

CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS AND THE TEAM'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Christmas 2020 has already come and gone at the Princess Elisabeth Antarctica.

With a smaller number of people at the station this year due to the pandemic, the traditional three-course Christmas Dinner, prepared by the station's cook, did not include as many participants as it has in recent years.

This didn't stop the BELARE team from getting into the Christmas spirit, however. The team managed to fashion an eco-friendly Christmas tree out of recycled wood, which now decorates the station's living room.

Maintenance and improvement

The team has had a full workload undertaking maintenance projects around the station over the last several weeks.

One of the first orders of business this season was to adjust the station's annexes, which sit atop a slow-moving glacier. Thanks to a new system of pistons and hinges the team installed last year underneath the newly rebuilt garage, the entire structure of the building can be adjusted and leveled to compensate for the glacier's flow.

Meanwhile, the team added finishing touches to the rebuilt garage, including insulation and a snow-tight door to the outside. They also added stainless steel plates to cover the garage and the new annexes of the station.

Engineers Guus Luppens and Johan Demuylder, added additional solar panels on the new building's façade, which increases renewable energy production by 10%.

In addition to the usual mechanical maintenance the crew is required to do on all of the vehicles used at PEA, it was also necessary to clear blocks of ice and some stones from the crevasse underneath the station (where clean, fully treated wastewater is dumped after use) and re-channel it so it can now flow unhindered.

Looking forward to a new year

As the first part of the season draws to a close, the team has a lot to look back on and be proud of. Everyone will get a much-deserved two-day break around New Year's as they look forward to 2021.

The first week of the new year will bring more interesting adventures, as a field expedition for the [CHASE project](#) is scheduled to depart.