

## BOOK REVIEW

Review of *Due south*, by John Kelly (2004). Oxford: Signal Books. 61 pp. ISBN 1-902669-90-8

This small volume is basically the diary of John Kelly, who visited the British Antarctic Survey station on Signy Island in the South Orkney Islands. It includes about 60 monochrome plates (mainly half-page ones), a few sketches and a map of the island. The text is essentially a diary of the author's time, from beginning in the Falkland Islands, sailing aboard RRS *Ernest Shackleton*, staying on the island from 25 January to 8 March 2003 to the return journey. As well as the illustrations, the text is accompanied by brief poetical extracts by the author and others. It is substantially a personal account of the visit, and may be best understood by those who have seen exhibitions of his artistic works. Impressions of Signy Island are confined to modern ones gained during the artist's visit; thus, there is no reference to the Norwegian aspects of its history (neither the derivation of the name from Signy, daughter of the whaling captain Petter Sørle, nor the graves of five whalers on Factory Bluff, is mentioned). Similarly, reference to the continuing scientific research conducted at the station is minimal although he accompanied a limnological survey.

Signy Island is small and so it is possible to see much of it during a long day's walk. This, as well as time in some of the field huts, is a specific point of interest as Kelly accompanies station staff visiting places distant from the main station. The period when he was on the island corresponded to the quite rapid change from near the height of summer to the beginning of winter. The vast movement of wildlife, particularly its exodus with the first storms of winter, intrigued him. The cover of the book states that "*Due south* catalogues moments in time



experienced... not simply a visual record, but an account of the emotions and fleeting thoughts of life in the 'freezer' ", which describes the slim volume well. The visit was one in a series of artist and writer's programmes of the British Antarctic Survey. For many years New Zealand, the United States, Australia and other countries with stations in the Antarctic have organized similar events, each yielding a distinct concept of the Antarctic.

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