

# The Explorers Club Northern California Chapter

January 2004

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nauticos@oceaneearth.org  
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Roster: Sue Estey

Web site: <http://www.diggles.com/ec/>



Khampa Tibetan father waits for wheelchair for his child in Xinlong

## LOCATION

**Date:** Friday, 16 January 2004  
**Place:** Sinbad's Pier 2 Restaurant  
Embarcadero, San Francisco  
**Time:** 6:30 pm, no-host cocktails  
7:15 pm, dinner  
**Cost:** \$40 (by January 12)  
\$50 (if posted afterwards)

Reach Steve at  
[nauticos@oceaneearth.org](mailto:nauticos@oceaneearth.org)  
or 925 934-1051.

Reservation Form on page 5  
Please reserve promptly!

## San Francisco January 16, 2004 Dana Isherwood

### Tibet in China Today Observed Through the Eyes of a Sinophile

Most Americans judge China and its treatment of Tibetans on what they read or hear in newspaper articles and television news reports produced primarily in the United States. We are told about China's human rights violations, corruption, poverty, and currency manipulations that are designed to subvert the U.S. economy. The sad stories of Tibetan refugees in India, Nepal, and other countries are promoted by Western aid organizations as proof that the Tibetan minority is in danger of losing its identity under pressure from Chinese government policies handed down from Beijing. But what of the Tibetans now living in western China, outside the geopolitical area known as the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR)? Will their culture survive?

Dana Isherwood's presentation will offer her perspective as a volunteer for the Kham Aid Foundation (KAF), a non-profit organization who assists Tibetans in Kham, a Tibetan region of western Sichuan Province. Isherwood has visited schools, clinics, hospitals, temples, monasteries, and Tibetan

Small Tibetan style homes around temple outside Zhongdian



all China photos: Dana Isherwood

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

homes in the region and brings us a personal look at the Tibetan 'question' in her role as KAF Vice President and Education Program Director.

The Northern California Chapter of the Explorer's Club has been directly involved with the Kham Aid Foundation since 2000, when they began sponsoring Jiangyang Quxi, a poor Tibetan girl. With the Chapter's help Jiangyang has attended the Litang Junior Middle School in Kham. She graduates in June 2004. What of her future?

When not traveling the back roads of Kham, Isherwood lives most of the year in Beijing with her husband, Bill Isherwood who works as a consultant for the China Renewable Energy Program. She will speak briefly of this modern metropolis as well.

Hospital room with patient waiting for free treatment



Shangye Rinpoche, Buddhist leader in Ganzi, has built hospital and school; services provided free to help poor Tibetans



Volunteer doctor attends monk while others wait, in Xinlong



KAF sponsored girls listen carefully as student tries to read a letter in English from her sponsor, in Batang,

## Casting a Memory

Diana Pickworth (FN'01) recently showed a sculpture she has created as a result of her emotions after the tragedy of NineEleven. The bronze sculpture, her first casting, was reproduced by the Mussi Artworks Foundry in Berkeley. Ask her to recite the poem she wrote as an accompaniment.



The Tears of God®

# Silk Road Bikers Alan & Shan Nichols San Francisco

Father and son Nichols recalled their 2300-mile, Explorers-Club-Flag bicycle expedition across the Silk Route of the 'stans'\* to a goodly crowd at our December meeting. The journey is the subject of an article to be published in the Winter issue of the Explorers Club Journal for the benefit of the whole membership. It was the first recorded successful bike ride across these fabled lands, and it was told by both with accompanying music in the background and a fast-paced digital slide show.

The spirit of the journey was well communicated with father Alan dressed in his riding garb (protected from the desert sun on this rainy San Francisco night) and son Shan in his ceremonial birthday robe. They even brought one of the two bicycles that made the trip and toasted Clif bars (who had been a sponsor.)

They shared the fact that assembling this talk about the 1998 expedition brought back the fond memories of pain and pleasure gained five years earlier. The fact that both were able to spend three months together in the tight quarters of camping each evening, exhorting themselves in travel, and living closely as never before bonded them in ways previously unachieved. The exploration alone would have satisfied most; the father and son achievement enhanced the accomplishment. This was clear.

Alan has studied and visited many sacred mountains of the world. This is his quest. As an author he has written about them (and other subjects) widely. Here is a sampling of his writings you might wish to seek out:

Journey

A Gift from the Master

To Climb a Sacred Mountain

Travel with Annie (short stories)

Adventures in Time (poetry)

S. F. Commuter

Water in California

\* The trip, after flying from San Francisco to New York to Istanbul to Ashkhabad, passed through Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kirghikistan to Kazakhstan. There were many side excursions along an already tortuous route.



The speakers before their talk in San Francisco.



An attempted swim in a lake 'tainted' by oil



Travels with the Explorers Club Flag



Approaching China the hard way





# Premier Ocean Film Festival January 9-11, 2004 Cowell Theater, Fort Mason San Francisco

Krist Jake (MN'79) invites you to the first Ocean Film Festival, to be held in San Francisco, in early January.

If you are interested in the ocean and marine activities, you will find some footage of interest. All details and a listing of the films are on the web-site:

<http://oceanfilmfest.org/about.html>

## Festival Schedule

Opening Reception - Sea Savories & Chanteys  
Friday, January 9, 2004  
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.  
Maritime Museum

San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park

Local fishermen, waterfront restaurants, and Qui-vira Vineyards are all contributing to this Festival kick-off event, which will recognize the Bay Area's English Channel soloists and more. Tickets available on the website.

Film Programs  
Saturday, January 10, 2004  
10:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.

&  
Sunday, January 11, 2004  
10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Cowell Theater  
San Francisco's Fort Mason Center

Marine scholars and saltwater heroes will share their stories throughout the weekend while intriguing and illuminating films are shown. Tickets available on the website

Children's Festival  
Saturday, January 10, 2004  
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Film program 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
National Park Service Visitor Center  
Jefferson Street at Hyde Street

The Children's Festival program is free of charge.

## Tickets

Opening Reception tickets are \$50, and may be purchased two ways:

Mail your check for \$50/ticket to SFOFF, PO Box 475668, San Francisco, CA 94147.

Online via our Acteva box office. A service charge of \$3.08/ticket will be levied by Acteva.

Tickets for individual film programs are \$6-\$10 and may be purchased two ways:

Cowell Theater Box Office, beginning Saturday December 20th. The box office is open 11-5 Tuesday through Saturday. Phone is (415) 345-7575. There is no service charge for purchases in person at the Box Office, which is located just inside the middle pier at Fort Mason Center. Phone, mail, and fax orders are subject to a \$2/ticket service charge.

Online via our Acteva box office. A service charge of \$1.50/ticket will be levied by Acteva.

Day or weekend passes are available.

## ECAD - NEW YORK March 20, 2004

Several Chapter members already have their tickets for this 100th Anniversary Event. If you wish to coordinate plans and seating, contact Steve or Lee, who will try to do so.

# The Chapter Chair

Dear Northern California Explorers:

Greetings and welcome to 2004! As always, it is difficult for me to believe that yet another year has passed and a new one is already underway. I clearly remember joking with a friend in January 2003, that before we knew it, it would be Christmas. I sometimes get the feeling that there is a yet-to-be-explained principal of time compression at work. But it is, I suppose, to be expected, as each day becomes a smaller fraction of your total existence. My primary problem seems to be that, as the days go by more quickly, I have a harder time remembering them. That, and where I put my keys.

Those of you who actually can remember last month's meeting (or reading the newsletter) will recall my discussion concerning the need to implement a modest dues structure to assist in keeping our financial status sound. At our very well attended December meeting, the issue was brought to vote, and without dissent, those present indicated their concurrence. Therefore, look below for an "invoice" for those dues. I feel hopeful that this action, along with additional efforts to contain costs will put us on a stronger footing for 2004.

As always, in addition to your financial contribution, we welcome your participation in the Chapter's activities and volunteer opportunities. At the December meeting, your Chair and Vice Chair were pleased to be re-elected to new annual terms. However, due to a demanding travel schedule, Tom Hall, who has served admirably as our Treasurer for several years, has chosen to pass the fiscal baton. As a result, we are seeking a replacement. The Treasurer position requires an individual who would be comfortable performing the relatively

straightforward accounting needs of the Chapter and who can respond to the reporting requirements of the National organization. If you would be interested in participating as an Officer of the Chapter, please contact either Lee Langan or myself for additional information. We are grateful that Mike Diggles will stay the course as our Webmaster and that Sue Estey will continue to shepherd the Roster update. The roster is moving forward with the help of a number of members who during our last meeting, volunteered to lend a hand.

Looking ahead, our January meeting will once again be at Sinbad's in San Francisco. For February we are considering a south-bay venue in the Palo Alto area. March's event will be quite special. Gene & Sybil Boudreau have graciously offered to host our meeting at their home in Sebastopol. This event will be a Saturday afternoon and evening gathering and should give us more time to socialize than is typical as well as enjoying a presentation on the Tamahumara of Mexico. We look forward to seeing a strong attendance from our north-bay members for the March meeting. April and June will return us to San Francisco for presentations by author Rupert Isaacson and adventurer Greg Patterson. All-in-all an exciting six months are on the horizon.

Lastly, on behalf of the Chapter and your Officers, I would like to extend the very best wishes for a happy and productive new year filled with good health, challenging endeavors and great friendships. I hope to see you on January 16th

—Stephen E. Smith, FN'96

Sinbad's Pier 2 Restaurant is easy to find: JUST south of San Francisco's Ferry Building! Parking is available. BART access.

# Evolution

@ The Explorers Club

Membership is important, and it has been my subject recently. Any organization requires new members to continue, even after 100 years! The tendency for The Explorers Club is for those interested to have *been there* and done much of their work. This should be overcome, for those who might benefit the most are those currently active in the field. The Explorers Club should be another activity they should add to their already busy life. Be proactive; find an associate and bring him or her along.

The other aspect of being a member is participation. Participation, like membership comes in several categories. The most active members are those who live in or near the Club Building in New York. They have a gathering place (even a 'pub') and a very active array of events. As a Chapter, we are fewer folk and have less direct involvement. [The Northern California Chapter is the third largest chapter, however, just behind New York and Washington, DC.] Our principle activity is our monthly meeting during the academic year. In the past we have also undertaken a West Coast meeting to allow those not able to attend ECAD the opportunity to get a flavor of this tradition. Twice we hosted the *Golden Gateaway*. There are other activities: what to do is up to members of the Chapter.

The first level of participation is to attend those meetings that interest you. [We like to think most do!] Come along!

—Lee Langan, FN'99



Annual Northern California Chapter dues for 2004: \$20.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ spaces for January 16, 2004, at the Sinbad's Restaurant. Cost: \$40 each by Jan 12 \$50 if postmarked thereafter (contact Steve at [nauticos@oceanearth.org](mailto:nauticos@oceanearth.org) or 925 934-1051 to assure a reservation).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Guests: \_\_\_\_\_

Dr. Stephen E. Smith  
402 Via Royal  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

meal choice (please circle):

meat

fish

vegetarian

## **Northern California 2003-2004 Event Calendar**

(Mark the dates! Venues will be identified at time of event.)

October 3, 2003	Thierry Thys	"Private Piloting Across Russia"
St. Francis Yacht Club, San Francisco		
November 7, 2003	Issa Mohamed	"Ancient Manuscripts of Timbuktu"
Sinbad's Restaurant, San Francisco		
December 5, 2003	Alan & Shan Nichols	"A 2300-mile Father/Son Odyssey Through Central Asia"
Sinbad's Restaurant, San Francisco		

**January 16, 2004 Dana Isherwood "Tibet in China Today"**  
**Sinbad's Restaurant, The Embarcadero, San Francisco**

February 27, 2004	Sheldon Breiner	"Remote Sensing in Archaeology"
Palo Alto		
March 20, 2004	ECAD	100 Years of The Explorers Club
New York		
March 27, 2004	Eugene Boudreau	"An Evening with the Tamahumara of Northern Mexico"
Sebastopol		
April 30, 2004	Rupert Isaacson	"The Bushmen of the Kalahari"
San Francisco		
June 4, 2004	Greg Crouch	"Enduring Patagonia"
San Francisco		
June 19, 2004	Chapter Picnic	Contact Anders Jepsen to help

Please note venues and dates with care.

The January 16 meeting is at  
Sinbad's Restaurant, San Francisco.

In full and lively color!

To experience this newsletter in color,  
see the 'pdf' version at our web site.

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

### *January 2004*

Dr. Stephen E. Smith  
The Explorers Club  
Northern California Chapter  
402 Via Royal  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

