

# Horizons



Year 7  
2004

# Left with the Baby

Tamara pressed the doorbell and it played a ridiculous tune. She heard the rumble of voices inside the house and the wail of a baby. Great. A grizzler. Just what she needed. Sometimes she wondered if babysitting was worth the money. And this kid was only a year old, much younger than usual.

The Marriots wore the befuddled expressions of people who are always disorganised or late. Mrs Marriot was stick-thin and wore a clinging green dress. She looked like a celery stick with make-up. Mr Marriot was plump and pale, and constantly slid his hands into his jacket pockets then took them out again. ‘We’ve heard good things about you from the Seatons, Tamara,’ he said. ‘We’ve had such trouble with our babysitters.’

The Seaton’s four-year-old twins had been so easy to look after; perfectly behaved. Tamara wanted to ask about the Marriot’s other sitters but she didn’t dare.

She took a good look at the child: a pretty blonde with blue eyes and pink cheeks. There was the hint of tears from the recent disturbance, and a smear across one cheek. The baby seemed fascinated by the arrival of a new face and stared back, unblinking, at Tamara.

‘Her name’s Zoe,’ Mr Marriot said.

His wife scribbled on a piece of paper and sat it next to the phone. ‘We’ll be at the Assam Restaurant in Hutt Street. Here’s the number. Call us if there’s any trouble.’ Her expression was earnest and the way she said ‘trouble’ made it seem that she expected it.

After a flurry of what-have-we-left-behind fussing and last-minute instructions, the Marriots departed. Tamara was left with the baby.

## Key dates in Antarctic history

- 1820** Fabien Bellingshausen, an Estonian, makes first sighting of Antarctic continent (probably).
- 1841** English explorer James Clark Ross penetrates pack ice to 78° south.
- 1898** Belgian expedition becomes the first to winter in the pack ice.
- 1899** Carsten Borchgrevinck's British expedition winters on the continent.
- 1901–04** Scott's Discovery expedition. Men sledge to 82° south.
- 1907–09** Shackleton's Nimrod expedition. A party sledges to within 97 nautical miles (180 km) of the Pole.
- 1910–12** Roald Amundsen's expedition in the *Fram*. A team reaches the South Pole on 15 December 1911.
- 1910–13** Scott's *Terra Nova* expedition. Five men reach the South Pole five weeks after Amundsen, and all die on return journey.
- 1911–14** Douglas Mawson's Australasian Antarctic Expedition to Adélie Land.
- 1914–17** Shackleton's transantarctic expedition and his epic journey to South Georgia after the ship *Endurance* is wrecked.
- 1922** Shackleton dies at South Georgia during his third expedition.
- 1934–37** British Graham Land Expedition discovers that the Antarctic Peninsula is not an archipelago (group of islands).
- 1935** Caroline Mikkelson becomes the first woman to set foot on the continent.
- 1947** American Richard Byrd makes a flight over the South Pole.
- 1955–58** Continent crossed for the first time by explorers Vivien Fuchs and Edmund Hillary's Commonwealth Transantarctic Expedition.
- 1956** American George Dufek's plane lands at the Pole – the first man there since Scott.
- 1957–58** International Geophysical Year. Twelve countries establish 60 bases on Antarctica and surrounding islands.
- 1959** Antarctic Treaty, which applies to all territory south of latitude 60° south, signed by 12 nations.
- 1961** Antarctic Treaty comes into force.
- 1991** International agreement on Environmental Protection places a 50-year ban on digging for oil and minerals.



# Natural Shelter

An experienced walker, while on the track or in the bush, is continuously noting the position of hollow trees, wombat holes, overhangs, caves, cliff faces and even trees with dense protective foliage.

Remember, too, that any naturally protected area is also the logical refuge for wildlife when conditions are inclement. Make sure you are not sharing quarters with animals or reptiles that could resent your company.

In open country simply dropping to the ground reduces the effect of wind. Any natural depression will also offer relief. In a crisis a shallow trench can be scraped with all the excavated material placed to windward of the scrape. If there are rocks in the vicinity, a simple rock wall will mitigate wind. Creeks and gullies often have wind channelled down them, making even worse conditions.

The best protection is found among trees and shrubs. The wind force can be more than halved some 100 m inside the tree-line. For example, on the Bogong High Plains the wind was gusting to 75 knots and the temperature was  $-11^{\circ}\text{C}$ ; some 50 m inside a stand of snow gum the wind was less than 20 knots and only  $-2^{\circ}\text{C}$ . On Mt Bogong in September the summit was  $-8^{\circ}\text{C}$  with wind at 60 knots; at 200 m less altitude and slightly inside the tree-line, the temperature was  $4^{\circ}\text{C}$  with no wind and brilliant sunshine.




# Brigitte Muir

Here are three extracts taken from a chapter about mountaineer Brigitte Muir in *Australian Heroines: stories of courage and survival* by Susan Geason.




## Brigitte Muir – The View from the Top of the World


### Extract 1




In 1988 Brigitte Muir embarked on a quest to climb **the Seven Summits**, the highest peak on each continent. Nine years later, she achieved her dream, becoming the first Australian woman to climb Mount Everest, the world's highest mountain, and the only Australian to conquer the Seven Summits.




### Extract 2



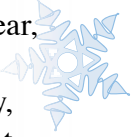
‘There’s no absolute bliss on the summit unless it’s been easy, a low mountain where coming down is a piece of cake,’ says Brigitte. ‘Getting up is only half the job – coming down is more dangerous. Reaching the summit of Everest was a relief, relief that I didn’t have to go any further or come back one more time. You let go a little bit but not too much. You have to stay focused because you have to concentrate on the way down. You can celebrate at the bottom. It takes a while to realise you’ve done it, especially if it’s taken a long time.’



### Extract 3



‘I don’t consider myself brave. Brave sounds like you don’t know fear, but that’s not the way it works. I’m realistic more than brave. You have to love what you’re doing. Climbing is hard, painful and scary, but that’s the fun. You’re pushing yourself to your own limits. What I like is that everything feels very simple out there. There are no complications. You feel as if you understand the world.’



## Letters to the Editor

The following letters to the editor were submitted to a local newspaper over a period of two weeks.

Dear Editor,

Last Friday I rode my skateboard through town and was told off by many pedestrians for riding on the footpath. **What else am I meant to do?** There is nowhere to skate except on the footpaths and in the car parks.

Skating is a healthy enjoyable sport. We are always being told to do more exercise but when we do we are made to feel like criminals. If the council built a skate park, there would be a safe place for us to exercise and enjoy ourselves without disturbing others. It would also mean that the kids of the town wouldn't be so bored. At the moment, there is nothing for us to do on weekends. When kids are bored they are more likely to write graffiti and annoy other people. If we had somewhere to go, it would benefit all people in the town.

**Corey Bell**

Dear Editor,

I am **quite possibly** one of the people who told off Corey Bell as he careered through the town. Skateboards are dangerous and their riders are inconsiderate and selfish. Rather than being encouraged through the provision of a skate park, skateboarders should learn that they cannot have everything their own way. We do live in a community after all.

Corey Bell is clearly too young to remember that the council built a skate park in 1972. The park was closed within three years because of the appalling behaviour of its users. The park was covered in graffiti and the council could not afford the continuous repair bills for the equipment that was broken in the park and the damage caused to the surrounding area. The faces of the people who ride skateboards may have changed but their personalities haven't. Bringing them together in one place will only lead to the same problems as we encountered before. The council should look for ways of promoting healthy and positive physical activity rather than encouraging antisocial behaviour.

**M Cassen**

# Improving plastics

Modern plastics are amazing. They're cheap, incredibly strong and can be formed into any shape. However, for many plastics there still remains a big problem – they won't be glued easily.

However, that may be about to change thanks to a revolutionary new system being developed by scientists at CSIRO's Division of Building, Construction and Engineering. Known as SICOR, the process provides a means of chemically tailoring the surfaces of plastics so that they can be glued permanently to other surfaces. With SICOR, the plastic surface becomes like a chemical velcro.

Once stuck, the adhesion is long lasting, resistant to humidity, thermal shock and mechanical impact. Road tests and laboratory trials indicate that the process bonds up to 20 times stronger than conventional surface treatments. What's more, the process can be integrated into existing manufacturing lines for plastics at very little cost and produces no undesirable waste materials.

This extract is taken from *The Helix 48 1996* – CSIRO.

# Storm Bird

Have you heard a storm bird shrieking in the channels,  
When the river bed is cracked and powder dry,  
And the coolibah trees sadly droop, and wither,  
As the sheep and cattle round them quietly die?  
Have you heard a storm bird calling from the river,  
Its rasping cry, or from the stockyard gate,  
And watched the rain clouds roll, and slowly gather,  
And prayed they'd burst before it was too late?

Oh, a storm bird's grating song is stirring music  
As it screams and hurtles by on rapid wings;  
For this bird is the bringer of wet seasons,  
An omen, to which every bushman clings.

**Clover F Nolan**

# Year 7 – Writing

This task will take 40 minutes.

## “What an amazing machine!”

Your story can be about your amazing machine and the incredible things it can do.

*or*

Your story can be about someone else and their adventures with an amazing machine.

### **When writing, you may like to think about:**

What kind of machine is it?

Who invented it?

Was the machine found somewhere?

What does it do?

Does the machine work the way it is supposed to?

Why is the machine so amazing?

