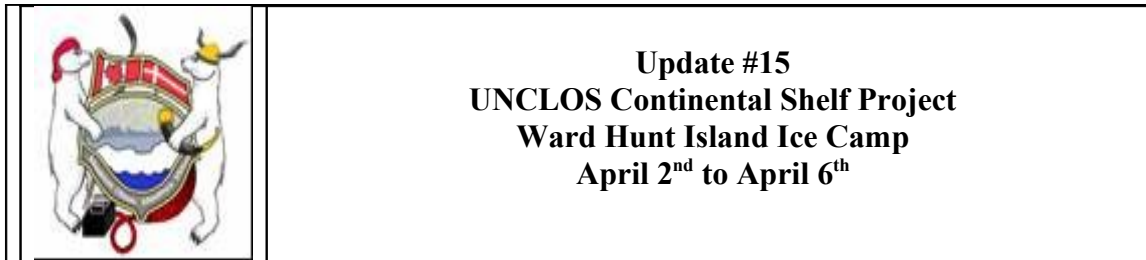


*Typical view from helicopter in the work area*

No open water has been spotted so far. Soundings are spaced 5Km apart along pre-established lines. Additional gravity measurements are taken at every third sounding site. One quickly learns

<sup>2</sup> Electronics equipment in helicopter required for sounding operations: Echo sounder, computer with mouse and two LCD screens, gravity meter, GPS.

<sup>3</sup> These ice-ridges are typically 2-3m high.

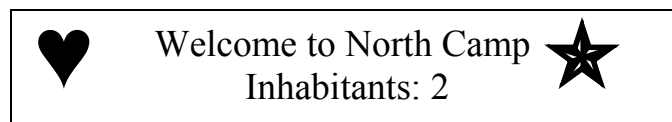


that the trick to collecting a sounding such that time outside of the helicopter is minimized is to properly *read* the ice. The ice must be smooth, level, and with as little snow on it as possible.

### **Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>**

Weather: -37°C, light overcast

All five helicopters were out sounding today. Some open leads in the ice were spotted to the west of North Camp. This site was visited by three choppers at almost the same time, all in need of fuel. Camp Operators Jorgen and Kristen are happy with their solitude, but also very welcoming to their remote outpost. Near the Canada flagstaff, a sign greets visitors as follows;



One of the helicopter pilots spotted polar bear tracks approximately 5 Km north of camp while departing this morning. Our Inuit Wildlife Monitors were out scouting again, and came upon a fresh seal kill only 3Km from camp. Apparently, the bear tracks convey that it was a sow and two cubs. Almost everybody in camp isn't very concerned about the bear situation. Perhaps it is because we know the bears just ate. Or perhaps we find comfort in knowing that we can run faster than those we share our tent with...

According to the GPS almanac, at our camp's latitude the sun will remain above the horizon 24 hours a day from today until September the 6<sup>th</sup>.

### **Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>**

Weather: -36°C, scattered ice fog

Sounding operations continued all day. The Twin Otter is back in camp, after having to detour down to Resolute Bay for the past few days for some mechanical repairs. It is a good thing this plane has returned, as some of the fuel caches are at risk of being depleted by as soon as tomorrow (Helicopters must fuel-up at the caches twice a day). Also back in camp is photographer Janice Lang, also known as the Ward Hunt paparazzi. With an eye for that 'perfect shot', Janice is often spotted sleuthing around camp - seeking just the right moment to capture the image she seeks.

*George Schlagintweit*  
Ward Hunt Ice Camp