

# The Explorers Club

## Northern California Chapter

September 2001

Website: <<http://caldera.wr.usgs.gov/mdiggles/EC.html>>

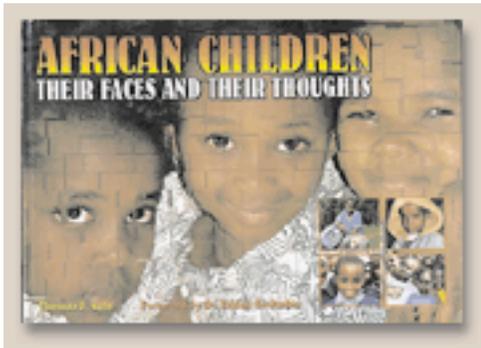
San Francisco  
September 28  
David Kennard

China, Africa, Space!  
Documenting Successfully!



**THE FINAL HOURS**  
Amelia Earhart's Last Flight

pictures from just a few  
of David Kennard's creative  
productions



*The Promise of Play*

Our first presentation this year will consist of glimpses into several of David Kennard's award-winning films and a preview of a new feature to be premiered in November on PBS: it is a look at artificial intelligence based upon the movie "2001, A Space Odyssey".

David Kennard (FN'01) is the co-founder and president of InCA (Independent Communications Associates, Inc.), a worldwide non-fiction production company operating from Mill Valley. He has more than 25 years of international experience as a producer, writer and director. He has played a

leading role in the creation of numerous television specials, books, multimedia products and fourteen major international documentary series. His work includes: Cosmos, Connections, The Ascent of Man, We The People, Joseph Campbell: The Hero's Journey, Things to Come, The Heart of Healing, Africa's Children, The Final Hours : Amelia Earhart's last flight.

His work has won the National Emmy, International Emmy, Dupont Columbia, American Historical Association, National Education Film Festival, International Science Film Festival, Houston Worldfest, Alexander Hamilton, Cine Golden Eagle, BAFTA and Peabody Awards. David Kennard holds an MBA from Indiana University, an MA and BA in Modern Languages from Oxford, and a DAP from the Sorbonne, University of Paris.

Each of his award-winning documentary series for television is a milestone in its field. Each project has integrated multiple media: books, videos, educational programs, new media, online connections and more. Kennard leads a team that thinks in many dimensions, and considers each



project like a good architect will consider designing a building: Is it functional? Is it beautiful? Is it cost effective? Can we help raise the money and get the permissions to build it? Will it stand the test of time?

Come, listen and discuss his results!

**Next Meeting**  
October 26, 2001  
Dr. Pat Scannon  
USS Mississinewa  
Sunk in 1944—Found in 2001

Expedition member Chip Lambert begins his description:

"Although it was a new ship, commissioned on 18 May 1944, Auxiliary  
continued page 4

**Date:** Friday, 28 September 2001

**Place:** Officers Club  
Ft. Mason (Bldg. 1)  
enter Franklin & Bay  
San Francisco

**Time:** 6:30 pm, cocktails  
7:00 pm, dinner

**Cost:** \$45 (by Sept 21)  
\$50 (if posted afterwards  
& call Lesley at 510 527-7899)

Reservation Form on page 5

# Second Wind Pentathlon

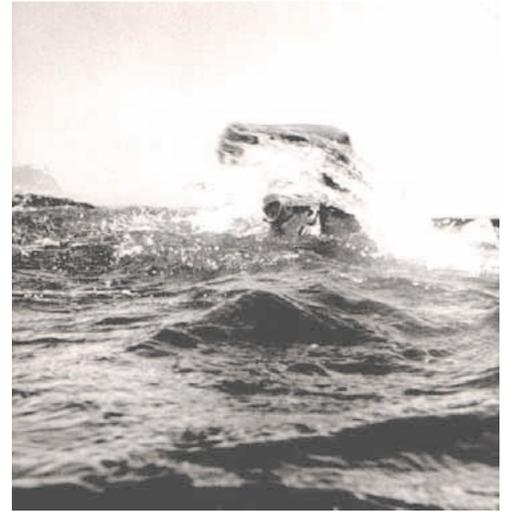
## Celebrating 30 Years

In 1967, LIFE magazine covered David Miln Smith (MN'96) as the first person to swim the choppy, shark-invested waters from Morocco to Gibraltar—a swim they called the “Mount Everest of marathon swimming.” Thirty-four years later, on October 17, 2001 (his 63rd birthday), he is returning to complete a series of events centered around the Rock of Gibraltar.

David, and a group of friends, will: **run** from the Spanish border, past Rosia Bay (where he came ashore those years ago) to Europa Point, the most southerly point in Europe; **leap** off the Rock into the Mediterranean at the site of the Neanderthal Caves; **swim** the eastern side of the Rock of Gibraltar; mountain **bike** to the top (1,398 feet) to view both continents and both seas and back; and **kayak** around the Rock into the Bay of Gibraltar, finishing at the marina near the Spanish border.

He calls this the *Second Wind Pentathlon*. “A second wind is a feeling of energy and optimism, when renewed resources appear to get the job done,” he says. “I’m here to support and demonstrate that we can be rejuvenated at any age if we keep at whatever we really want in life.”

Since the 1960’s, this modern-day Halliburton has traveled the world in search of the most risky physical challenges. In August, two magazines chronicled his feats: The **Adventure Sports Journal** has a two-issue feature on him as “*The Original Adventure Athlete*”. Santa Cruz County’s **Good Times**, featured “*Going to Extremes*”.



Photographer **Enrico Sarcini** captured this drama for Life Magazine during **David’s** record-breaking 1967 swim between Africa and Europe. There is a glimpse of Gibraltar (left)!



Mike Diggles, Mary Jane Coombs and Elsa Roscoe near the top of Mount Livermore — sights to behold.

As ‘advertised’, we brought along the tent John Roscoe used in Antarctica when he was Admiral Byrd’s Science Advisor. The thing weighs 42 pounds. Elsa Roscoe says he used it last in 1948; the date on the label says 1945 so that’s about right. We opened it up, having decided not to test it before the picnic so that whatever surprises were inside the storage bag would be enjoyed by all, even if the bag contained nothing but moths and mummy dust. Well, the bag contained a tent and a tent liner but no tent pole. So the adventure began. We got Captain Crunch to pull a couple lines and a Crescent wrench off of his boat and we managed to get a line over a tree limb so we could hoist the tent without a pole. The folks at Angel Island State Park don’t let visitors put stakes in the ground because they poke holes in the sprinkler pipes so we used packs, ice chests, picnic-table legs, tree trunks, people... whatever we had handy... to hold the lines out.

—Mike Diggles (FN’92)

photos courtesy Paul Sumi

(see page 5 too)

## The 2001 Picnic — Angel Island

Good chow, pretty boats and explorers



## Book Review

### Fifty Years in the Kalahari

Tom Larson (E'52) wrote, in June, that he would like to attend more of our meetings, but he is busy in Klamath Falls, writing and teaching. Here is a summary and review of his most recent publication. (An article, *Remember Pearl Harbor*, was published in **World War II Magazine** earlier in the year; he served from Guadalcanal to Tokyo Bay.)

Larson, Thomas J. (2001): [The Hambukushu Rainmakers of the Okavango](#) ISBN: 0-595-18456-1, 524 pages, paperback. \$28.95. (August publication)

Botswana's Okavango Delta, 15,000 square miles of swamp, ox-bow lakes, islands, narrow channels, flood plains, papyrus, elephants, crocs and hippos, lies deep in the Kalahari Desert—the longest continuous stretch of sand on earth. Today, the 'swamps', as they are often called, are known internationally as a playground for fishermen, hunters, photographers and wildlife enthusiasts. But when Tom Larson first went there they were almost an unknown wilderness where Hambukushu chiefs were famous for secret rainmaking powers., Bayeyi hunted hippopotamus with heavy harpoons from dugout canoes, and River Bushmen fished its waters with spears, hooks, homemade nets and basket traps and dug water-lily rhizomes from channel floors to roast for food.

In 1950, Tom Larson first visited Okavango, directed there by his CapeTown mentor, Isaac Schapera, who was himself to become famous for his work on the Botswana. Fascinated by this remote wilderness and its little-known peoples, Tom never looked back. He was to return again and again until the small white community in nearby Maun called him 'Okavango' Larson and his endless researching gained him the nick-name Radipotso (Father of Questions).

Tom Larson is an indefatigable old-time anthropologist and explorer who, now 84, still works on his enormous accumulation of data, lectures to students and visits in the Pacific islands. As a young man he travelled the world by bicycle, foot and thumb. Of Africa he felt life safer than in America; wild animals, he explains, leave people alone unless aroused.

Tom travelled on huge Wenela trucks carrying mine workers, asked endless questions in the heat topping 100° in the shade, slept on the ground and battled the multitude of tiny insects. In 1994, they nearly killed him.

## Isherwoods' Travels Greenland, Alaska, China

Bill and Dana Isherwood did just about everything they planned, as outlined in our June issue. For two weeks in late April and early May, they travelled by dogsled for 200 miles along the northwest Greenland coast from Savigsivik to Qanaq with eight Inuits and 124 dogs. Twice open water caused by an early spring forced them to bypass sections of the coast by travelling up onto the Greenland Icecap. Led by Paul Schurke, the expedition included a team of three film makers from the National Geographic Society. A film about Matthew Hensen and his Inuit descendents for their Explorer television series is scheduled this Fall. Hansen was the Black American who co-discovered the North Pole with Commander Robert Peary in 1909. Hansen fathered a son while living in Greenland and one of his grandsons, Ussarkaq Hansen traveled with us.

Bill then climbed in the St. Elias Range before he and Dana traveled to China. The express reason: to learn the language—which one is led to believe went rather well. Although when Dana describes her capability, she quotes, "ma ma hu hu". Literally I believe this means 'horse horse tiger tiger'—paraphrased: 'so so'! In all respects the reports of her experience (Bill returned a bit early) were delightfully shared with many. (Don't you

This book can be seen as his *magnus opi*, the compilation of work spread over half a century in one of the tougher regions of southern Africa. During those 50 years, the delta has been opened to tourism and a remote area of colonial Bechuanaland Protectorate has become a part of the Republic of Botswana. He presents a picture not only of the people leading their traditional lives but also of those people taking their place in the 20th century, and deciding their own affairs, and of a wild and beautiful world being slowly tamed. The great value of this book lies not just in the ethnographic detail of traditional custom, and there is plenty of that, but in the unfolding of a people's story, the changes and constraints in their lives covering half a century. Nor is it written just for the anthropologist but, if I guess it correctly, it makes good reading for all with an interest in Africa and in a people who, still clinging to much of their cultural heritage, have taken in a few short years a giant step into modernity.

— Alex Campbell



**Bill Isherwood and Ussarkaq Hansen** during sled travels with Inuit hunters (and 124 dogs) in NW Greenland last Spring.

love email!) New Chinese friends in a very friendly and busy city, Beijing. Many sojourns to the places you must see. Travel by modern and rather antiquated means. A grand experience. Talk to them about it!

## The Pygmy Giant Striving to Save the Pgmies

Jean Pierre Hallet's newsletter of **The Pygmy Fund** is bullish in reporting an increase in the population of the Efé Pygmies in the Serenity Zone of the Semliki Sanctuary. From 617 to 657 (8 baby boys; 6 baby girls and 26 new arrivals from outside the protectorate.) He pleads, again for their benefit, for financial support to assist these endangered peoples who have existed from time immemorial.

Jean Pierre presented such an impassioned talk last year. He has just issued a new **Manifesto** for the Pygmy Fund—an update of his first, issued 27 years ago. Write for a copy, and help where you can: The Pygmy Fund, Box 277, Malibu, CA 90265.



Explorers Club Flag 103 on Ulithi Lagoon, 120 feet above the USS Mississinewa on 6 April 2001. Right to left: Chip Lambert (MN'01), Pam Lambert, (MN'01) Pat Scannon (FN'96)

continued from page 1

Oiler AO-59, USS Mississinewa, had already accumulated, in its short six-month career in the western Pacific, 4 Battle Stars including action against Peleliu, Leyte and Okinawa. The 24,400-ton 'Ashtabula' class oiler was built at Sparrows Point, Maryland and manned by a complement of 278 enlisted men and 20 officers under the command of Captain Philip G. Beck.

Attached to Halsey's 3rd Fleet, AO-59 swung on her mooring, designated as Berth 131, in the peaceful waters of Ulithi lagoon during the early morning hours of 20 November 1944. The tranquillity was interrupted by the first, and probably the most successful, attack of a new Japanese weapon, the manned suicide submarine known as 'Kaiten'." The Miss lay on the bottom since;

it was located by a Bent Prop team at Ulithi Atoll in April 2001. Come on October 26, to hear about this Explorers-Flag expedition, and about The Bent Prop Project, from its founder and chapter member, Pat Scannon.

If you just cannot wait:

<http://www.bentprop.org>

The Onward, and her owners, berthed in San Francisco on a cool Summer day

## The 'Onward'

Tom Hall and Liz McLoughlin also ventured the globe and spent much of the summer at sea. They began by sailing in the Barents Sea and even had a train ride far north of the Artic Circle.

In July, they accepted delivery of their brand-spanking-new trawler: a 40' Norhaven, at Dana Point, California, and took it on its first sea cruise to San Francisco Bay in mid July. A 'boat-warming' was assembled after they tied-up at the St. Francis Yacht Club; all who could make it were treated to a tour of their delight. Soon they were headed north where they plan to leave her at Juneau for the foreseeable future. A trawler she is, but all of the comforts and instrumentation you might want are installed; this 'work' boat is not for hauling fish. She is outfitted with his-and-her kayaks; with a range of 3000 miles, there is little to hold back.

"When we have seen our fill of this incredible area, we will move on, but there are no plans!" The 'Onward' will be pulled out for the harsh winter months and await their return next year. Take a closer look:

<http://www.bikenfly.org/onward.htm>



# Greetings from the Chair

Dear Northern California Explorers:

Welcome back to another season of Northern California dinner meetings. I hope your summers have all been exciting and enriching and encourage you to come to a meeting soon and share the recent highlights of your travels or expeditions.

Steve has put together an interesting and varied program. There are still a few TBA speakers and locations that will get settled as we get closer to the event, so keep checking the newsletter or web site for updates. We also have a few extra programs that we are planning for the year and will announce them as soon as the logistics can be finalized.

We added two new members over the summer -- Diana Pickworth-Wong and Richard Blake, both FN-01. They have both attended functions in the past so many of you have already met them. I hope they will attend future events and continue to get involved with the chapter. Also, a belated welcome to Wilford Welsh, MN-00. I had not gotten any notice that his application had been accepted until he joined us at Angel Island.

Finally, Elsa Roscoe sent an article from her local paper that a trail in Windy Hill has been dedicated to Betsy Crowder, FN-94. Everyone who met Betsy quickly learned of her enthusiasm for the open space and hiking, and her belief that local trails and open space are important to our well being. I'm talking with Betsy's daughter Wendy, to find a day when she can join us for a chapter hike on the **Betsy Crowder Trail**.

Looking forward to seeing you soon,  
—Lesley Ewing, FN'93



Joan Linn Bekins has an exhibition of her macro photography, *Flower Power*, through October 5, 2001, at the MGH Medical Building, 1350 South Eliseo Drive, Greenbrae. Hours 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Examples may be seen at her website: [www.joanlinnbekins.com](http://www.joanlinnbekins.com)



Another view of this year's featured picnic tent, with an attempt at 'localization'!  
(photo: Jerry Hughes)

The San Diego Chapter will send you their newsletter, if you wish, or find it on their website, as a .pdf: <http://www.adventurecorps.com/sdx> You can reach their Vice Chair, Bonita Chamberlin, Ph.D. at 287 East Lane, El Cajon, CA 92021.

Make a note that she will be speaking to us in February.

# Evolution

@ The Explorers Club  
Summer Swiftly Byes

If you were exploring, adventuring or staying at home the happy days of Summer have passed us once again. Seems more rapidly each year. We now face the rigors of that trio of seasons when we reflect on all of the accomplishments of the field. We listen to the assessments of the outdoors, get on with the business at hand and plan for returns to the wild.

Some of us still forewray into projects more suitable for other times and climes, but the traditionalists will gather around the inside. We have planned our normal array of intriguing talks, and we look forward to good attendance. This newsletter introduces what to expect.

Our email was filled with the fodder of our member's activities since Spring; we can only give a glimpse. Come listen to what they have to say!

A minor change in the newsletter format: we found we can print each address and the single sheet and have only the folded page copied; also saves the insertion labor— penny here, penny there.

Welcome back for 2001-2002!  
—Lee Langan, FN'99

Please make your checks out to The Explorers Club, Northern California Chapter and mail with this form to:

Please reserve \_\_\_\_ spaces for September 28, 2001, at Ft. Mason Officers Club. Cost: \$45 each by Sept 21; \$50 if postmarked thereafter (call Lesley at (510) 527-7899 to confirm and assure a reservation.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address (if changed): \_\_\_\_\_  
Guests: \_\_\_\_\_

Lesley Ewing  
The Explorers Club  
1679 Tacoma Avenue  
Berkeley, CA 94707-1826

meal choice: (please circle)  
meat  
fish  
vegetarian

## Chapter Officers

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lee@langan.net

## Chapter Calendar for 2001-2002 Season

September 28	San Francisco	David Kennard — non-fiction films
October 26	San Francisco	Pat Scannon — finding a WWII Navy ship
December 7	San Francisco	Gene Savoy — exploration tales, shared in Reno last year and more
January 25	not set	Elbert Branscomb — the Joint Genome Project
February 22	not set	Bonita Chamberlin — dangerous jewels
March 31	not set	Marilyn Schlitz — noetic sciences
April 26	not set	not final
May 31	not set	not final

Please note venues with care. They sometimes change, but the most recent is accurate!  
For example, the September 28 meeting is at Ft. Mason in SAN FRANCISCO!

(When copying the URL addresses be sure to keep them all on one line; most are also available as links on our Chapter website.)

### *September 2001*

Lesley Ewing  
The Explorers Club  
Northern California Chapter  
1679 Tacoma Avenue  
Berkeley, CA 94707-1826

