It will be the first organized international race of lighter-than-air skyships and, as the first full global circumnavigation by a lighter-than-air skyship, it will establish an international aviation record.

“Each time you start new, start something big!” is Don Hartsell’s (MN07) motto. After more than 30 years of quiet thought, Don decided to follow a beckoning dream that had simmered on the back-burners of extraordinary, but undone, projects. As his then current project, digitally archiving 8 million historical documents for the Texas Archive and Texas Supreme Court, was coming to a close, he had to ponder the unthinkable. “What if I actually had to get a job, like everybody else? What would I do?” Rather than face such regimented realities, he came to the conclusion, he was simply unemployable. This was the same conclusion to the same question for nearly a quarter of a century; each time it was asked. His professional career was more similar to a pinball’s path in a pinball wizard’s tournament.

After such a deeply personal inventory, he decided to organize a race of zeppelins, blimps and skyships to go around the world. He would justify it as the first global circumnavigation by a lighter-than-air skyship and a reinvigoration of a transport technique. He has created a partnership with the UNESCO World Heritage Center to enable children around the world to participate in an educational program about geography, history and culture by using the World Sky Race to be an internet classroom tool on a global basis.

Considering the importance of the environment, he found that many thinkers have concluded that lighter-than-air travel is the greenest form of aviation technology this side of flying a kite. Looking for story tellers, an IMAX film, the World Sky Champions, will be produced as a documentary of epic proportions. In knitting together Ministries of Tourism on a global basis, he has found allies that are prepared to grant all possible assistance and protection.

The race will keep him busy enough to postpone, for awhile, “What if I actually had to get a job?” Come listen to the plans; it is happening sooner than you think. San Francisco will be a singularly important locale—as the end of the longest leg of the race; it will require in-flight refueling over the Pacific!
Touring Antarctica in a Woodside Garden

The Woodside Fall afternoon was more like Summer in Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley. Sweltering, Don Collin, a good friend of our late chair emeritus Ron Reuther, provided cool refreshment with his Penguin chardonnay. The garden shade offered relief. Some retreated to inside air conditioning. Bay Area explorers are not used to such warmth (when not in the field!) Besides, we had gathered to hear about the coldest place on earth: Antarctica. The contrast was laughable, especially to the Antarcticaans who joined to listen to Dr. Art Ford (FN98).

As the sun bowed over the Santa Cruz mountains, the heat quickly dissipated to a balmy evening, and Art held forth on what people came to see and on how one gets to the southern-most continent. He speaks with an innate knowledge having spent some 35 summers there as a field geologist—often the first person to venture into the mountains of west Antarctica. He has watched the scientific sophistication of exploration develop as technology made field activities more safe and sometimes a bit easier. Those early days were simply really dangerous; the harshness of the weather and sometimes tragedy of the terrain remain. Yet, the beauty, the unknown, and expanse draw people—and that was his principle topic this night. In the 21st century a tourist can go anywhere on the continent, if his or her pocketbook allows. Art has spent fifteen years since his retirement lecturing to these folks during their visits.

When the agreements covering international cooperation in Antarctica were developed, a genuine achievement of the first International Geophysical Year in the early 1950s, tourism was never given a thought. Who, in his right mind would want to venture into this harsh place? Some, surely. For, as early as the 1960s, Lindblad Explorations took intrepid passengers to see rookeries of penguins and calving ice along the Antarctic Peninsula. The word spread, and there began a steady increase in visitors. In 1991, the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators was founded because governmental groups would not focus upon the growing intrusion on this neutral part of the world. IAATO is a volunteer member organization to advocate, promote and practice safe and environmentally responsible private-sector travel to the Antarctic. It has been a success—so far. There are but a few rogue visitors.

Getting to the Antarctic as a scientist, an explorer, is difficult. One goes through a vetting process by the National Science Foundation and, in spite of approval, budgets limit how many can go each southern summer. Getting there as a tourist simply requires getting a ticket. Most visitors travel by ship to the coastal rim of the continent, and most of these to the Antarctic Peninsula that jabs north toward the southern tip of South America. One company (Adventure Network International) will fly hearty adventurers to a base camp at Patriot Hills, established in 1987, within sight of the Ellsworth Mountains.

The penguins are the big draw for visitors. A popular rookery on Deception Island has hundreds of thousands. One can go ashore, by Zodiac raft, but IAATO rules keep you at least 15-feet distant from the birds. Close enough. Rules also require cleansing boots at the ship—a strong effort to prevent any disease from effecting the birds. The March of the Penguins is credited with increasing tourism to an annual level of 40,000 visitors. “How many are too many?” asks IAATO. Even now, ship captains must communicate to assure each has the chance to be ‘alone’ in the icy seas. After crossing the godforsaken Drakes Passage passengers appreciate this.

Contact Art, who lectures for Quark Expeditions, if you want to go! www.quarkexpeditions.com

Don & Joan Collin served their ‘Penguin’ wine.

Our speaker, Dr. Art Ford—in the Thiel Mountains in 1962 and ready to lecture.

Mt Erabus volcano from McMurdo Base (top); Mount (President Andrew) Jackson, the Antarctic Peninsula’s highest peak.

Dan Liebowitz (MN66) and Basia Kanowick, with Jake, hosted our September event. The Polish tall-masted ship Dar Poxorza model was built by Basia!

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Belong; it is a very tangible reality of membership. Each of you know why you started for it is one-on-one that we expand our attention upon a potential club member, expansion? I urge each of you to turn your gatherings of late. Can we turn this into a world of enthusiasm in our chapter, am sure we shall return in 2009. And the staff has been very welcoming; I hardly imagine a more dramatic view than watching the sun set over our Golden Gate. Meanwhile the yacht club has been a great location for our meetings; one could hardly imagine a more dramatic view than watching the sun set over our Golden Gate. And the staff has been very welcoming; I am sure we shall return in 2009.

Over a career in exploration that began after she raised her family as a teacher, Merle developed the ink on silk-paper technique that was able to capture the details of the often pale nary rubbings.

By now most have received their September copy of The Explorers Journal and read the cover story/interview about one of our senior members, Merle Greene Robertson FN96. (If not, you will soon.) Editor Schuster and Art Director Jesse Alexander did a beautiful job featuring some of Merle’s extraordinary rubbings.

Over a career in exploration that began after she raised her family as a teacher, Merle developed the ink on silk-paper technique that was able to capture the details of the often pale nary rubbings.

A Request for Help

LOUISE ARNER BOYD (1887-1972)

Dr. Joanna Kafarowski, a Research Associate with the Canadian Circumpolar Institute is seeking information for the first comprehensive biography of American polar explorer Louise Arner Boyd. Born in San Rafael, California where she lived for most of her life, Boyd lead seven Arctic expeditions primarily to Northeast Greenland between 1928–1941 culminating with her 1955 flight to the North Pole. Kafarowski will be in San Rafael and San Francisco during the last two weeks of November and is requesting that anyone with knowledge of Boyd or any of her colleagues, friends or employ-ees contact her by email at: gypsy_four@hotmail.com.

In particular, Kafarowski is hoping for contact from any descendants or relatives of Marjorie and Gordon Fountain (former members of this Chapter), Miss Janet D. Coleman, Helen Mori, Julia Langhorne Parker Calhoun (married to John Harrison Calhoun). Any assistance will be most gratefully received.
Northern California  
2008 Calendar of Events  
(Venues will be identified at time of event.)

Our next Meeting
October 18  (Saturday) . Don Hartzell
Lighter than Air.
Golden Gate Yacht Club, San Francisco

Future Meeting Schedule
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
September 27 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Art Ford
Tourism in Antarctica,
Liebowitz home, Woodside

Send address changes and corrections by email to Steve at
nauticos@oceanearth.org

October 2008

Lighter Than Air, Golden Gate Yacht Club
18 October — San Francisco, California

October LOCATION

Date: Saturday, October 18, 2008
Place: Golden Gate Yacht Club
San Francisco, CA
Time: 6:30 - reception
7:15 - dinner
8:00 - talk
Cost: $60 (includes wine with buffet)

Please mail information (to right),
with payment, to Dr. Anders Jepsen
23 Dos Posos
Orinda, CA 94563
or email ajviking@aol.com
or call (925) 254-3079

Reserve ___ spaces for October 18 2008 at
Hartzell talk at GGYC
San Francisco, CA
Cost: $60, buffet dinner with wine
Annual dues still payable @$25

Name: ____________________________________________
Address (if changed): _______________________________
Companion: _______________________________________

If you desire a car pool from the Peninsula call Helen Klaben Kahn

Golden Gate Yacht Club
San Francisco
Along the seawall

St. Francis Wood
Reserve ___ spaces for October 18 2008 at
Hartzell talk at GGYC
San Francisco, CA
Cost: $60, buffet dinner with wine
Annual dues still payable @$25

Name: ____________________________________________
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October 2008