

Our Colleagues

New book by Weihaupt tells “The Story of the Victoria Land Traverse”

10/23/2012



A new book just published by [John \(Jack\) Weihaupt](#), emeritus professor, Geography and Environmental Sciences, traces the trail of a four-month, 2,400-km journey into the unexplored hinterland of East Antarctica in 1959-60. The book is [Impossible Journey: The Story of the Victoria Land Traverse 1959-1960, Antarctica](#). According to the publisher, Geological Society of America, the trek by the Victoria Land Traverse team is a critical link in the International Geophysical Year/U.S. Antarctic Research Program.



The traverse team conducted seismic, gravity, magnetic, geological, glaciological and atmospheric surveys over the continental ice sheet, discovering the Wilkes Subglacial Basin, the Wilkes Land Gravity Anomaly, the Outback Nunataks, the USARP Mountain Range, and the upper reaches of the Rennick Glacier. During the exploration, the team encountered heavy crevassing on the Skelton Glacier, where SnoCats frequently broke through snow bridges, threatening the end of the traverse.

On the high plateau, fuel shortages and frequent equipment failures also threatened progress. The latter portions of the traverse were marked by near catastrophes in the vicinity of the Mertz and Ninnis Glaciers, and on the glaciers of the Transantarctic Mountains, where unknown and initially undetected substantial crevasse fields were encountered.

Author Weihaupt constructed this story a half-century after the trek from the traverse team’s scientific field notes and personal journals. He also is the author of numerous earlier scientific publications in the *Journal of Geophysical Research*, *Eos—Transactions of the American Geophysical Union*, *Geophysics*, *Transactions of the International Geological Congress*, *Transactions of the AGU Meetings of the Americas*, *EuroCoast* and *Biologicum Periodicum*.

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