

The Explorers Club Northern California Chapter

June 2016

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

LOCATIONS

Note venues and dates with care
In San Francisco, CA.

June 25, 2016

[Crissy Field, San Francisco](#)

COME JOIN THE FUN!!

Saturday, June 25, 2016

**Northern California Chapter, Explorers Club Annual Picnic
at
Crissy Field, San Francisco**

10 AM until ??

**We will gather in the picnic area between the Tidal Marsh and the west
end of the East Beach Parking Lot.
See the Chapter website (www.diggles.com/ec/) for a map.**



The Club will supply plates, napkins, etc., as well as beverages and some food, but please do bring food and drink contributions to share. Spouses, partners, children welcome. For planning purposes, please let us know if you will be coming, and, if someone is with you, how many.

**Please respond by email to Joan Boothe (hoodoskr@aol.com)
or phone (415-233-1697).**

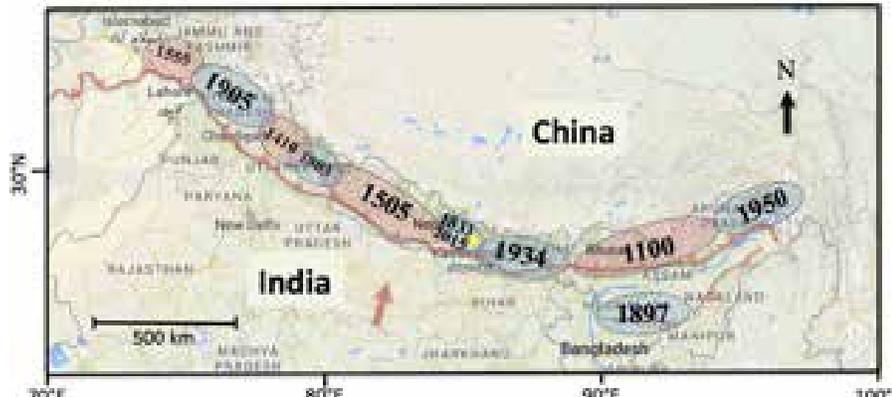
SURVIVING THE 2015 EARTHQUAKE IN NEPAL

ANNE SANQUINI, PHD

Illustrations provided by the speaker

Editor's Note: This review has benefitted greatly from the speaker's review and enhancement of the text, which was much appreciated.

Dr. Sanquini began her talk with a slide showing earthquake history in the area between China and India. There have been four great earthquakes over the past ~120 years along a thrust belt that forms the Himalayan mountain range.



Last year's temblor in Nepal was of magnitude 7.8. Clearly, Nepal is an area that needs to anticipate such earthquakes and to set up plans to survive them. The photograph of Kathmandu below shows a variety of buildings. Construction methods range from common adobe to modern reinforced concrete.



Experience in Nepal, like elsewhere, is that properly designed and built structures are much better able to withstand the destructive force of an earthquake. However, there are many, many unsafe buildings throughout the country.

Public school buildings are of major concern. Many are built of unfired adobe bricks, using mud mortar. They are unrein-

forced and poorly maintained. One non-profit, GeoHazards International, 20 years ago took up the challenge to introduce seismic knowledge and construction skills at the community level. Partnering with a local NGO, National Society for Earthquake Technology-Nepal (NSET), they worked with the government and local school districts to begin strengthening the buildings. In the process, the local masons, teachers and students, as well as parents and other neighbors of the schools learned of earthquake-resistant construction.

Dr. Sanquini's research in Nepal focused on developing and testing an outreach program that could be used to enhance the extension of such practices to other at-risk communities. On her last trip there, she landed in Kathmandu April 21, 2015. Four days later, while she was working with her student research assistants, the earthquake



struck. She was able to record and evaluate first hand the nature of the damage and the response of the populace. One picture of a street on which the facade of the buildings on one side of the street had completely fallen off is especially memorable, as well as the concern of the locals for themselves and the safety of visitors. "Don't walk close to the building. Stay in the middle of the street" was a familiar reminder to be heard. After-shocks continued to be felt throughout the night, and for weeks and months afterwards.

The difference between the poorly and well-built structures in standing up to the seismic shaking was immediately clear. The next picture in particular shows an elementary school in which the support structure on the middle floor had failed, resulting in an upper floor pancaking down on to the lower floor, crushing the desks below. Thankfully, the Nepal earthquake struck on a Saturday, when school was out, and no lives were lost in that school. Although thousands of school buildings suffered damage in the earthquake, the ~300 schools that had been retrofitted before April 25, 2015 all stood strong. Many became aid distribution centers or provided temporary shelter for the affected community people.

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SURVIVING THE 2015 EARTHQUAKE IN NEPAL

Continued from page 2.



Five of these retrofitted schools had been featured in an educational video filmed in 2014 by Kathmandu University students as part of Dr Sanquini's research. The video drew on social theory and the experiences of GeoHazards Internationals and NSET in motivating people to take action to reduce their harm from natural disasters before they happen. This has been shown to be especially difficult to do in countries with limited resources and cultural barriers to change, in this case, by the local school districts. In some cases, the locals thought building a new school was the only solution, even though the cost for that was 4 times the cost of a retrofit. Educating those decision makers as to what was needed meant encouraging them to make their own decisions, based on the following simplification: People will take action when they 1) Know what to do; 2) Believe it will work; and 3) Know somebody who did it. The "actors" in the video were the local Nepalese who had already successfully retrofitted their schools. They were peers to the intended audience.



The video's impact was tested using a randomised controlled trial with 761 adult community members at 16 Kathmandu Valley schools in need of seismic work. The study was completed just 5 weeks before the earthquake struck. The video was shown to be successful in increasing educating and motivating audience support of not only making their school more earthquake resistant, but also to recommend to others that they build earthquake-resistant homes. A peer-reviewed original research article, "A communications intervention to motivate disaster risk reduction" about the making of the video was published last month as an Open Access article in the journal Disaster Prevention and Management. After the April 2015 earthquake, the film crew returned to the schools, to include a new ending: that all the schools had survived the earthquake. The local-language video was released to the public in Nepal, to aid in the reconstruction effort.



Dr. Sanquini expressed hope about the success of Nepal's recovery from the April 2015 earthquake. As she describes it, seeds were sown starting over 20 years ago that have been slowly growing into an awareness of the need for earthquake-resistant construction and the technical and financial support to achieve it. She closed her talk with the earthquake history slide. This time, she highlighted Bhutan and Western Nepal, which are in "seismic gap" areas and overdue for great earthquakes. GeoHazards International is now working in those areas, championing innovative and affordable solutions to help them to reduce their earthquake risk, **before** the disaster happens.

AJ

Note: You can find out more about GeoHazards International and sign up for their newsletter at www.geohaz.org

HEARD ISLAND EXPEDITION COMPLETED SUCCESSFULLY

Robert Schmieder PhD FN'86

Illustrations provided by the author

After three years of planning and raising a half-million dollars, the 2016 Cordell Expedition to Heard Island was carried out during March/April, 2016. Led by Chapter member Dr. Robert Schmieder, the 14-man team spent 20 days on the island, logging 75,000 radio contacts worldwide and carrying out a research program to document effects of climate change and to elaborate the biodiversity of



this extremely remote subantarctic island. You can see information about the project on the websites www.heardisland.org and www.vk0ek.org.



Heard Island lies at 53°S 73°E, about 1000 nm from Antarctica and 2300 nm from the nearest ports. The team assembled in Cape Town, South Africa and boarded a 130-ft. chartered vessel for the 12-day cruise to Heard Island. They carried with them all the

facilities to erect a temporary village, complete with military-class inflatable shelters, generators, furniture, and facilities for eating and sleeping.

A major innovation was the deployment of Inmarsat satellite terminals, and their use to provide direct connection to the internet. Besides the normal email and web access tools, the group implemented its own special-purpose software (“DXA”) that enables radio operators to be informed in real time when they have been successfully logged by the expedition. At any time, about 10,000 persons were watching the special DXA page, which can still be seen at www.dxa3.org.

The team implemented many other innovations for communicating with the radio community and the public. For instance, as Expedition Leader, Bob was able to dial a regular phone number and record an audio report, which he did almost every day. Those “live” recordings can be heard at audio.vk0ek.org. Another first was

the control of one of the radios on Heard Island by an operator in California. This “remote operation” function had never before been attempted, and its successful demonstration will lead to an extended effort to expand this mode of operation.

The team also carried out the first scientific investigation on Heard Island since 2004. Satellite images show clearly that during the past decade Heard Island has undergone major changes due to



global warming. For instance, on the southeast corner of the island, a 2-mile long glacier has recently completely melted away, leaving a 100-m deep lagoon. The Cordell team was the first to enter the lagoon and make collections of samples of the water, ice, and soil. An extensive collection of rock specimens was sent to the University of Tasmania, while water and soil samples were shipped to California for distribution to various specialists. Bob is optimistic that the collections contain undescribed species of plants and animals, and that the water and rock samples will provide information about the geologic and glacial processes occurring to rapidly on the island



Although the actual trip is complete, Bob’s tasks are far from finished. He must write reports for the Australian government, and for various organizations that provided support. He also maintains the websites, responds to inquiries, and coordinates logistics, the scientific work, and he plans to write a documentary book about the expedition.

**HONOR ROLL OF
PAID UP DUES
FOR 2016**

Members

Jim Alexander
James Allen
Julia Amaral
Susan Anderson
Reginald Barrett
George Belcher
Bonnie Bibas
Rick Blake
Peter Bogardus
Kendra Bolt
Joan Boothe
Keith Chase
Doug Cheeseman
Ted Cheeseman
Sandra Cook
Alan Cooper
Thomas Cromwell
Don Dana
Peggy Day
Rick Dehmel
Mike Diggles
Thomas Dolan
Louise Downe
Thomas Durbin
Susan Dutcher
Donald Dvorak
Elaine Dvorak
Scott Ellis
Sue Estey
Robert Eustace
Art Ford
Susan Fox
Paul Freitas
Lawrence Glacy
Ron Glantz
Arjun Gupta
Tom Hall
Peter Hemming
Michael Herz
William Heydom
Don Heyneman
Robert Higgins
Jim Hurson
Von Hurson
Alan Hutchison
Anders Jepsen
Steven King
Ronald Klein
Suzanne Klotz
Bill Kruse
Keith Kvenvolden
William Lidicker
Pierre de St.J. MacBeth
Marco Meniketti
Teresa O'Kane
Peter Overmire
James Prigoff
Edward Ross
Sandra Ross
Rick Saber
Bob Schmeider
Sara Shoemaker Lind
Steve Smith
William Straka
Susan Taylor
Richard Tenaza
Ed Von der Porten
Don Walsh
James Weil
Gordon Wiltzie
Sherry Wren

Sirdars

Linda Alexander
Caryn Anderson
Marion Blumberg
Barry Boothe
Karoli Clever
Wendy Crowder
Joy Durighello
Dafne Engstrom
Mats Engstrom
Sandra Fish
Eric Follestad
Anna Freitas
Louise Geraci
Gina Glantz
Jerry Griffith
Louise Heyneman
David Hirzel
Nancy Isaac
Kathy Jepsen
Kathy Judd
Margot Komarmy
Ellen Lapham
Iyana Christine Leveque
Tim Loew
Liz McLoughlin
Bonny O'Keefe
Ingrid Peterson
Laura Phelps
Aldeana Saber
John Schlagheck
Kay Schmeider
Scott Soper
Robert Van Austen
Judy Van Austen
Andrew Wegst
Mark Weiman
Thomas Yohannan
Robin Ziegler

FROM THE CHAIR

Joan Boothe MN'07

Welcome to summer and the nearing conclusion of our 2015-16 Northern California Chapter Explorers Club "year". We have only one event left — our annual picnic. The first announcement about that went out several days ago and I hope that lots of you took note and plan to attend. See more about it on the first page of this newsletter. But if you're wondering why we are going to Crissy Field in San Francisco this year, rather than returning to wonderful Angel Island where we have gone so often in the past, the answer is several-fold. First, both Bob Schmeider and Rick Saber have sold their boats, so we longer have the opportunity to enjoy the wonderful sail to the island that we previously did. Yes, ferrys are an option, and are fun as well, but it's just not the same. Second, Crissy Field is easier to reach. And third, it's an experimental change — a new place for us. We're explorers, aren't we? Ready to find new places? We'll see how it goes!

I won't be writing to you all again via the Newsletter until the end of summer, so I'd like to take this opportunity to say how much I've enjoyed being your chair this past year. I hope that you've enjoyed the speakers and other events we've put together for you. We began in September with chapter member Tom Dolan reporting on his 2015 Flag expedition and officially returning his flag. Two more speakers — Dave Imus

in October and Arjun Gupta in November, a terrific expedition medicine field trip to Mt. Diablo, and then our annual Holiday Party wrapped up 2015. We opened 2016 with our first meeting at Grace Lutheran Church, hearing Chapter Member Ted Cheeseman. Rosemarie Twinan in February, Daniel Lin in March, our gala event at Autodesk in April, and Anne Sanquini at the end of May closed out our regular meetings for the year. And for those who were fortunate enough to attend, there was that great field trip in February to Intuitive Surgical to learn about Robotic Surgery. And finally, of course, there was ECAD, where we had more than 40 people from our chapter in attendance. It's been a wonderful year for me, and I thank all of you for the role you've played in it. As always, though, I welcome your input and suggestions for change and improvement.

What's coming next? As you'll see elsewhere in this newsletter, we already have a field trip scheduled for September and are looking into a chapter visit to Yosemite in October as a volunteer group. Speakers are being lined up. And our Roster project is moving along. I'll be in touch over the summer to organize another gathering for those who want to become more involved in the chapter. Stay tuned!

If I don't see you at the picnic, have a great summer. Exploration of all sorts is beckoning!
Joan

The Hicks Foundation for Cultural Preservation
Egyptian Project Update, May 2016
by Harry Hicks MN'87 and Dede Whiteside MN'13,

The Hicks expedition headed to Egypt this April to meet with the Elders and Abbott of the ancient Monastery of St. Macarios the Great. The Monastery is located in the desert between Giza and Alexandria, and is known as the site of the oldest Christian monastic community extant, dating back to the 4th Century C.E. There are several churches and a library within the walled compound and a retinue of about 400 Coptic Monks.

The expedition had two goals; to make arrangements to secure a DNA sample from relics believed to be those of Alexander the Great and to investigate ancient documents, reported to be housed in the Monastery Library.

Based at the historic Mena House, within a camel's spit of the Giza Pyramids, the team set off to the

Monastery the day after their arrival. Since the monks have no trustworthy mail service (basically no one does in Egypt other than diplomatic pouch), no listed landlines, and no listed cell phone, an in person meeting to move the project along proved essential. The Fathers were in a 40-day fasting period prior to Coptic Easter May 1, and monastery was closed to the public. This made a more private meeting with them possible, as normally up to a thousand Coptic Pilgrims arrive daily for blessings. Upon arrival the team were told a meeting would be arranged for the next afternoon, as there was a 2-hour Coptic Mass earlier. Our Explorers then were led by one of the Fathers to the site of the relics and given a brief tour of the ancient church in which the relics resided.

The next morning they returned for the Mass, an ancient, and elaborate service. In the afternoon they met with the Abbot, along with other Fathers from the Elders group. In a friendly meeting lasting several hours, the team was told that although the Coptic Pope had earlier given permission to test the DNA, the Elders at St. Macarios were "older and had the autonomy to make their own decisions," and after careful review they had decided that as the suspected relics were within the reliquary holding John the Baptist and Elisha the Prophet, that for now, they had concluded they not be disturbed for the test. The door was not completely closed however, and we believe that at some point this test may become possible.

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Top Row: Harry at top of monastery staircase. Harry in monastery library; local Giza scenery
 Middle Row; monastery residents with guests; Dede and friends at local mosque.
 Bottom Row: Dede and Harry with Abbot and interpreter; Dede, Harry, Tracey Stevens(left) and Peterson Conway in local hangout

Hicks Egyptian Project (continued from page 5)

Regarding the library, the Abbott mentioned that “the Vatican had stolen many documents” and that some were “also in the British Museum”; however, that a bibliography had been prepared of all documents still there and at the Vatican and BM by a Benedictine monk named Ugo Zanetti, and that it might be available by contacting him. Later that day the team explored what was left at the library. As informed by the Abbott, none of the hoped for scrolls from the Alexander library were there, the oldest document left being a Coptic fragment from 7th Century CE with a few from the 10th Century, but nothing from earlier times.

There still could be documents of interest to the team’s research at the Vatican and BM, and our Explorers are working to reach Ugo Zanetti now to secure his bibliography. The team were also successful in connecting with the Abbot regarding securing a DNA sample, and although not a completely clear path, there is now a direct way to stay in touch and move forward with the Coptic Fathers of St. Macarios.

Northern California Chapter
Established 1973



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Chapter Calendar of Events
(Venues are identified as soon as known.)

Upcoming Events (2016)
2016

June 25, 2016 . . . Chapter Picnic at Crissy Field
September 23. Susan Middleton
Marine Vertebrates in the Pacific . Grace Luth Ch
October 28 Dr Eric Weiss
Wilderness Expedition Medicine . Grace Luth Ch
November 18, 2016 TBA
December 11 Holiday Party

Earlier Chapter Events
2015

September 25 Tom Dolan
Studying Tornados . .Covenant Presbyterian Ch
October 23. David Imus
Art of Cartography . . Covenant Presbyterian Ch
November 7-8 Lowell Thomas Meeting
November 20. Arjun Gupta
Third Pole Initiative. Covenant Presbyterian Ch
December 13. Holiday Party
. Home of Joan Boothe

2016

January 22 Ted Cheeseman
Modern Ocean Exploration . Grace Lutheran Ch
February 26 Rosemarie Twinam
Game Counting in Africa . . Grace Lutheran Ch
March 11-13. ECAD New York
March 25 Daniel Lin
Navigation on Polynesian Voyages Grace Luth Ch
April 21 (Thursday). Autodesk
Technology in exploration. Gallery, 1 Market, SF
May 27 Anne Sanquini
Surviving the 2015 Earthquake in Nepal GLChurch

Send address changes and
corrections by email to Steve Smith
ecnc@oceaneearth.org

May 2016 Mount Everest expedition; We understand that Dan Ackerman AN'14 successfully summited Mount Everest in late May. We look forward to hearing from him about his experiences.

June 25, 2016: Annual expedition to Crissy Field. See notice on page 1.

UP-COMING FIELD TRIPS: by Joan Boothe

Saturday, September 10: Drakes Bay, Point Reyes. Chapter member Ed Von der Porten FN'80 will lead a field trip to highlight the visit of Francis Drake to the shores of the bay in 1579 on his circumnavigation, as well as the shipwreck of the Manila galleon San Agustin in 1595. The early interactions with these European explorers and the native American population will also be discussed. This will be a full day field trip with an optional dinner at the Station House Cafe in Point Reyes Station. An announcement with full details and how to sign up will be sent to the mailing list in mid-August.

October. Yosemite. We are looking into taking a group of Northern California EC Members and Sirdars to Yosemite National Park on the first or second weekend of October for volunteer work in the park. Details on this are yet to be worked out. We will let you know in late August about this possible event.

OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE

- * Join the Chapter AV team to help with video and audio equipment set-up at Chapter meetings. A little training session and you're ready to help out.
- * It's a pleasure to report that we now have a new Treasurer: Sandra Cook. More about her in our September issue.

PHOTO AND STORY OF THE MONTH

Got a favorite picture from your explorations? How about an interesting personal story? Please submit them to the Newsletter editor (ajviking@aol.com) so the rest of the club can enjoy them - picture, story or both..

We have an established PayPal account.

With an account, you can sign up and remit your meal costs, dues, etc to the NorCA Chapter by transferring money to: explorersnorca@gmail.com
There is a PAYPAL BUTTON on our website (www.explorersnorca.org); easy to use!