

-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-

13 AUGUST 2024

THE ANTARCTIC COMES TO TOWN – LIVE!

Antarctica is the coldest and windiest place on Earth. Shrouded in a blanket of ice more than two kilometres thick and with winds hurtling across its barren plains at over 320 km/h, the southern continent is the last great wilderness on the planet. And life in this frozen desert is certainly not for the faint-hearted.

Local residents have a unique opportunity to learn about living and working on the frozen continent when Australian polar expeditioner Andrew Brock will be live on the big screen at Cootamundra and Gundagai libraries to answer questions about life in the subzero zone.

Andrew, a resident of Gundagai, is working as a carpenter with the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) at Mawson Station, one of three stations on the Antarctic mainland presently occupied by Australian personnel. However, with only 20 staff on base over the winter season, Andrew's days might include duties from drilling ice cores to fixing broken cabinets and concreting, counting penguins to search-and-rescue and firefighting. He even has to wash the dishes.

But even the simplest of duties can be complicated by temperatures plunging below minus-70 degrees, months in almost complete darkness, blizzards strong enough to blow an aircraft away, and a very basic internet connection (with no streaming allowed). There are no trips home, no visits from family, no shops, roads, cars, trees, or pets. Mail comes only twice a year. But for these resilient expeditioners, there is the daily challenge to survive, an epic adventure in one of the most hostile environments on Earth, and a chance to support the vital biological, ecological and environmental research conducted by Australian scientists.

Andrew has been working with the AAD since October 2023, and will return to Australia in March 2025 after spending both a summer and winter season in Antarctica. He said the camaraderie among the Mawson team, the opportunity to test his trade skills in a demanding environment, and the unique beauty of the Antarctic wilderness have made the challenges of life below sixty degrees South worthwhile.

Join the Q&A with Andrew live from Mawson Station at Cootamundra Library on Thursday August 29 at 2pm, or Gundagai Library on Thursday September 5 at 2pm. These events are free and all are welcome. To book, phone the library on 6940 2200 (Cootamundra) or 69 440 270 (Gundagai).

Picture and caption:

Gundagai polar expeditioner Andrew Brock will be live from Mawson Station on August 29 at Cootamundra Library and September 5 at Gundagai Library, answering all your questions about life in Antarctica.



-END-

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council
www.cgrc.nsw.gov.au

For further media information contact:
Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council on
1300 459 689