

The Explorers Club Northern California Chapter

May 2004

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San Francisco June 4, 2004 Gregory Crouch

Enduring Patagonia, The Winter Face Hostile Beauty in the Far South

Patagonia is a land trapped between angry torrents of sea and sky, a place that has fascinated explorers and writers for centuries, discouraging all but the most devoted pilgrims. Gregory Crouch is one such pilgrim.

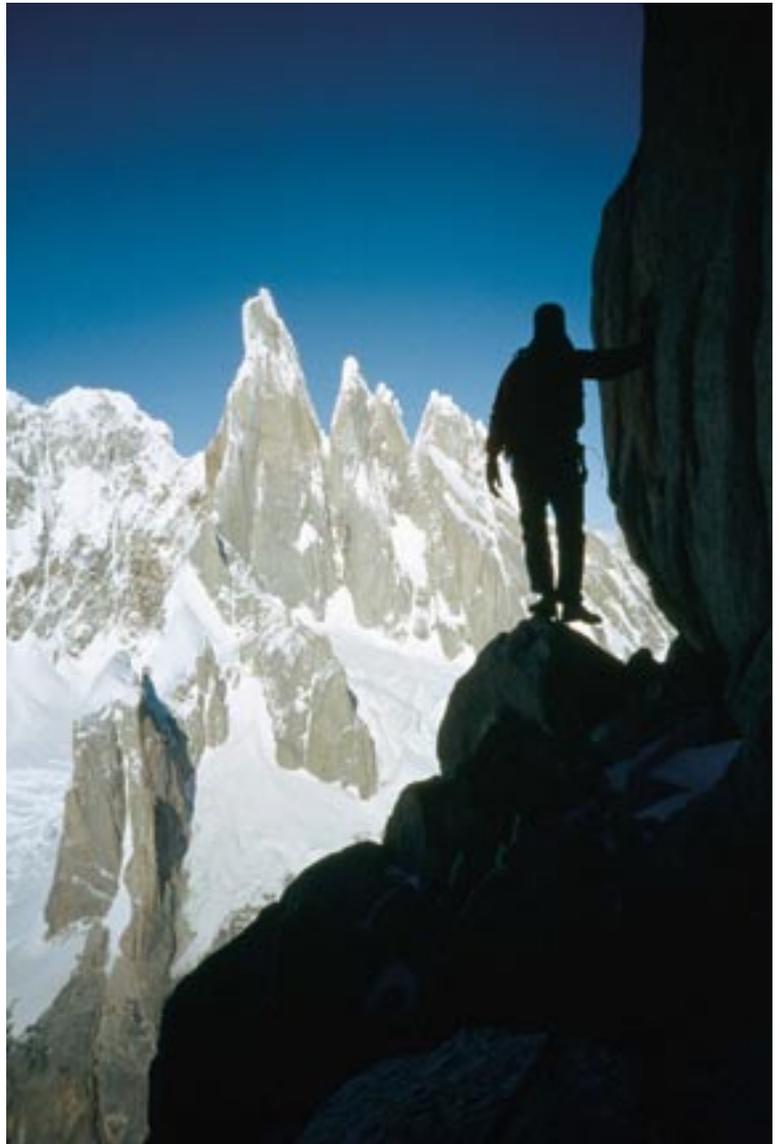


Gregory Crouch graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York, with a degree in military history, completed Airborne and Ranger Schools, and served as a light infantry platoon leader before leaving the Army to pursue more adventurous interests, most notably in the arena of international

alpine mountain climbing. He developed a particular

obsession with the storm-swept peaks of Patagonia, and has made seven expeditions to those remote mountains.

Along the way he became a writer, and his work has appeared in *National Geographic* ("Stone Cold Ascent," March 2000, and "Caves of Oman," April 2003), *Outside*, *National Geographic Adventure*, *American History*, *Climbing*, and many others. He is a senior contributing editor at *Climbing*. His book, *Enduring Patagonia* (Random House), was chosen for the Barnes & Noble "Discover Great New



Writers" program.

Enduring Patagonia chronicles one man's obsession with the beautiful and terrible mountains of Patagonia, which Crouch says, "might be our planet's most perfect mountains." In *Enduring Patagonia*, Crouch explores the world of cutting-edge alpinism and takes us along on his many notable Patagonian climbs, including the first winter ascent of Cerro Torre's legendary west face. His vivid accounts of ice, storms, and gravity illustrate the crucial alpine balance between physical danger and

LOCATION

Date Friday, 4 June 2004

Place: Sinbad's Pier 2 Restaurant
Embarcadero, San Francisco

Time: 6:30 pm, no-host cocktails
7:15pm, dinner

Cost: \$45 (by June 2)
\$50 (if posted thereafter)

Reach Steve at
nauticos@oceaneearth.org
or 925 934-1051.

Reservation Form on page 5
Please reserve promptly!

Continued on page 2

mental agility. Finding the same harsh discipline in climbing that he sought, but ultimately rejected, as a West Point cadet and as an Army officer after graduation, Crouch also writes about the lessons one learns by going to the limit— lessons about leadership, patience, risk, failure, endurance, and courage.

Enduring Patagonia: The Winter West Face focuses on Cerro Torre’s remote and treacherous West Face, which rises from the Southern Patagonian Ice Cap. It is one of the most coveted modern alpine climbs, holding a position similar to that once occupied by the North Face of the Eiger. After a month-long campaign battling extreme cold, notorious Patagonian gales, and dangerous alpine terrain, Gregory Crouch and three Swiss partners, made its first winter ascent. Crouch’s account of that climb appeared in

the March, 2000 issue of National Geographic.

Rather than attempting an overview of his many Patagonian adventures, in his Winter West Face presentation Greg chooses to tell – with vivid narrative detail and National Geographic caliber photography – the full story of this one, grueling expedition made in the coldest and darkest month of the austral winter. During this expedition, four peripherally acquainted people were able to overcome hugely different individual motivations and an immense language barrier and coalesce into a unified team. After several difficult weeks and one nearly-crushing failure, they found success – and survival – in the face of some of the most outrageous natural obstacles on earth.

A story of adventure and exploration in today’s modern world (featured at our New York Headquarters on May 24!).

Help the Bushmen! Rupert Isaacson San Francisco

Rupert Isaacson, a southern African by birth, was raised in the UK. He is using his respected journalistic skills to help right wrongs of the past. The recent past. His ancestors were part of the Colonial times, and from England he has championed the animals and peoples of this heritage. In writing guidebooks, based upon his African visits, he was drawn ever deeper into the realities and inequities he found; in his case the focus became the Bushmen of the Khalahari.

These diminutive people have lived

in the vastness of the fertile Khalahari for eons. They are closely descendent of the earliest peoples. They have moved with the flowing tide of animals, onto the plains with rains and out with the dry. They travel light; they live off the land. They are heralded as peaceful and healthful, often reaching 8 to 9 decades of life. Their interaction with the arrival of the European settlers did not go well. It is the story of indigent peoples around the world. In the land of apartheid, it was even worse, as many were banished from their traditional places of existence.

With slides of his friends, Rupert spoke intently of two groups of Bushmen he has lived among: one in Botswana and one to the south, in Namibia. He addressed their great respect for conflict resolution, a tradition based upon consensus reached through long conversations between all parties. (They have no history of warfare.) He spoke with great respect for the mystical healing ceremonies common to the culture. He found, through one of these (as he questioned his goals and future) that he could help his ancient friends.

The Bushmen of South Africa, long exiled and living along roadsides, have managed to recover over 50,000 hectares (125,000 acres) of their heritage lands due to the patient persistence of a leader and the help of concerned white friends. Thanks to the enlightened policies of the new South

Rupert Isaacson



Africa, there is a good chance their way of life can continue. All is not so well in Botswana.

Kimberlite vents, and associated diamonds, have been discovered in the national park home of Botswana’s Bushmen. Since 2002, mining companies have moved in, and the Bushmen have been forbidden to stay. Botswana doesn’t mess around with environmental impact statements. Mining claims bring money.

Isaacson has taken on the daunting task to right this imbalance, for he and his Bushmen friends do not see why mining and nomadic Bushmen cannot coexist. To gain international support he is arranging a visit by Bushmen leaders to the native peoples ‘gathering’ in Southern California in late Summer (9-12 September 2004.) They will then visit the Southwest US and make their way to the United Nations. Their hope is to resolve this conflict.



Our Speaker Rupert and Chair Steve; an Explorers Club shirt changed on-the-spot!

Want to learn more?
www.thehealingland.com

or contact Rupert directly
rupertisaacson@hotmail.com

One could not help but recall the struggles of the Ituri Forest Pygmies of the Congo as championed by the late Jean Pierre Hallet (who lectured at our February 2001 meeting.)

Go & Tell

Highlights gleaned by your reporter on a busy night. (Note: your newsletter is looking for a volunteer to listen with care who will report these member activities routinely.)

David Larson delayed a trip to southeast Utah to help with a public opening of San Francisco's 'last-of-the-Liberty-Ships' *Jeremiah O'Brien*.

Mort & Danielle Beebe were on their way to the Sea of Cortez to participate in the second training session for pilots of the Deep Sea Aviator. William Beebe Medal winner Graham Hawkes is already on site (see page 4.)

Brian Hansen (Austin Chapter Chair emeritus, Board member and Vice President for Chapter Affairs) just returned from Easter Island and came to our meeting to hear Rupert's talk. On Easter Island he participated in a regretfully unsuccessful search for anchors lost by the Dutch in the 1700s; a Club Flag was carried by former Club President John Lorret. Exploration is fraught with disappointment but is never without excitement; the diving was great! And, Brian returned with sand samples for collectors Lee Langan & Lesley Ewing.

Brian reported the establishment of a new Club Chapter in Hong Kong (for SE Asia), the resurgence of one in Australia and plans for an Icelandic Chapter.

Ed Ross spoke of traveling over 100,000 miles in Africa, over six years while camping the whole time; he was very supportive of Rupert's efforts. Sandy Ross said their visit to Peru's Valdivian site was exciting and invited any members who wished to come to their Andean retreat.



Brian Hansen, Rupert Isaacson, Lee Langan

The Explorer's Club of San Francisco Cordially invites you to an Angel Island Picnic/BBQ Saturday, June 19th, 2004 10:30 am to 3 pm

- Join fellow Explorers and Friends for a Tour of Angel Island
- Come for the exercise or the camaraderie at this beautiful location (also known as the "Ellis Island of the West")
- We're hoping to have a special guest. someone who was born on Angel Island!!!



Ferries depart for Angel Island from Alameda, Oakland, San Francisco's Pier 41 and Tiburon. Meet on the Island at the picnic site near the ferry dock from 10:30 am to hike, bike, or go for a tram tour around the island. Charcoal ready at about 12:30 pm for a picnic/BBQ

Again this year, Bob Schmieder and his *Cordell Explorer* will be making the trip from the Berkeley Marina, Slip 112, departing at 9:00 am PROMPTLY. For those of you who haven't done this before, it's worth the extra effort to come to Berkeley first, and enjoy a morning on the water in the comfort of the 42-foot research vessel that can accommodate up to 30 people in comfort. Let Bob know if you're coming with him.

schmieder@cordell.org or (925) 934-3735

Bring your own picnic lunch or items for grilling. Bikes are available for rent. Lots to do, and plenty of time to talk, laugh, sing or just snooze. Maybe even bocce ball! Or take a fascinating tram tour journey into the Island's military history and cultural past. Enjoy a captivating, audio-enhanced tour with the sights and sounds of years gone by. Delight in breathtaking views of the Bay, San Francisco skyline, Sausalito, Tiburon, and the Golden Gate Bridge, all from the comfort of the open-air TourTrams.

Please let us know so we can plan the supplies.

ajviking@aol.com or (925) 254-3079

SEE YOU THERE!!!

Deep Sea Aviator Trains More Flying Under the Sea (of Cortez)

The DS Aviator, along with her entourage (Graham and Karen Hawkes, the support crew, the crew pilots, the photographers, etc.) has been spending the month of May in the Sea of Cortez, near Loreto. Mort Beebe, Lesley Ewing and Fred McLaren, who made their maiden dives in the Aviator when she was in The Bahamas, returned for another adventure in underwater flight.

The Baja program was a multi-purpose trip. Part of the time was to train new pilots and to let the previous group of pilots work on skills. Baja turned out to be a perfect area for skills training since there was rather poor visibility and, like in an aircraft, a lot of the piloting was with instruments. We saw an occasional fish or jelly but never had the wide panorama of marine

life that is associated with the Sea of Cortez, that so captivated Ricketts and Steinbeck early in the 20th century. So, rather than spend hours doing deep dives and taking sight-seeing voyages, we started naming maneuvers— the Spy Hop (where the submersible mimics the traveling style of a dolphin)— and practiced some evasive maneuvers, like making rapid 90-degree turns. We learned that, even in the vast ocean, there are obstacles and evasive maneuvers are important. Fortunately, the Aviator has shown what she is made of: with some bondo, some resin, some spare parts and some long hours of work between dives, she's kept on a rather taxing dive schedule.

There has always been an element of education in the Aviator program, a big part of the last two weeks of the Baja trip. Fred McLaren put together a group of Mexican businessmen who will have a chance to see into the Sea of Cortez, rather than look across the surface. Good visibility will help this program, but even with the visibility we had, Graham Hawkes will be able to show off the Aviator and give them a feel for the vastness and the unexplored reaches of the area, to realize that the Sea of Cortez is just a tiny part of the ocean world that we will be able to explore.

Exploration is the third aspect of any Aviator trip. One of the famous visitors to the Sea of Cortez is the Humboldt squid, the 50 to 100-pound diminutive cousin to the Giant Squid. Graham hopes to observe the Humboldt squid as part of this trip to Baja and eventually to mount an expedition to observe and photograph the giant squid in its native deep ocean habitat.

—Lesley Ewing, FN'93



Graham Hawkes' Deep Sea Aviator

M. Beebe

Lesley in Baja, 'flying'

Lesley with Graham Hawkes



(Lesley Ewing received the 2004 Award for Coastal Zone Management, presented by the Coastal Zone Foundation. The award was presented by the Foundation's president, Orville Magoon, at the recent meeting of the California Coastal Commission.)



Turkey Iran 2004 Cycling the Silk Web Expedition Alan & Becky Nichols' Flag-carrying Third Leg of the Silk Route

"WE MADE IT!"

The expedition ended at 5:45 pm, May 20, 2004, on the Sarakhs-Mashad road. We're still alive after 2,700 miles of cycling. Hurray!!!! What a thrill to take a picture from the Iran side of Serakhs, Turkmenistan where Shan and I cycled earlier on our Central Asia Cycling Expedition. Still to-do list: Caspian Sea, Sacred Mt. Damavand, historic Isfahan. the best and worst awards cer-

emony and GET HOME!

Tidbits from the last email: "Tehran to Eyvankey. 50.5 miles with a late start, heavy traffic, a sand storm from Saudi Arabia and new construction; to caravanserie between Semnan and Damgahn 167 miles with a great road and one long but not steep pass and, believe it or not, a tail wind almost all day; to Damghan 90 miles on excellent paved shoulder with 4 lanes; to Abas Abad 84 miles including 20k of the worst asphalt so far and some heavy headwinds; to Salzebar 82 miles in the desert; to Neishabur 69 miles with

some excellent rolling highway and some very rough shoulders and big headwinds; Neishabur to Sarakhs highway 93 miles with rain, a hail storm and rolling hills like Turkey; Sarakhs to Mashad 97 miles with some terrible road and two big unexpected passes. Iran highways are schitzophrenic—sometimes great sometimes horrible. The last few days were especially tough and fast, like a horse returning to the barn. Besides getting hit by a car I saw six serious truck accidents all in one 36 hour period."

—Alan Nichols (FN'84)

The Chapter Chair

Dear Northern California Explorers:

Once again we come to the close of another great season of meetings at the Northern California Chapter. I look back with pleasure on the past months during which we have had the opportunity to hear from another stellar lineup of speakers and enjoy the camaraderie of our fellow explorers.

It goes without saying that any organization is simply the sum of its members. And our members have certainly stepped forward this season to demonstrate their belief in our Chapter. As a result of the dedication of member's time and personal resources, the Northern California Chapter continues to remain successful and in the forefront of the organization's chapters throughout the world. As your Chair, it's my pleasure to extend the appreciation of the Club and it's Officers to all of you who have continued to demonstrate your interest and involvement.

At the beginning of the year I wrote with some concern of our deteriorating financial situation and the need to both reduce expenses and increase revenue. I am very pleased to report that we end the season in much better shape than when we began. A portion of this is due to our new venue, where attending members have graciously adapted to our revised approach of *a la carte* imbibing. This, combined with a much-reduced overhead for the venue itself, has stabilized our revenue/expense balance. Just as important has been the response of our members to the institution of a nominal dues structure. I am happy to report that we are nearing 50% participation in dues-paying members. And, yes, we do keep track of who has paid. As promised, I will be suspending pledge-breaks until October!

The substantial contributions of individual members have also made a significant difference. Gene and Sybil Boudreau's full hosting of a dinner meeting and support of a highly successful auction helped solidify our current fiscal resources. I also want to make mention of the many individual additional contributions made in association with dues payments. They are too numerous to identify here, but they are recognized and very much appreciated. Members such as Dan Liebowitz, who got into a bidding war with himself at last meeting's auction exemplify that the true source our club's support remains at the individual level.

At this juncture I also want to express my gratitude for the many hours of work of the club's officers. Tom Hall will be passing the Treasurer's baton to Anders Jepsen, (who is presently recovering from a dislocated shoulder as a result of an arm-twisting at the last meeting.) We are fortunate to welcome Anders aboard. Tom has done a great job in the post and deserves our many thanks and best wishes that he employ his additional free time for even more adventure.

Lee Langan has continued to provide exemplary service as both Vice Chair and Newsletter Editor and, most recently, house auctioneer. His dedication continues to amaze, and, believe me, the quality of our newsletter is well known and recognized among the national Explorers Club membership.

Congratulations are also due to those members who have met personal milestones this last season. Webmaster and techno-guy Mike Diggles, has continued his unflagging support of our website, in spite of the need to proctor school dances and ballet performances as a result of his recent marriage. Congratulations as well to John Roscoe, who recently celebrated his 50th year of club membership, and to the many

chapter members who carried and safely returned Flags, demonstrating their dedication to the foundation of our organization.

We have one more dinner meeting this season, which will be great lecture by Greg Crouch, recently presented at the New York clubhouse. I strongly encourage you to attend and enjoy his chronicle of "one man's obsession with the mountains of Patagonia." We will also be sharing late-breaking news of the annual chapter picnic scheduled for June 19th.

Once again, thanks to all for your continued support and participation. The more involved you become, the more value the club will have for you. I look forward to seeing you at Sinbad's on June 4th.

—Stephen E. Smith, FN'96

Evolution

@ The Explorers Club

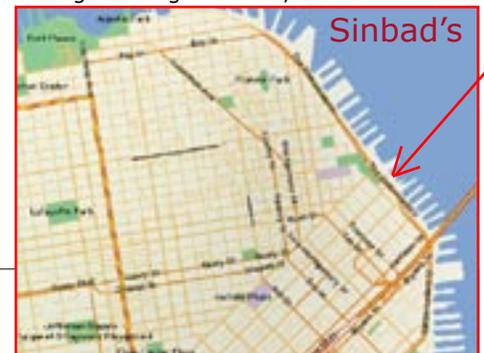
Belatedly I fall across the finish line with this year's newsletter. Nevertheless, do not be disappointed by missing a beautiful award-winning presentation on June 4!

Have a wonderful Summer, exploring to your hearts content. All good ideas for speakers next year are welcome— and the sooner the easier

Thank you all for the enthusiasm this year; it is rewarding to be part of such a lively group of friends.

—Lee Langan, FN'99

Sinbad's is JUST south of the Ferry Building! Parking available; BART access.



Please mail this form to:

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

meal choice (please circle):

meat

fish

vegetarian

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

Name: _____

Address (if changed): _____

Please reserve _____ spaces for June 4, 2004, at Sinbad's, San Francisco.

Cost \$45 each by June 2; \$50 if paid thereafter.

Prospective members are very welcome.

(Contact Steve at nauticos@oceanearth.org or 925 934-1051 to assure a reservation). (Dues not yet paid? Send \$20, each.)

Name: _____

Address (if changed): _____

Guest: _____

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, San Francisco		
February 27, 2004	Sheldon Breiner	"Remote Sensing in Archaeology"
Sheraton, Palo Alto		
March 20, 2004	ECAD	100 Years of The Explorers Club
Waldorf Astoria, New York		
March 27, 2004	Eugene Boudreau	"At Home with the Tamahumara of Northern Mexico"
Boudreau Home, Sebastopol		
April 30, 2004	Rupert Isaacson	"The Bushmen of the Kalahari"
Sinbad's Restaurant, San Francisco		

June 4, 2004 **Greg Crouch**
Sinbad's Restaurant, San Francisco

"Enduring Patagonia"

June 19, 2004 **Chapter Picnic**

Contact Anders Jepsen to help: <ajviking@aol.com>

Please note venues and dates with care.

The June 4 Friday meeting is at
Sinbad's Pier 2 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.)

May 2004

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

