

# The Explorers Club

## Northern California Chapter

September 2008

In color at our web site: <http://www.diggles.com/ec/>

### Woodside—September 27, 2008

#### Art Ford

#### Cruising Antarctica

#### What Will Come of It?

The sudden and spectacular 23 November 2007 sinking of the revered old red tourist ship, known widely as the *Lindblad Explorer*, brought into renewed focus the perils—human and environmental—of tourism in Antarctica, the continent's only economic industry. A startling radio message came to the ship 30 miles away, Quark Expedition's *M/V Ocean Nova*, on which Art was a lecturer. They heard she had hit a growler and was going down. Engines were readied to head her way, but they soon learned that a larger ship with many spare bunks would reach her first. Luckily, seas were good, and no lives were lost when she sank.

Most credit the start of the tour “business” to the entrepreneurial Swede Lars-Eric Lindblad. He called travel on his new ice-strengthened *M/V Explorer* “expedition cruising” in 1969-70. Shore trips to visit penguins by small inflatables were an integral part of these operations. Tourist numbers rose gradually; they approached 10,000 people annually by the mid-1990s. Movies like the 2005 *March of the Penguins* lured many more so that tourist numbers now reach 40,000 or more, and ships seem everywhere.

Tourism in Antarctica is arguably under control. No officials control the largely voluntary environmental rules; they are enforced by

*M/V Explorer* enters ice pack on a cruise to the Antarctic Peninsula (top right)

Art Ford takes field notes on 1977 Soviet Antarctic Expedition



Art Ford explains geology to passengers on a Russian cruise ship in the Lemaire Channel, Antarctic Peninsula.

Note venues and dates with care.  
**WOODSIDE, CA!**

Our next event is at 4:00 on Sep 27, a Saturday afternoon, at the Liebowitz home.



S. A. LINDBLAD

Long term member and chapter stalwart Dr. Dan Liebowitz (MN66) has offered his home—and his extensive outdoor model train system—for our enjoyment for the first meeting of the new ‘academic’ year. We have decided upon a Saturday afternoon, when the temperature should be perfect of sipping some wine and enjoying a light repast. After gathering and socializing, we will enjoy Art’s talk. Woodside is usually glorious in the Fall! (We plan for an early evening completion.)

## Savoring California's Coast

### Hicks' Garrapata Hospitality

Seize the day indeed: 35 members of The Explorers Club, most but not all from our chapter, joined on a very festive Saturday as the guests of Harry Hicks and Dede Whiteside in their Highway One coastal home south of Carmel. It became a mini symposium continuing the style initiated by the Keoug's in British Columbia and added to by the Pacific Northwest Chapter in the San Juan Islands. Indeed, a gathering was held by the Southwest Chapter in Flagstaff in late June to extend the string (see report, right.)

The concept is simple: invite explorers to intermingle, add a few prepared talks, and magic happens. It especially happened when we gathered at such a mystical place as the central coast of California. Our hosts began with a spectacular setting over-looking a pristine lagoon emptying into the Pacific, continued with hospitality congenial, complete and absorbing and let the magnet of the surroundings infuse the guests. The hum of conversation was stilled only when the speakers took their place in front of a roaring fire as the sun dipped over the horizon.

Nancy Black runs a whale-watching boat out of Monterey Harbor—twice a day, all year. She is a research biologist; her focus, the killer whale. She took the audience into a lesson on whales and the myriad of small sea mammals that surround them around the sea canyons off Monterey. For many, the diversity of the

whales themselves was an eye opener; the availability of these huge mammals all year round nearby (she virtually guarantees you see some if you join the watch); and the number of their smaller mammal friends was surprising. Check out:

[www.gowhales.com](http://www.gowhales.com).

Lynn Damner told us about the enthusiasm generated at the Pacific Northwest Chapter's San Juan Island symposium. Our gracious host, Harry Hicks, showed some of the items his Foundation for Cultural Preservation has found as links to ancient culture. Just a glimpse into such diverse findings as those of Alexander the Great and King Arthur. Dede and he spoke of Shiva's manifestation as Nataraja (*Lord of the Dance*) and other pieces in their home.

As the talks ended, the sound of the house increased to a high decibel level—an audible response to what was discussed. Actually rather amazing. The after glow continued into the late evening as, slowly, people peeled off and dispersed to their lodgings along the coast. On Sunday midday several reconvened at Nepenthe for a sun-drenched lunch.

The consensus: this was one of the most enjoyable meetings of the NorCA Chapter. There was time to mingle. There was spectacular nature to enjoy (the stroll down from the Hicks' home to the Garrapata lagoon and the ocean breakers was a completely different view of the central coast, up close and invigorating with freshest air

and crystal-clear water.) Our hosts were welcoming and generous. We learned new things. What more would one ask?

### REPORT FROM FLAGSTAFF

The Texas Chapter of the Explorers Club sponsored a two-day trip to Flagstaff, Arizona to explore the Lowell Observatory and the nearby Meteor Crater for June 27th and 28th 2008. Members of the Southwest Chapter were invited to join them. An invitation was sent to me since my mailing address is in Nevada – and my wife, Ann, and I readily accepted.

As always, the greatest attraction of an Explorers Club function is meeting fellow members. There were 16 participants, mostly from Texas, but four from New York and two from Denver. The hospitality and friendliness of the Texans was overwhelming.

Naturally, being Explorers, we set out early on Friday, the 27th not only to view the Meteor Crater, but to hike the entire rim. It's a big hole in the ground, the guided walk was very informative, and everyone should see it once!

After our exhausting walk (it was hot, dry and high) we gathered for lunch at La Posada in the nearby railroad town of Winslow. La Posada is an old Harvey House alongside the Santa Fe railroad. Lunch was delicious, but the dessert was outstanding: a tour of the restored La Posada by a group of former Harvey girls, all in their 70's and 80's dressed in their black dresses and white aprons.

The following day we met at the Lowell Observatory for a well-informed guided tour of all of the many telescopes. Lowell has the largest optical telescope still operating. In the afternoon, we went to the nearby Anderson Mesa where their most modern equipment is installed away from the lights of Flagstaff. On this trip, Dr. Jeff Hall, Astro-Astronomer and Associate Director, was our guide. Dr. Hall explained that even in the age of space telescopes, a facility like Lowell carries on valuable work studying specific areas of the sky over 10 to 20 year periods, taking detailed photographs every evening and comparing them for movement and new developments. This is how they discovered Pluto back in 1929. Now the computers do much of the work.

In the evening we had dinner at the Lowell Observatory Rotunda, a magnificent room, part library, part museum and a meeting hall. In my over 40 years as an Explorer, this is the best Explorers Club dinner I have ever tasted!!! After dinner Dr. Hall gave a brilliant talk on his study of sun spots. According to Dr. Hall, sun spot activity is decreasing and this means, at least during the past ten years, that the sun is cooling. There is no question the temperature of the Earth is rising, but it's not caused by the sun warming. Dr. Hall said it is undoubtedly human activities. Later that evening Ann and I viewed Saturn and its rings through an optical telescope. A great ending to a great weekend!

I have already received several e-mails from new friends made on this outing. That's what makes the Explorers Club such a wonderful organization.

–Alan Hutchison (ME67)



Harry Hicks and Dede Whiteside  
at their Garrapata home

# Oh, to be 100!

Our very own kilt-dressed Kyle Rothschild-Mancinelli (SM04) played his pipes to lead the guests to follow a five-foot-long homemade cake festooned with 100 candles for the champagne reception. All to honor Marta Walsh's centenary. The Club's newly-elected Honorary President Don Walsh escorted his mother. Members of the Northern California Chapter toasted the honoree. President Dan Bennett provided a proclamation and joined in with his wife Colette and new son, Grant—just



Kyle Rothschild-Mancinelli (top, left); Chairman Lee Langan and Marta Walsh (top, right); Marta with 100 candles (center). EC President Dan Bennett, Honorary President Don Walsh, Sylvia Earle and Southern California Chair David Dolan; Colette and Grant Bennett (insert). San Francisco's Emperor Norton (aka Rick Saber) delivering proclamation



8-weeks old! Fellow Sylvia Earle (MED81) reflected on what has come to pass during Marta's event-filled life, not the least the contributions to our oceanographic knowledge made by her son. San Francisco's Emperor Norton IV (aka Rick Saber (MN01)) proclaimed to all within his realm an event to be held in memory. It was a festive occasion!

The chocolate-cake blowout (it took several helpers to quell the flames) was followed by service to all of cake and ice cream and bubbly. The guests were overlooking a sail-boat harbor from the boardroom of DOER Marine in Alameda.



This venue was graciously offered by DOER President Liz Taylor; it is located very near where young Don Walsh was raised by Marta during World War II.

The Chapter members had gathered in the late afternoon for a traditional "Tea for Marta" which gave ample time to visit, reminisce and, in addition, to browse the intriguing hardware and submersibles on display at DOER. The tea and finger sandwiches matched the lovely hats worn by some: a proper affair for a sprightly and chipper lady.



## The Chapter Chair

We begin our lecture season with a considered observation of the impact of tourism on a part of the world where there are virtually no people, and where visitors can arrive in relative luxury. Visiting Antarctica is not like struggling up Everest. Art Ford's thoughts are insightful.

Dan Liebowitz and Basia Kanowick have invited us to share their lovely home in Woodside for this talk. If you have not had the pleasure before, you will be delighted. If you are a train buff, you will be even more so, for Dan promises to have his outdoor layout in full operation! To allow as many as can to come, we have scheduled this for a weekend late afternoon. While we are the guests of Dan and Basia, I have suggested a donation to defray Chapter costs.

We ended last year in a flurry as the articles within demonstrate; we are off

into a new year that promises the same diversity and quality. You may note that several events are at member homes; how generous, as well as how enjoyable. If you consider the costs for each attendee, the average outlay has fallen. Our intent!

We shall introduce a new slate of officers for your consideration in September; if approved in October, they will take over the affairs of the Chapter in January. This is in consideration of the chapter desire to involve as many as we can in our activities.

The new team (all are familiar names) will have the schedule for the balance of the year ready to announce soon.

One comment upon October's meeting. You will hear about a grand undertaking by a new member of the Club—an attempt to reinvigorate the practicality of lighter than air craft—in establishing an around-the-world race! Stay tuned.

—Lee Langan (FN99)

## Ed Ross — Redux

For those of you who missed the splendid exhibit of Ed Ross's bug photographs (when they were at the Presidio last year), you have another chance. Take a drive to



Pacific Grove's Museum of Natural History. Ed's remarkable pictures are on display through October 25th: "*The Lives of Insects: The Close-Up Photography of E.S. Ross, Ph.D.*"

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

September 2008



Chair: Lee Langan  
415 567-8089  
lee@langan.net  
Vice Chair: Alan Nichols  
415 789-9348  
ahnichols@att.net  
Treasurer: Anders Jepsen  
925 254-3079  
ajviking@aol.com  
Secretary: Stephen E. Smith  
Webmaster: Mike Diggles  
Newsletter: Lee Langan

## Antarctica at the Liebowitz Home 27 September — Woodside, California

### Northern California 2008 Calendar of Events

(Venues will be identified at time of event.)

#### Our next Meeting

September 27 (Saturday) . . . . . Art Ford  
Tourism in Antarctica  
Liebowitz home, Woodside

#### Future Meeting Schedule

October 18 (Saturday) . . . . . Don Hartzell  
Lighter than Air.  
Golden Gate Yacht Club, San Francisco  
November 21 (Friday) . . . . . Leela Hutchinson  
Giant Cave Crystals  
Dana home, Tiburon  
December 7 (Sunday) . . . . . Lee Langan  
Holiday Gathering

#### Meetings earlier this year

January 26 . . . . . Vince Backen  
OR/V White Holly, SF Bay Model, Sausalito  
February 22 . . . . . Lawrence Lansburgh  
David & Goliath in the Amazon, the Achuar  
Golden Gate Yacht Club, San Francisco  
April 4 . . . . . Felicia Nutter  
The Marine Mammal Center . . . . . GGYC  
April 23 . . . . . Jeff Morgan  
Global Heritage Fund New Sites . . . . . GGYC  
May 30 . . . . . Nancy Black  
Whale Watching off Monterey  
Hicks' home, Garrapata Beach, Big Sur  
June 25 . . . . . Marta Walsh at 100  
DOER Marine, Alameda

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

### September LOCATION

**Date** Saturday, September 27, 2008  
**Place:** Liebowitz Home, 175 Fox  
Hollow Road, Woodside, CA  
**Time:** 4:00 - reception, sandwiches  
5:30 - talk  
**Cost:** Guests of Dr. Liebowitz (\$20  
donation suggested for Chapter)  
Please mail information (to right),  
with payment, to Lee Langan  
2660 California Street  
San Francisco, CA 94115  
or email [lee@langan.net](mailto:lee@langan.net)  
or call 415 567-8089

Reserve \_\_\_ spaces for **Sept 27 2008** at  
Ford talk at Liebowitz home  
Woodside, CA  
Cost: your reservation;  
\$20 suggested donation

Annual dues still payable @\$25

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

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

Companion: \_\_\_\_\_

### Directions to the Liebowitz Home

Make your way to Interstate  
280, the Woodside exit ('A',  
which is the Woodside Road  
intersection.) You can arrive  
from north or south along  
I280 or along Woodside Road  
if you use this exit at US101.  
Proceed toward the  
mountains; Fox Hollow is the  
first road to the right beyond  
the village of Woodside.  
175 Fox Hollow Road is  
almost at the end,  
on your left.

