

News of Members

British AsMA member and Associate Fellow, Dr. Nina Purvis, has arrived and is set to spend 1 year in Antarctica on behalf of the European Space Agency.



Dr. Purvis is taking a sabbatical from her general surgery residency in the NHS and will spend one year living and working at Concordia research station, run by the French and Italian polar institutes, located on Dome C at an altitude of 3200 m (~10,499 ft) causing chronic hypobaric hypoxia, with temperatures as low as -80°C (~ -112°F).

Dr. Purvis will run experiments to study the effects of the base's isolated, confined, and extreme environment on the crew, investigating gut-health and metabolism, psychological wellbeing, sleep, time perception, the crew microbiome and base contamination, cognition and learning, exercise tolerance, and immunity.

This will be the 20th winter-over at Concordia Station. Dr. Purvis will return in late 2025 to resume her residency.

In Memoriam: Chris Brooks

AsMA staff were saddened to learn of the death of Christopher J. Brooks, an Emeritus Member of the Aerospace Medical Association. Born in 1941 in Prestbury, Cheshire, United Kingdom, he finished with main engines and steering on, but his bilge pump could no longer keep up with his leaking stern gland, and he sank on October 3. He was a physician, a scientist, and an inventor whose career spanned over 30 years. Coming from a medical family of at least 14 doctors, he was accepted at Medical School at age 17 in Manchester, United Kingdom. After graduating with an M.D. in 1964,



he joined the Royal Navy and served in two nuclear submarines for 5 years as the physician and the Health Physicist in charge of the reactor chemistry and 16 nuclear tipped Polaris missiles. After leaving the Royal Navy, he spent 5 years in Family Practice in Nottingham, United Kingdom, the highlight of which time was delivering twins in the middle of the night in a caravan camped by the Erewash canal. The second twin came out bum first and survived!

Dr. Brooks then went to Carlyle, Saskatchewan, to do a locum in the winter of 1974/1975. He looked after an Indian Reserve and the nearest hospital was 100 miles away. He pulled out teeth, dealt with a blown off kneecap, and one ectopic pregnancy. He loved Canada so much, he and his wife emigrated and he joined the Canadian Navy in late 1975. His new naval career started as a Flight Surgeon in Shear-

water, Nova Scotia. Here he spent some time dangling from the hoist of a Sea King helicopter conducting rescues in the North Atlantic. It was also here that he realized that if the helicopter ditched, he was going to be the first person to drown—hence his interest in marine survival and his extensive research into the human factors of escape and survival from helicopters flying over water.

Dr. Brooks had three tours at the former Defence and Civil Institute of Environmental Medicine in Toronto, two of which were as the C.O. He was the Command Surgeon for the Canadian Navy and later the Canadian Air Force too. He introduced a new lifejacket for the Air Force, a quick don immersion suit for the Navy, and pioneered an Emergency Breathing Apparatus (EBS) for helicopter crew and passengers flying over water. He retired from the Navy as a Captain in 1998. At that time, he was appointed as the Director of R&D at Survival Systems Ltd. in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and an adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Health and Human Performance at Dalhousie University, Halifax. He was also appointed by the Privy Council to be a Federal Medical Judge as a member of the Transportation Appeal Tribunal of Canada.

Dr. Brooks held a Diploma in Aviation Medicine from Farnborough, UK, and was a Fellow of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine, London. He published over 75 articles and papers, wrote the textbook on lifejackets, and has written several publications for NATO. He also co-shared five U.S. and one European patent for helicopter window escape mechanisms. Within AsMA, he served on the International Activities Committee. His awards include the NATO Research and Technology Achievement Award, two Joe Haley Writing Awards, Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Queen's Jubilee Medal, Order of Military Merit, the Sir James Martin Gold Medal, Honorary Member of the International Association for Safety and Survival Training, and the Theodore C. Lyster Award from the Aerospace Medical Association for outstanding contributions to enhancing the survivability of helicopter water ditching through helicopter underwater escape training programs and improvements in cold water immersion protective equipment.

An online obituary is available at <https://www.arbormemorial.ca/en/kelly-kanata/obituaries/christopher-james-brooks/131145.html>, where condolences and stories may be shared.

Wishing everyone a merry holiday season and a happy New Year!

**From the staff of
Aerospace Medicine and
Human Performance
and the Aerospace
Medical Association**