

## Logbook 12 (04/12/15)

### A buoy that does not work, does not work - does it?

It is a popular story among science historians that Newton watched an apple falling from a tree and the very sight of it inspired him to write down the law of gravity. Scientific progress isn't that cheap any more these days. *Polarstern* for instance carries several tons of tools and equipment to the far end of the world. All these tools are man made, in other words they can fail and fall to pieces - especially under the extreme conditions of icy Antarctica. The career of scientists and entire projects can literally depend on a two-cent-screw, which is not available down here beyond 68 deg South. You simply can't buy it around the corner or call a specialist to repair the sophisticated tools.

*Polarstern* and its crew have a good reputation when it comes to "first aid" for broken systems. Chief *Volker Schulz* proudly tells: "Well, it gives me a certain kick when a scientist shows up in our engine-underworld, desperation written all over his/her face, asking for something which we could possibly provide or fix, and all I say is: No problem, almost done!" *Volker Schulz* himself built a new adapter for the diver's regulator. Members of his crew repaired – pressed for time - the drainage pumps of the lab containers as all of them were malfunctioning. And even the ice crusher of the Belgium crew, which almost crashed itself, is doing fine after *Polarstern's* technicians spent some hours of intense work on it.

Well these things are nothing to make a fuss about - crew members would tend to say. But *Harald Bohlmann*, head of the electronic lab, is the guy to realize medium sized miracles. He repaired the electronics of highly sophisticated sea-ice buoys, a job that normally requires a team of experts. *Adrienne Tivy* from Canada gave him a helping hand; her first soldering course was solid work.