

# The Explorers Club

## Northern California Chapter

April 2015

In color at our web site: <http://www.explorersnorca.org>

### LOCATIONS

Note venues and dates with care.

In San Francisco, CA,  
our next meeting is 6:30 pm  
April 24, a FRIDAY,  
at Pomeroy Center  
207 Skyline, San Francisco

#### THE LAST OCEAN: THE TOOTHFISH AND THE BATTLE FOR THE ANTARCTIC'S SOUL

Dr. David Ainley

Photo copyright, John Weller

Are you a fan of “Chilean Sea Bass”? Our speaker for April, Dr. David Ainley, may make you want to reconsider that. Dr. Ainley is a world-renowned penguin biologist and ecologist. As he puts it, his “underlying motivation in how to conduct science is inspired by Thomas Jefferson, who in charging Meriwether Lewis with surveying the Louisiana Purchase, noted that making observations are important but those not recorded and reported is information lost.” And Dr. Ainley’s work has indeed not been lost. With an eye to communicating his findings resulting from field research, including around 35 trips to the Southern Ocean and Antarctica, he’s published 4 books, 12 monographs and more than 200 papers about the ecology of marine top predators: seabirds, mammals, and sharks.



For us in April, however, Dr. Ainley will be using a different form of communication. Rather than delivering a lecture per se, Dr. Ainley brings us a unique opportunity, a presentation of a highly acclaimed documentary film — The Last Ocean — that has not been shown in the United States other than at film festivals. Dr. Ainley, who was one of the inspirations for the making of this film, will be open to questions following the film.

The Ross Sea, Antarctica, the subject area of The Last Ocean, is the most pristine stretch of ocean on Earth. For Dr. Ainley, this film is a natural outgrowth of his work in Antarctica for three decades. The Last Ocean is a product of his participation in what he describes as an “avocation.” He writes, “For the past 10 years ... I’ve been ‘tilting at windmills,’ attempting to protect the Ross Sea from humans, most immediately industrial fishing. . . . Founding FORSE (Friends of the Ross Sea Ecosystem), proposals and efforts to designate the Ross Sea as a Marine Protected Area has gotten lost in geopolitical greed and chaos.” The film, The Last Ocean, is an attempt to bring this to the public attention.



Dr. David Ainley grew up in the wilds of New England, while also spending time in the mountains of New Mexico, Colorado and California. With the inspiration of the wilderness and wildlife about him, he went on after college to obtain a Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins, with his field research focused on investigating penguins in Antarctica. Since then, he has made more than 30 trips to Antarctica and the Southern Ocean and today is internationally recognized as one of the world’s foremost authorities on penguins. In between all those trips to Antarctica, he founded and for 20 years led the marine research program at PRBO, including the at-sea/foraging ecology (through NOAA) and the Farallon Island marine bird and mammal components; and co-researched with Larry Spear the ecology of seabirds in the eastern tropical Pacific. For the past 20 years he’s been on the staff of H.T. Harvey & Associ-

#### UPDATE ON THE ULITHI ATOLL EXPEDITION

YOU WILL RECALL Explorers Club FN Nicole Crane’s call for volunteers to join her and her science team, along with Rick Saber, NorCA EC Chapter Chair, to work with outer island communities on reef conservation and management. Since that announcement, Ulithi Atoll has experienced a major destructive storm and the trip may be canceled. Nicole writes “The four islands of Ulithi with whom we have been working for several years, were hit directly by typhoon Maysak. All four islands have been devastated. No fatalities, but extensive destruction.” Updates can be found at [onepeopleonereef.ucsc.edu](http://onepeopleonereef.ucsc.edu). Donations through PMA at this link: <http://www.pmapacific.org/contribute/give/index.php> (say Ulithi relief) OR [http://ulithimarineconservation.ucsc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Gift\\_form.pdf](http://ulithimarineconservation.ucsc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Gift_form.pdf)

# THE FIRST HALF BILLION YEARS OF EARTH HISTORY THE REAL DARK AGES

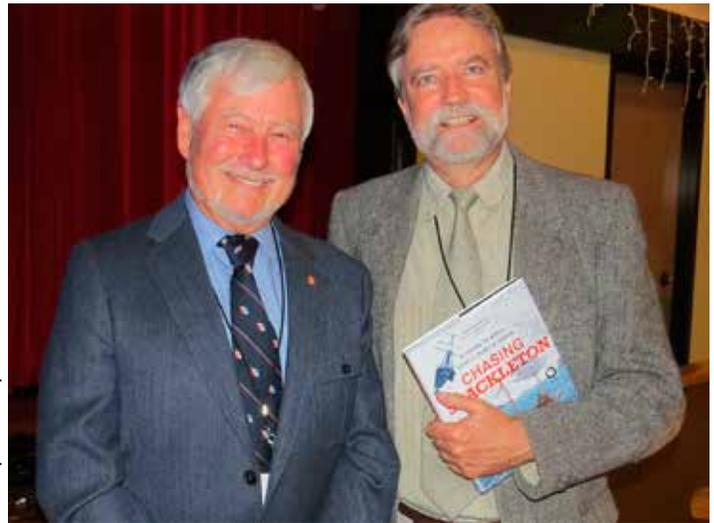
## Dr. T Mark Harrison

Dr. T. Mark Harrison gave a graduate geology lecture to the Northern California Chapter on March 27. Most were able to keep apace, as he explored, defined and redefined the early eons of our earth. Perhaps some of the chemical interactions and deduced thermal differences slipped notice, but the implication was clearly stated. In Hadean times (Hellish times) the Earth developed to be more like today than a molten sphere bubbling at the surface. Massive impacts injected new chemicals and caused the formation of our own satellite, the moon; processes still operating began.

The crust formed early and water abounded to assist in this process. Massive cracks formed the tectonic plates that collide to this day to form the moving machine we live upon. Most amazing is that recent observations (we are talking within the month!) support the theory that nascent life initiated in these early times. An article for *Science* is being prepared in the months ahead, but you heard it here first.

Harrison took us through the current view of how the world may have been in the first 500 million years—keeping in mind our home is estimated as 4 billion years old. We toss billions around effortlessly in our age of trillion-dollar budgets, but a billion, a 1000 million, remains a large value. Perceived by life-thinking humans, us, we must remember human existence is but a speck of time in comparison. Geologists deal with great periods of time that allow the earth to roil as a very active mechanism.

At the same time, geochemist Harrison uses ion micro-probes and mass spectrometers to investigate the inner details of inclusions in the rocks and minerals he studies from exposures of ancient igneous materials. The magic



Chair Rick Saber & speaker Mark Harrison. Photo by Von Hurson

minerals are really old zircon ( $ZrSiO_4$ ) crystals, especially some zircons stumbled upon serendipitously in western Australia. (He noted that geologic insight often moves forward by materials found by sheer accident.) These tiny gems contain inclusions which allowed dating – they are very old – and chemical composition analyses. They enable deductions about a new concept of the old earth.

It was an insightful talk. (LL)

## PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Got a favorite picture from your explorations? Submit it to the Newsletter editor ([ajviking@aol.com](mailto:ajviking@aol.com)) along with about 200 words describing what it is and how you came to take it. This photo was taken 3 years ago by Peggy Day during one of her guiding visits to Bhutan. At present she is working on putting together another tour to Bhutan and a tour to the Galapagos. For more information, email Peggy at [mizday@me.com](mailto:mizday@me.com).

### Yak Herder, Bhutan

This young yak herder comes from eastern Bhutan, in a remote area known as Merak and Sakten. She is ethnically called a Brokpa, a unique group of nomadic yak herders with a distinct heritage, customs and language. She made her dress from nettles and jacket from yak wool. Both are dyed red from the root of a local plant. The coral and turquoise necklace, green brocade and cotton thread for the embroidery were traded at the border with Tibet. The stylish yak wool hat is considered functional in that it gathers the moisture from the thick mist at 18,000' where they graze their yaks and the droplets fall at the end of the tendrils, away from their face. Peggy writes "We met her on our way to the Sakten Wildlife Sanctuary, a national park for Yetis. Although the Bhutanese Yeti or Migoi, as it is locally called, has been known to steal girls in the night and keep them as pets, I wasn't afraid. Migoi are also known to smell badly so you can smell them before they can find you."

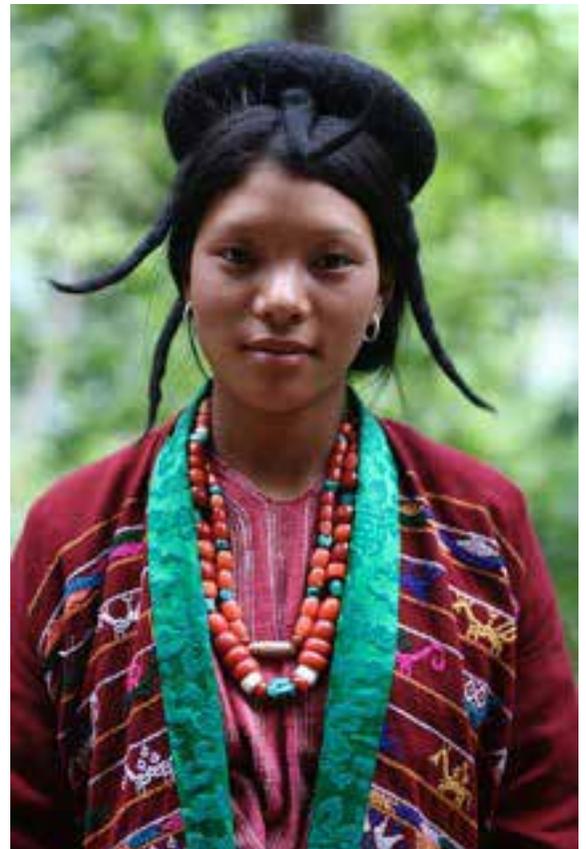


PHOTO BY PEGGY DAY

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The Newsletter has gone digital with distribution via the internet and website. Want a hard copy? Contact the Editor or Steve Smith to submit your email address if not already receiving notices OR for a color print. Pass the word..

## FROM THE CHAIR

**ECAD** –The Explorers Club Annual Dinner, represents a Mecca of sorts. One thousand of us attended the 111th annual Explorers Club Annual Dinner & awards, walking away with a pride of belonging to the hub center of exploration. Be very proud of your affiliation; I sure am! I was proud to be among 59 of you from the Northern CA Chapter-a new record! - who made the challenging Trek to ECAD to visit our Mecca last week, a Mecca represented so well by the somewhat eccentric meeting place we call home, on upper 70th Street. None will forget a night aboard the **USS Intrepid** for cocktails, and the fine dining beneath the giant Blue whale while listening to intros by **President Nichols** of award winning Explorers at the American Museum of Nat'l. History. We felt the bitter cold, biting wind and dangers encountered on the replicated voyage following Shackleton's 1916 heroic self-rescue related first-hand at the United Nations complex. So many opportunities to hear and meet those who have been to the edge and beyond, I could go on and on. Make your way to "our Mecca" at least once in your lifetime. Reflection of your Explorers nature will be your reward.

**April 24 Meeting** – Dr. David Ainley, one of the world's foremost authorities on Antarctic penguins, will be sharing his documentary film "The Last Ocean" and experiences in the Ross Sea. See description in this newsletter

**Thursday 21 May** from 6-10PM. "**A Night at the Museum**"- please plan well ahead for this limited attendance event expected to be sold-out. Maybe not quite on a par with ECAD, it will be this year's Chapter highlight. This unique night will be held at the Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park. For the event charge of \$100 per person, you will enjoy heavy hors d'oeuvres, an open bar, short behind the scenes tours of the Academy, the opportunity for self-exploration of the Academy all evening, and a short Northern CA Chapter program, including meeting our newly elected Officers. **Meg Lowman FN'97**, and several of her young applying Member Scientists will represent the Academy.

**Solar Impulse 2** – our chapter-sponsored solar panel 7744 departed from Mandalay, Myanmar, landed Chong qing, China on leg #5 with Bertrand Piccard at the controls. This long, solo 19 hour leg was physically challenging due to needs for oxygen, temps of -20C, high altitude crossing of the Himalaya and low-altitude winds of up to 40 kts

in Chongqing.

**Nominations** are closed for elected Chapter leadership taking over at our May meeting. Voting for our slate will take place at our April 24 meeting with installation taking place at our May "Night at the Museum" Meeting. **Joan Boothe** and **Steve Smith** are nominees for Chair and Vice-Chair.

**New National Members-** Welcome **Alan Eustace FN'15**, **Arjun Gupta FN'15** and **Jonathan Knowles MN'15**, all three of whom were approved in N.Y. as new fellows and member. Applications from Elliott Jessup and Laurel Allen are now in process with the Membership Committee. In the past two years, NorCA has had many successful applications submitted and approved insuring the continuing vitality of our Chapter. Many are young scientists who are extremely well-qualified and sure to become future leaders throughout the Explorers World..

"Life is short. The world is big. It awaits your exploration. If you're not living on the edge, you're just taking up way too much space." Paul Beaver, *Diary of an Amazon Jungle Guide*

Keep up the good work, keep exploring!

Capt. Rick Saber, MN'01

## EXPLORERS ON THE MOVE

(If you have news of a Chapter member's impending expeditionary activity, please send the information to the editor.)

### An ECAD MUSING

Much of the fun of ECAD is meeting giants of exploration face to face. At the Friday panel discussion I found myself sitting next to Joe Kittinger, the man whose record jump from space (104,000 feet, in 1960) was just surpassed last October by Alan Eustace (140,000 feet). Now Joe and his wife Sherry spend their days flying hot air and He balloons at balloon fiestas around the world. Joe and Alan were both honored at the UN session on Saturday. AJ



Intrepid explorers Bob Schmieder (seated), Kay Schmieder, Mimi Breiner, Kathy Jepsen and Anders Jepsen braving the winter chill on the **High Line** in NYC. Photo by Sheldon Breiner

## Election for Chapter Officers for 2015-2017 coming up at the April meeting.

The nominating committee presents the following slate to be considered at the April meeting:

Chair: Joan Boothe; Vice Chair: Steve Smith..

### From the Board: Lee Langan FN'99

We have a new President, Ted Janulis, after a surprise and heartfelt announcement at the end of the ECAD by our own Alan Nichols that he would not stand for reelection. The next day, after four incumbents were reelected to their Board seats (Atwater, Edwards, Fowler, Hanson) and Southern California's David Dolan filled the new Class of 2018, five capable individuals were nominated to the presidency; after four non-adversarial rounds of voting, Ted emerged. In addition, after the bit of turmoil developed by a small group during the balloting, the new Bylaws passed by a 65% margin. This speaks well for your Club, in this Director's opinion. We were extremely well served by Alan, and his foresight will be felt, moving ahead. Thank you! — Lee Langan FN'99



Previous page, clockwise from top left: Honorary Club President Don Walsh; past, present and future NorCA Chapter chairs Ewing, Jepsen, Boothe, Schmieder, and Saber (background Harry Hicks left and Becky Nichols right); Dede Whiteside Hicks with auction treasure in the Intrepid hanger; Rick Saber and friend; Becky Nichols telling club history to NorCA chapter; and Explorers Club President Alan Nichols. Photos mostly from Rick Saber's camera.

April 2015



Chair: Rick Saber MN'01  
 415 457-0345  
 eagle@rsaber.com  
 Vice Chair: Joan Boothe MN'07  
 415 346-5934  
 hoodooskr@aol.com  
 Treasurer: Stephen E. Smith FN'96  
 925 934-1051  
 ecnca@oceanearth.org  
 Secretary: Von Hurson MN'10  
 Webmaster: Mike Diggles FN'92  
 Newsletter: Anders Jepsen FN'03  
 ajviking@aol.com  
 925-322-8893

**Northern California  
 Calendar of Events**

(Venues are identified as soon as known.)

**Our Next Event**

**Upcoming Events (2015)**

April 24 . . . . . Dr. David Ainley  
 Last Ocean (& NorCA election) . . . . . Pomeroy  
 May 21 (Thursday) . . . . . Meg Lowman  
 Underground Tour, CA Academy of Science  
 June 13 . . . . . Chapter Picnic  
 . . . . . Angel Island  
 September . . . . . TBA  
 October . . . . . Lowell Thomas Meeting  
 October . . . . . Rosemaire Twinam  
 Counting Game in Africa"

**Earlier Chapter  
 Events (2014)**

April 26, 2014 . . . . . FIELD TRIP  
 Geyser's Field trip . . . . . Richard Blake  
 May 23 . . . . . Dr. Meg Lowman  
 Forest Canopies . . . . . City Forest Lodge  
 June 8 . . . . . Summer Gathering  
 Gene & Sybil Boudreau's home, Sebastapol  
 June 20 . . . . . FIELD TRIP  
 USS Hornet . . . . . Oakland  
 September 26 . . . . . M.E.A McNeill  
 Apiary Science . . . . . City Forest Lodge  
 October 11 . . . . . Lowell Thomas Award Dinner  
 . . . . . Bowers Museum, Santa Ana, CA  
 October 24 . . . . . Dylan Burge  
 Botany Field Trip . . . . . Golden Gate Park  
 November 21 . . . . . Tony Liang  
 An exploration into cancer. . . . . City Forest Lodge  
 December 10, . . . . . Holiday Party  
 February 27 . . . . . Nicole Crane & Giacomo Bernardi  
 Romance & Discovery Under the Sea. . . . . Pomeroy  
 March 21 . . . . . ECAD  
 American Museum of Natural History New York  
 March 27 . . . . . Dr. T. Mark Harrison  
 Earth's Geochronology. . . . . Pomeroy

Send address changes and  
 corrections by email to Steve at  
[ecnca@oceanearth.org](mailto:ecnca@oceanearth.org)

**Upcoming Expeditions:** We have been advised of several upcoming expeditions which we believe Chapter Members and/or Sirdars may be interested in. Each of these expeditions has at least a place or two available as of the date of this newsletter. Because of space limitations, we can only provide brief descriptions here, but if you would like more information, please contact the listed expedition organizer or Rick Saber ([ricksaber1@gmail.com](mailto:ricksaber1@gmail.com)) or Joan Boothe ([hoodooskr@aol.com](mailto:hoodooskr@aol.com)).

**May 2015** — Raivavae Research Program, led by Explorers Club Board member Capt. Lynn Danaher. Raivavae is an island in Polynesia with a population of under 1,000. One of 5 of the Austral Islands, it is lush, unspoiled and stunningly picturesque. It is located just south of the Tropic of Capricorn at 23 52 S latitude and 147 40 W longitude. Participants will be involved in helping to collect data, visiting the communities, and learning about the unique management and conservation efforts in the region. This program will be through the Oceanic Society in partnership with our One People One Reef project. Information about this program can be found at <http://www.oceanicsociety.org/trip/research/ulithi-reef>. An Explorers Club Flag has been applied for.

**June 15-28, 2015** ~~MAY BE CANCELED~~ check w Nicole Ulithi Micronesia Reef Conservation volunteer participant program led by Nicole Crane. Participants will be involved in helping to collect data, visiting the communities, and learning about the unique management and conservation efforts in the region. This program will be through the Oceanic Society in partnership with our One People One Reef project. Information about this program can be found at <http://www.oceanicsociety.org/trip/research/ulithi-reef>. An Explorers Club Flag has been applied for.

**August 2015** — Travel down the Nelson River in Canada to York Factory with the Fara Heim Expedition to search for the lost warships of the 1697 Battle of Hudson Bay. For information, please call (262-960-2959) or email David Collette ([david@faraheim.com](mailto:david@faraheim.com)). For more information re Fara Heim, go to [www.faraheim.com](http://www.faraheim.com)

**November 10, 2015 - December 22, 2015** ----Dr. Bob Schmieder reports from Australia that the agent for the Heard Island expedition has extended an offer to others who might be interested in sailing along on the ship that will take the expedition team to Heard Island, remain there to service it, and bring it back home. While not living on the island, day trips to visit the various scientific teams or to check out the local wildlife would be offered. All meals would be eaten on board or bag lunches provided for the individuals for the day trips. If you

April 24, 2015

**THE TOOTHFISH AND THE BATTLE FOR THE ANTARCTIC'S SOUL**

**April 24, San Francisco @ Pomeroy Center**

**Date** FRIDAY, April 24, 2015  
**Place:** Pomeroy Center  
 207 Skyline Blvd  
 San Francisco, CA 94132  
 (415) 655-4100  
**Time:** 6:30 - reception  
 7:15 - dinner — 8:00 - program  
**Cost:** \$49 in advance; \$60 after 25 April  
 Students: \$35. (2015 dues: members, \$25; Sirdars, \$50)  
 Please mail reservation & meal choice, checks & dues to Steve Smith.  
 email [ecnca@oceanearth.org](mailto:ecnca@oceanearth.org), call (925) 934-1051, or  
 mail to 402 Via Royal, Walnut Creek, CA 94597

**Reserve** \_\_\_\_\_ spaces  
**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address (if changed): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Companion: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Meal choice\*: \_\_\_\_\_

**We have an established PayPal account.**

For those of you who have an account, you can sign up and remit dinner costs to the NorCA Chapter by transferring money to: [explorersnorca@gmail.com](mailto:explorersnorca@gmail.com)  
 There is a PAYPAL BUTTON on our website ([www.explorersnorca.org](http://www.explorersnorca.org)); easy to use!  
 (There is a slight extra fee of \$2 for this service.)

\*April Meal Options (select your choice)  
 stuffed pork tenderloin or chicken marsala or veggie (pasta primavera)