

# The Explorers Club

## Northern California Chapter

June 2001

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

### Angel Island Chapter Picnic

June 23, 2001  
A Way to Enjoy a Day  
on the Bay

The Angel Island picnic is an opportunity to stretch your legs, get some sun (and/or fog), appreciate the Bay, and visit with friends and fellow Explorers. Enjoy the barbecue, and learn some Bay Area history. Take a ferry from San Francisco, Vallejo, or Tiburon, or arrive by kayak with Sue Estey (weather permitting).

We are aiming to send an advance party via private vessel to arrive before the first ferry and establish a beachhead.

Access to the Island is by private boat or public ferry:

#### **Tiburon to Angel Island Ferry**

415-435-2131 (hourly trips)

#### **San Francisco from Pier 41**

Blue & Gold Fleet 415-773-1188

#### **Vallejo BayLink Ferry**

707-643-3779

#### **Tides**

Low (-1.7 ft) at the Golden Gate at 7:42 AM, high at 3:09 PM, low at 7:35 PM  
Slack water at 10 AM, max flood (4.4 knots) is at 1 PM, slack around 4:30 PM, max ebb (2.6 knots) at 7 PM.

**Date:** Saturday, 23 June 2001

**Place:** Angel Island  
San Francisco Bay

**Time:** 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

**Cost:** \$20, or  
\$25, posted after June 18  
(for food & drink, but NOT  
the ferry travel)

(call Steve at 925-934-1051 if  
check mailed after June 18)

### Experienced Kayakers

Meet at  
Schoonmaker Beach,  
Sausalito.

For the trip to Angel Island, experienced kayakers only please, call **Sue Estey** at 510-526-2216. Sea Trek rents kayaks at Schoonmaker Beach to those who have taken classes in sea kayaking; you should call them for more information.

### Next Meeting(s) Fall 2001

The schedule for the Northern California Chapter's meeting for the next season is well underway but, as you might appreciate, there are choices to make, rooms to secure and details to arrange.

Using the wonderful excuse that you are bound to misplace a June newsletter by the Fall, all the details will be in our first mailing in late September

Enjoy the sun or, as we might say in San Francisco, "Have a cool Summer!"



**A Train in Woodside**  
Rusty and Dan Leibowitz hosted a garden reception prior to our May talk. They have done so before, and we were delighted to return. Their warm hospitality welcomed members and their guests on a splendid afternoon; isn't Woodside always so? The garden is beautiful. It is enhanced by a real treat: Dan's working train layout which covers hundred's of feet, mounted at waist level. This Santa Fe locomotive trailing a dozen cars created a tranquil backdrop to conversation.

# High Jinks in The High Country

## It was a young man's challenge!

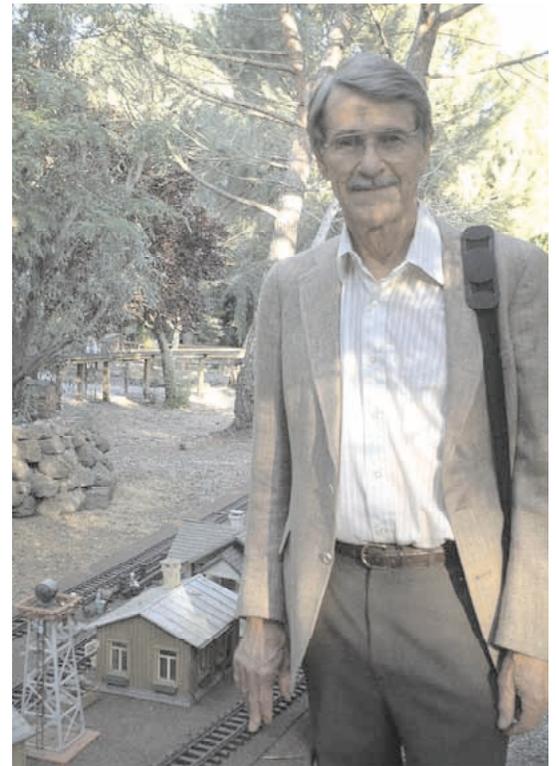
At our May meeting, Dr. James Moore spoke about the history of exploration in the 'highest' Sierra from 1844 through 1876 with illustrations from his book published by the Stanford Press. Get the book!

The tales of intrigue and competition striving to be the first to climb and measure the highest peak are a rare insight into the development of the West. Familiar names now, for they named peaks after survey leaders and members, they were true mountain men climbing and measuring and mapping. Dr. Moore equates mapping to exploration. If it is not mapped how do you know it has been explored? If it *is* mapped, it has been explored!

John Fremont was the first to venture into these fault-block mountains, then part of Mexico, in 1844. He published the first map of our State in 1850 (and was the first to label the 'Golden Gate'.) Others followed; they were the founders of the California Geological Survey (Josiah Whitney) and the U.S. Geological Survey (Clarence King). It took many expeditions into this rugged high country to learn that the extensive north-south Kern River Canyon prevents access to the highest peaks from the gradual western slope of the range.

There are twelve peaks exceeding 14,000 feet in the highest Sierra. Using meter-long mercury barometers, these topographers made multiple ascents to observe the elevation. Given today's satellite-based observations to compare, they were remarkably precise. However, the close proximity of Mt. Langley and Mt. Whitney caused grand confusion. King even 'moved' Mt. Whitney by climbing Mt. Langley in error; he published this fact to his dismay. John Muir later corrected the error!

Today, access to the highest peak in the contiguous United States, Mt. Whitney, is a well-maintained trail. Approach from the east!



Jim Moore, our May speaker pictured at the Leibowitz Garden Party, is an emeritus geologist of the U.S. Geological Survey.

## Go & Tell!

### May 2001

**Jim Moore**, our speaker, explores beneath the sea as well as in the highest country. He just returned from a project with the Monterey Research Institute aboard the *Western Flyer*. They were using a remote deep-sea rover near Hawaii, capable of grabbing samples as deep as 4000 meters.

**Jeff Mantel** has returned from his fourth North Pole expedition, escorting visitors on the sled trip.

**Tom and Liz Hall** are soon off to Norway where they will travel north to Spitzbergen. This Summer they will then take their 40-foot trawler to Anacortes, B.C.

**Eva Blum** introduced her guest Marion Softky, senior writer for the Country Almanac, who has signed on to join an archaeological expedition in the high Andes this Summer— at 11,000 feet.

**Art Ford** returned from a series of four cruises to the Antarctic this Winter; he was the guest lecturer aboard small-expedition cruise vessels.

**Keith Kvenvolden** introduced his guest T R and Alpha Tau; the Alphas plan to continue travels along sections of the Mississippi/Missouri River this Summer.

**Steve Smith** introduced his guest, Mary Jo Dierickx. In early June he will teach an underwater archaeology course to students from St. Mary's College. Their project is a seventeenth-century wreck off the south shore of Bermuda.

**Lee Langan** introduced his guest Booker Kelly, a native of Santa Fe who has just moved to the Bay Area. Lee has just returned from travels in Turkey with his son; they motored throughout

the country's western regions visiting numerous archaeologically significant locations in this beautiful land. Sites spanned from those Paleolithic Man through all of the great ages of civilization. The cultural density and remains of man's work brought a new appreciation of our heritage and its complexity.

**Bill Isherwood** was in town: just back from sled travels with Inuit hunters (and 124 dogs) in NW Greenland; a National Geographic film crew tagged along to gather film for a documentary on Michael Hensen who co-discovered the North Pole in 1909. Bill is off soon to climb Mt. Elias in the Yukon Territory. Then to China with Dana; they hope to circumnavigate three sacred mountains in SE China. Whew!

(If you were missed, drop a note; I was scribbling fast!)

## Book Review

### Clarifying an Enigma

Long, Elgen M. & Marie K. (1999) Amelia Earhart: The Mystery Solved, Simon & Schuster, ISBN: 0-684-86005-8, 320 pages. Photographs. Maps. Line drawings. \$25.00

The Amelia Earhart story continues to invoke inordinate amounts of research energy and speculation. Few historical mysteries have been studied, dissected, and speculated on as much as this one, and here is the latest book on the subject.

This one is the result of more than twenty-five years of research, interviews with over a hundred sources and over a hundred thousand miles of travel. The senior author is a retired Boeing 747 senior pilot with 40,000 hours flying time starting with PBW World War II seaplanes. He has circumnavigated the earth in a small plane...north to south over each of the poles. His practical knowledge is extensive including experience with the same navigation techniques used on Earhart's last flight.

More than just a book about the mystery of her disappearance, this is the "Amelia Earhart story" and is a good starting point for someone who is just now joining the ranks of Earhart aficionados.

It is written in an easy-to-read conversational style that provides insights into Earhart's history and the early flying ventures that made her a prominent public figure even before her attempted round-the-world flight.

Using a blend of story-telling and technical analysis the authors take the readers step-by-step along the way toward her fateful departure in July 1937 from Lae, New Guinea, bound for Howland Island.

Drawing on carefully gathered and organized information supplemented by insights into the technical details of navigator Noonan's methods, documented details of the flight's circumstances, along with descriptions of technical details of the flight, as well as computation and reasoning, the Longs conclude that after sixty years the plane is "...lying quietly on the ocean floor in the deep water near Howland Island. It can be found, and it can be recovered."

They reached their conclusions by determining the boundaries of the most probable area where the plane ran out of fuel and then systematically eliminating the places where the plane could not have been.

Is the mystery "solved?" No. That won't happen until hard physical evidence is recovered, but the Long's explanation is convincing

enough that the publisher appended the subtitle. Will the physical evidence turn up—and when? Who knows? But, keep an eye cocked on the news media. Suitable technology is available and sooner or later it will be applied.

There is one inescapable conclusion however. Now-known facts compiled over recent years add up to more knowledge than was available at the time of the tragic loss and the resulting search. For instance, we now know that reoccurring and confounding information regarding the then-newly emerging radio procedures combined with confusing time zones at the crucial part of the world were contributing fatal factors. Looking back we can now reconstruct events building up to the disaster-about-to-happen. Had the principals known then what we know now, the outcome of the flight would have been a successful and happy one.

—Norden H. (Dan) Cheatham, FN'89  
(Note: author Elgen Long, FN'72)

## Japanese Suicide Sub's Victim Found Divers Successful

As the Summer Blockbuster Season opens with a fictional film based upon the attack at Pearl Harbor, and National Geographic presents a television documentary of the attack that began World War II, three members of the Northern California Chapter of The Explorers Club contributed their discovery from the Pacific War. Divers Chip Lambert, (MN'01), Pam Lambert (MN'01), and Pat Scannon (FN'86) discovered a Navy tanker sunk on November 20, 1944, by a Japanese suicide submarine. (Part of this report was published last month but is repeated here for to be complete.)

On April 6, 2001 at 12:10 pm (local time) in Ulithi Lagoon, this independent team located and were the first to dive on the wreck of the 553-foot USS Mississinewa AO-59, the only American naval ship sunk by a kaiten, a one-man Japanese suicide submarine.

Since WWII, the ship's exact position has been in question, despite

numerous prior attempts by both American and Japanese dive groups to find the wreck. James P. Delgado, Director of the Vancouver, B. C. Maritime Museum and an expert on Japanese midget submarines, has described the lost USS Mississinewa as "the last great unsolved WWII Pacific sinking."

Chip Lambert, the team leader, working with Mike Mair, the ship's historian and author of the USS Mississinewa story (in progress), obtained photographs, taken by Sid Harris, Cherry Hill, NJ, from the rescue tug ATF-107 Munsee at the time of the sinking in 1944. Using observations from the photographs, Lambert narrowed the search area from almost 200 square miles to 5 square miles. After seven straight days of searching in a small dive boat using a portable sonar unit, the team, working with Ulithians, located the tanker on a sandy bottom in 120 feet of water.

Describing his first view of the ship, Lambert stated, "While descending, we saw the sea reluctantly releasing the USS Mississinewa from its grasp. I was finally convinced we were no longer looking at a photograph, a chart plot, or a detector signal, but a grave for fifty war heroes, a memorial for the surviving crewmembers and families and a symbol of honor for the people of Ulithi."

The USS Mississinewa was at berth at this key WWII US Navy installation when the kaiten, probably released by Japanese mother sub I-36 just outside Ulithi Lagoon, crept into the harbor and struck the tanker on the starboard bow, taking the lives of 50 American officers and sailors. The bow section with the forward crew berthing, where it is believed the greatest loss of lives occurred, lies on its port side with hatches open. The submarine's site of impact just aft of the bow and a secondary explosion created a huge opening in the hull. Today, the lifeless twisted metal is home for large schools of fish and other sea life. The remainder of the ship lies upside down with the twin screws and rudder angled toward the surface. The bottom blends with the surrounding sand, making the ship difficult to see from the surface. The dive team, respecting the ship as a gravesite, elected not to enter the ship; they photographed only the ship's exterior.

The team coordinated its efforts with the people of Ulithi, first gaining permission to search for the ship from both Chief Pisente Talugyar, the hereditary owner of these waters, and Senator Anthony M. Tareg, local representative for Ulithi in the Fifth Legislature of Yap State. The islands' Chief Administrator, John Rulmal, critiqued the team's observations and ensured logistical support. At one point he ordered release of the atoll's remaining gasoline reserves to support the search efforts. Immediately after the search team radioed news of the find to shore, Mr. Rulmal contacted Senator Tareg by radio in Yap, 100 miles to the southwest, as Ulithi has no other means of communication with the outside world. Others involved with the search and discovery included Ulithians, Faustino Yalomai, manager of Ulithi Divers dive shop, Kenneth Wur, Mario Suk and Trip-N-Tour representative, Lisa Wallner.

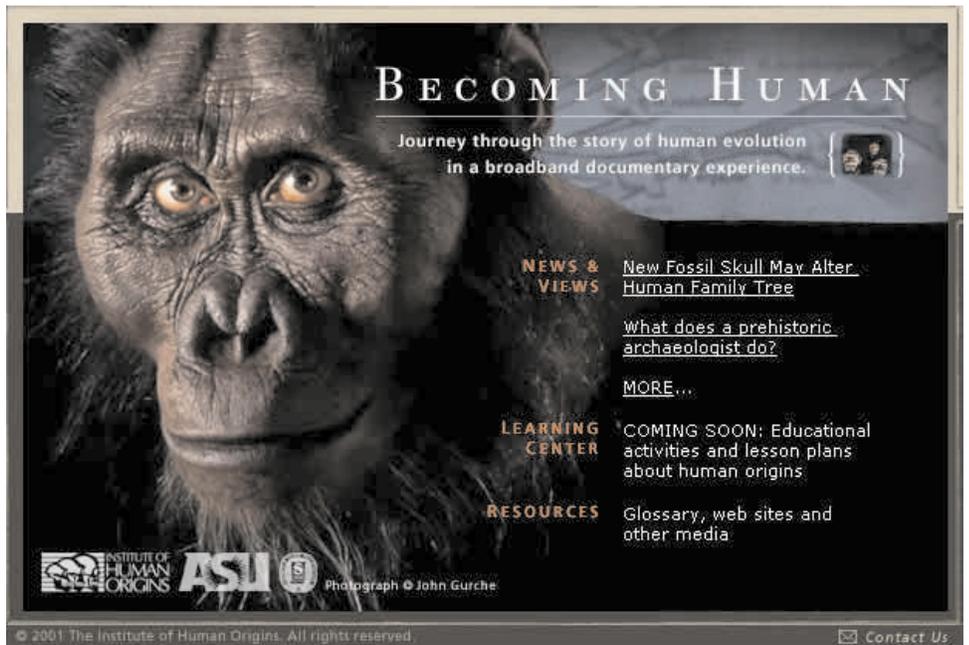
With the discovery of the exact location of the Mississinewa, and in recognition that the ship is a gravesite, Ulithian leaders have met and closed the site to all sport diving, pending discussions and coordination with the US Navy. The California team, working with key Ulithians, is in the process of notifying the US Department of Navy of their findings.

In the United States, forty-eight surviving crewmembers have stayed in close contact with each other through the USS Mississinewa AO-59 Reunion Group. The California team hopes to present documentation of the Mississinewa's final resting place at their next reunion meeting.

## Earle Parks Award EC Director Honored

The May/June Issue of National Parks, the magazine of the National Parks Conservation Association, reports that Northern California Chapter member (and Club Honorary President) Dr. Sylvia Earle (MED '81) was presented the Winks Award for Enhancing Public Understanding of National Parks at its annual dinner last March. It commented,

"A noted oceanographer, Earle received the Winks award for her tireless efforts toward protecting ocean



## Early Man's Web A Site to Visit

<<http://www.becominghuman.org>>

The Institute of Human Origins has recently launched a significant web site that has gotten a lot of attention. It is a highly interactive, information-rich site with voice-over, animation, music and so on. Don Johanson, formerly of this chapter and now at Arizona State University, reported that site has had favorable comments in the New York Times, Science, Chronicle of Higher Education and USA Today.

Take a look. It is a real treat—the sort of wonderful benefit that the Internet can bring to the world. A skillful design that intrigues and invites, while you learn more about paleoanthropology.

ecosystems. Through her work on the National Park Advisory Board of the National Park Service, on other nonprofit boards and commissions, and through her more than 125 scientific and popular works, Earle has shown dedication to marine conservation within national parks and beyond."

At the same banquet the NPCA honored Senator John McCain with the William Penn Mott, Jr. Park Leadership Award.

## John Roscoe (FN'54) Related Items!

Congratulations to Stephanie Wolf (SM'92) who received her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Cornell University on May 27, 2001. Steph got

*adopted* by John and Elsa Roscoe into the Northern California Chapter when they met at ECAD in about 1995, when Steph was an undergraduate at Cornell. So, is she going to work on kitty cats and puppy dogs or Florida Panthers next?

We are going to bring the tent John used in Antarctica a few decades ago, if we can just lift the thing. It is not something he tossed on the top of his pack and hiked with; this seems to be one of those serious pieces of field equipment you use in harsh field conditions. We'll roll it out on the lawn at Angel Island, and see if we can figure out how to set it up; come join us for this historic event.

—Mike Diggles

# Greetings from the Chair

Dear Northern California Explorers:

# The Explorers Club's Exploration Grants

# evolution @ The Explorers Club

Summer is around the corner and most of us are about to take off for travel, expeditions, research projects or vacations. Then we will come home with slides, photographs, specimens, samples, raw data and tons of memories and spend the autumn putting these collections all in to order and sorting out the real essence of what we learned over the summer. One of my most lasting memories from school was during the first week, when we all reported on "How I Spent My Summer Vacation." My marvel stays the same over the years—the projects change, but the basic ideas remain.

I hope all of you have fabulous summers—filled with lots of new experiences and opportunities for exploration and research, lots of time to share with friends and colleagues and time for reflection on both what you have already accomplished and what you hope to do next.

I've enjoyed serving as your chapter chair and am looking forward to continuing that duty in the autumn. After Angel Island, we'll shut down the organized activities till September. We may do some business over the summer and will keep you aware through e-mail. If not done already, send your e-mail address to Mike Diggles <mdiggles@usgs.gov>.

I'll be here much of the summer. You can reach me by in phone, letter and e-mail. As you return from your various pursuits with new discoveries that you would like to share with the Chapter please contact me or Steve Smith. As you meet fellow explorers, please tell them about the Club, invite them to attend the Chapter events and encourage them to join.

Carpe Diem!

—Lesley Ewing, FN'93

As members of The Explorers Club venture into the field for a summer season in the northern hemisphere, it might be helpful to know about resources available from the Club that might be tapped for follow-up efforts.

The Explorers Club offers a number of grant programs as part of its public service commitment. Applications are judged on the scientific and practical merits of the proposal, the competency of the investigator and the proposed budget. One need not be a member to apply.

The Exploration Fund of The Explorers Club provides grants in support of exploration and field research. Grants are awarded primarily to graduate students and members of expeditions in amounts up to \$1,200. Applications are judged on the scientific and practical merit of the proposal, the competence of the investigator, and the appropriateness of the budget. Deadline: 31 Jan.

The Youth Activities Fund was established to help foster a new generation of explorers and to build a reservoir of young men and women dedicated to the advancement of knowledge of the world. Grants are awarded to high school students and college undergraduates to enable them to participate in field research under the supervision of qualified scientists. Awards typically range from \$500 to \$1,500. Deadline: 15 Jan.

Special Grants are awarded for a number of select purposes each year, usually from the proceeds of special fund-raising events held by the Club headquarters in New York or by one of the regional chapters.

At the May meeting, Steve Smith mentioned that an opportunity has presented itself and the officers would like reactions or assistance from members of the Chapter. Mort Beebe, also active in the American Society of Media Photographers, has proposed that BOTH organizations (the chapter and the local ASMP chapter) share the use of and purchase price of a LCD Projector. This would be used in lieu of slide projectors we now borrow and VCRs we occasionally need. Most speakers have their presentations in computer-based formats (PowerPoint, QuickTime, Real Player, etc.), and projectors for their use are not readily available.

A nice idea but a costly one. Three questions are asked:

Is it the responsibility of the Chapter to provide this service?

Is this the right time to buy this kind of equipment? (If so, which device?)

Can we afford to buy this? (Perhaps a \$2000 for a 50% share; would you approve a \$10 accessment?) Should we? Help decide... Please let Leslie, or any chapter officer, know your thoughts and suggestions.

—Lee Langan, FN'99

Please make your checks out to The Explorers Club and mail with this form to:

Stephen E. Smith  
The Explorers Club  
402 Via Royal  
Walnut Creek, CA  
94596

Please reserve \_\_\_\_ spaces for June 23, 2001, at Angel Island.  
Cost: \$20 by June 18; \$25 if postmarked thereafter.

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

## Chapter Officers

Chair: Lesley Ewing  
510-527-7899  
lewing@coastal.ca.gov

Vice-Chair: Stephen E. Smith  
925-934-1051  
nauticos@oceanearth.org

Treasurer: Thomas Hall  
415-502-7204 (work)  
thall@epi.ucsf.edu

Webmaster: Mike Diggles  
650-329-5404  
mdiggles@usgs.gov

Database: Jerry Hughes  
707-322-6605  
jerry@jghughes.net

Newsletter: Lee Langan  
415-567-8089  
lee@langan.net

## Continuing Chapter Calendar for 2000-2001 Season

June 23          Angel Island          Summer Picnic

July, August, and September          Break for the Field Season. Explore!

October          There are a number of very active plans for the events of our next year: the 2001-2002 Season. Rather than outline plans in progress we will feature these in our first newsletter in the Fall. If you have suggestions for speakers, please contact Steve Smith. They are welcome! Meanwhile go climb, hike, sail, dig, dive, read and enjoy.

Please note venues with care. They sometimes change, but the most recent is accurate!  
For example, the June 23 picnic is on Angel Island in SAN FRANCISCO BAY!

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

### *June 2001*

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

