

# The Explorers Club

## Northern California Chapter

April 2009

Note venues and dates with care.  
**San Francisco, CA!**  
 Our next event is at 6:30 on  
 April 24, a Friday evening,  
 at the Golden Gate Yacht Club.

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



The mountains of Rwanda and the Congo border are shrouded in clouds and fog, the 'mist' alluded to in Dian Fossey's biography, *Gorillas in the Mist*. Our speaker and his wife (who spoke with us earlier\*) spent years living in this environment and, as animal doctors, tended to these fabled animals in their home environment. They trained indigenous staff to continue in this work.

It is hard to avoid the misty reference for it aptly describes the place in a single word that communicates the working environ-

ment. San Franciscans can relate.

While tourists pay a heady amount to struggle along a trail to observe the gorillas, Dr. Chris Whittier (and his wife, Dr. Felicia Nutter) were part of the Mountain Gorilla Veterinary Project. Jack Hanna, a Board Member, has observed: "Every day MGVP's dedicated veterinarians risk their lives on the high mountain slopes of east central Africa to track and treat this highly endangered species. MGVP has been recognized as the best of its kind by the international scientific community, and has played a major role in increasing the mountain gorilla population by 17% over the last 20 years."

There are approximately 740 Mountain Gorillas left on earth; they live only in two small parks, one in Uganda and one that includes a corner of Uganda, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In order to ensure a healthy future for this special animal, vets monitor the gorillas on a regular basis, provide life-saving medical care if needed, conduct health studies, and do all they can to build local capacity in veterinary medicine and ecosystem health.



A band of gorillas;  
 camera toting visitor



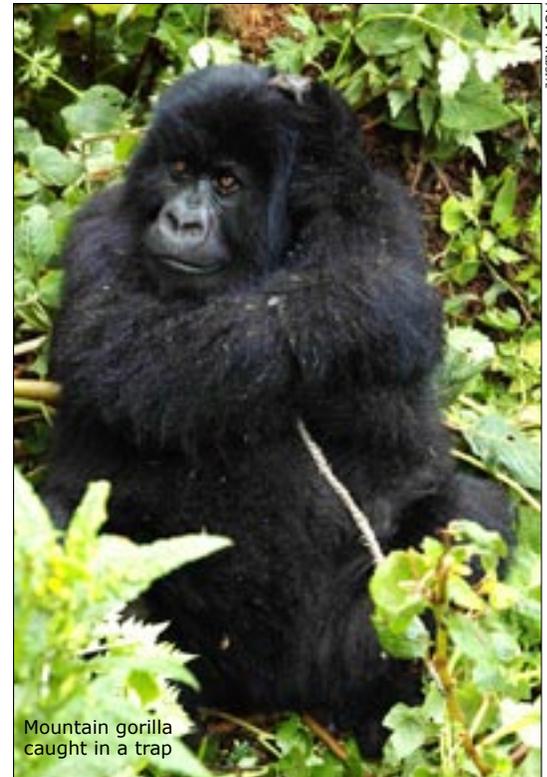
Dart-sedated gorilla  
 given medical care

### San Francisco—April 24, 2009

### Christopher Whittier

### Veterinarians in the Mist

### Tales of Living with the Mountain Gorillas in Central Africa



Mountain gorilla  
 caught in a trap

\* Dr. Felicia Nutter spoke on April 8, 2008, about the Marine Mammal Center in Marin.

## NorCA Photo Expedition

On April 18, beginning at 9 AM, Mort Beebe (FN78), a world-renowned photographer, will lead us on Mt. Tamalpais to demonstrate good techniques of expedition photography. You'll need a digital camera and good walking shoes for the moderate hike. May want to bring your laptop to download and edit results.

Sign up by sending email to [sacred-mountain@att.net](mailto:sacred-mountain@att.net)

Details of the exact locations, and directions, will be sent to all who register by April 15. ACT NOW!.

# Catherwood's Sights Found Again

## That Was Then; This is Now! San Francisco

Payne Johnson (FN94) took us on an explorers' history trip at our March 27th meeting. Had the Club been chartered in the 1830s, John Lloyd Stevens and his artist compatriot Frederick Catherwood would have been honored Fellows. They joined together for a year-long exploration of then unknown-to-the-outside world Maya ruins of Central America and Mexico. Stevens organized and wrote about their travels; Catherwood's art documented the grandure of what they saw. When they returned the publications were best sellers.

When they landed on the shore of what is now Belize, they only had vague reports of monumental buildings inland. No maps, no guidebooks; trails and rivers through deep jungles lay ahead. Stevens had travelled widely through the Mideast, Egypt, Russia, Greece and Turkey; he was a seasoned explorer. Catherwood, known for his extensive panorama art and also well travelled, became his trusted friend. Within fifty miles they came upon Copan! Over the months they pushed on to Antigua, over the Chiapas highlands and came upon Palenque. With so much in between: more Maya cities, more mosquitos, fighting malaria, fatigue and the tropical heat. They were the first to report extensively since the Spanish conquistadors, three centuries before. On a later trip they reported on Uxmal and Tulum, among other sites on the Yucatan Peninsula, in a separate publication.

Johnson, the former Chair of our San Diego Chapter, followed the "Path to the Lost Cities" over a five-year period. His goal was to capture the same vistas documented by Catherwood. Payne was successful in finding river valleys, rock outcrops, fallen idols, monumental pyramids and crumbling Spanish churches. Most covered by vegetation when Stephens and Catherwood were there; many now opened to the sky above. The color slides and art sketches are remarkable to view over this 150-year span when shown side by side. Our speaker found the same vantage; in many cases his splendid photos could almost be overlain on the earlier art.

Catherwood took very little artistic license; most views are shown to be almost photographic in their detail. How fortunate because, now exposed, the ravages of weather, volcanic acid rain and looting have all taken their toll.

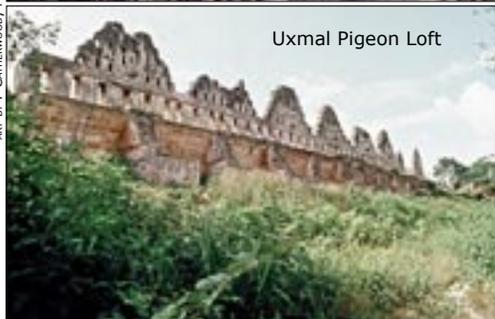
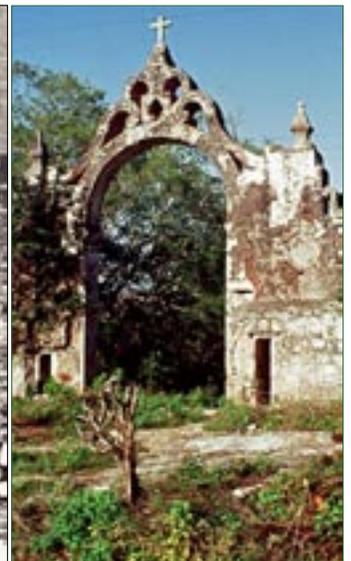
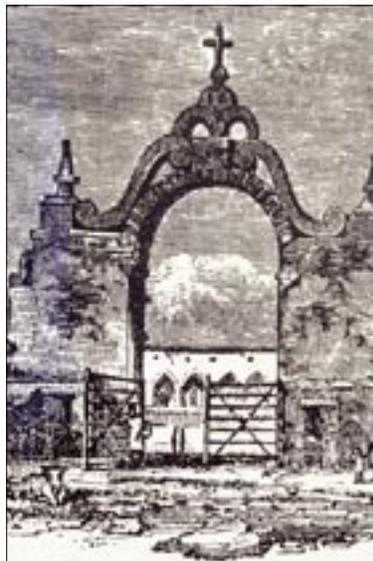


Our speaker, Payne Johnson (FN94) with Merle Greene Robertson (FN90), the doyen of Maya archeologists



Payne Johnson has followed other explorers and has investigated ancient drawings within the caves of Baja California. He also guides travelers to the major archaeological sites of the world.

Hacienda Mucuyché



Uxmal Pigeon Loft



Uxmal Pyramid of the Magician



## HELP WANTED

Volunteer victims (virtual) for our Field Medicine Expedition on May 9.

Members who have written published books for our Story Night, next Fall.

A reminder: we would like to send as many notifications and newsletters as possible by email to be green. Please notify Steve Smith at [nauticos@oceanearth.org](mailto:nauticos@oceanearth.org) if you will accept email-only communication. Note that our new web address for the chapter: [www.explorersnorca.org](http://www.explorersnorca.org)

Kyle Rothschild-Mancinelli piped across the stage honoring members who died over the past year.



ECAD's official Scottish Bag Piper was Kyle Rothschild-Mancinelli (SM04). Kyle is a Junior at Carlmont High School in Belmont. His proficiency with the pipes is attested by competing in the highest-ranking Grade 1 solos for three years, placing in the top 5 under age 18 nationally. He came in 4th in the Grade 3A World Competition in Glasgow in 2005. Currently he is Pipe Major of the Prince Charles Pipe Band (Grade 3) in South San Francisco.

Kyle's parents are both NorCA Chapter members:

Dr. Lynn Rothschild (FN04) and Dr. Rocco Mancinelli (FN87). Lynn and her father, Kyle's grandfather Dick Rothschild, proudly attended ECAD! They brought the news that Kyle won the Bay Area Science Fair for all Biological Sciences, earning a spot to compete in the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in May in Reno. His project is *The Effects of UV Radiation on Supercoiled DNA: A Three Year Study*. He began field work in Kenya in 2007 with a grant from the Explorers Club Youth Activity Fund.



Your Chair Alan Nichols (FN84) and former Chair Lee Langan (FN99) at ECAD. Lee's candidacy for Club Board was not successful *this* time; his response, "While not elected, I am certainly not dejected. There is so much to do for the Club that is challenging and rewarding! We have a great new class of directors to serve with our splendid new president." To the right, a view of the Waldorf's Grand Ballroom at the 2009 ECAD. ECAD is an experience all explorers should strive to attend!

## The Corner Chair

Our last speaker **Payne Johnson** was an inspirer—three members stood up and said so in their own ways. Thanks to **Lee Langan** for bringing Payne to us. Good to hear about some new expeditions—**Liz Rosen** to Peru (archeology); **Dan Dana** back to Africa; **Todd Borgie** to Viet Nam; **Joan Boothe** to South Georgia, again; **Paul Stoicheff** excavating in Macedonia.

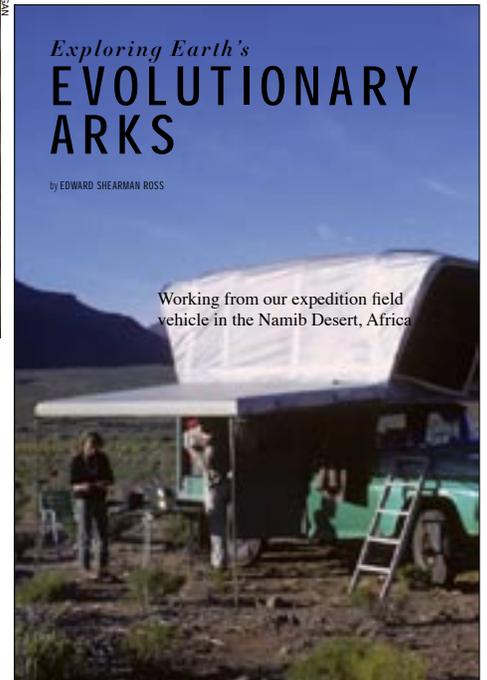
**Joan Boothe** and her Sirdars are rolling—4 more signed up at the meeting; good going Joan. **Anders Jepsen** pointed out that we old timers don't have to introduce our spouses as guests anymore. They are now full-fledged Sirdars, a part of our official email member list and entitled to join all our events. A new development in Spouses Rights. And some may make the plunge and apply to be inter-

national members; we can help that happen. **Mike Diggles**, our Webmaster par excellence, reminded me Sirdars will also receive our email *Explorations Newsletter* with the reports on all the expeditions of Explorers Club members and others.

Thanks also to all who have joined the Honor Roll as voluntary dues payers (\$25) and to **Eva Splitz-Blum** who paid her dues plus a donation to our Chapter.

I'm excited about our field trips. Photography with **Mort Beebe**, expedition telemedicine with **Paul Freitas**. Two more trips are in the works for later in the year. Our newest Sirdar **Von Hurson** has already volunteered to be a 'victim' on the Mt. Diablo expedition.

As one of my expedition patrons, The Sufi Rumi, said: "Adventure is a state of mind not a seat on a camel." —Alan Nichols (FN84)



For the second time this year\* a NorCA nonagenarian has been honored with 14 pages in *The Explorers Journal!* Ed Ross (FE79) discusses collecting bugs throughout his life, and sixty-five spectacular color images are reproduced. He is the featured author and subject of the Editor's comments, as well. Congratulations Ed!

The Journal is the principal outreach for The Explorers Club and is sent to subscribers as well as members.

\* In the Fall issue Merle Green Robertson's rubbings were featured in a similar broad spread

April 2009



Chair: Alan Nichols  
415 789-9348  
sacred-mountain@att.net  
Vice Chair: Anders Jepsen  
925 254-3079  
ajviking@aol.com  
Treasurer: Sue Estey  
510 526-2216  
sestey@earthlink.net  
Secretary: Stephen E. Smith  
Webmaster: Mike Diggles  
Newsletter: Lee Langan

Beebe Photo Training | Whittier Gorilla Stories  
18 April — Mt Tam | 24 April — Golden Gate Yacht Club

**Northern California  
Calendar of Events**

(Venues will be identified at time of event.)

Our next Meetings

April 18 (Sat) . . . . . Mort Beebe  
Photography Field Expedition, Mt. Tam  
April 24 (Fri) . . . . . Christopher Whittier  
Stories of Gorilla Country, GGYC

Future Event Schedule

May 9 (Sat) . . . . . Paul Freitas, MD  
Medical Emergency Field Expedition, Mt. Diablo  
May 15 (Fri) . . . . . Doug Findley  
Sailing the NW Passage, GGYC  
June 6 (Sat) . . . . . Angel Island Picnic  
November (TBD) . . . . . Story Night

Earlier Meetings

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  
Antarctic Tourism, Liebowitz home, Woodside  
October 18 . . . . . Don Hartsell  
Lighter than Air, GGYC  
November 21 . . . . . Leela Hutchison  
Giant Cave Crystals, Dana home, Tiburon  
December 7 . . . . . Holiday Gathering, Langan home  
January 30 . . . . . Malcolm Potts & Martha Campbell  
Sex in 21st Century, Golden Gate Yacht Club  
February 27 . . . . . Orville Magoon  
Tsunamis—Real and Personal, GGYC  
March 27 . . . . . Payne Johnson  
Stephens' 1839 Search for the Mayas, GGYC

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

**April LOCATION**

**Date** Friday, April 24, 2009  
**Place:** Golden Gate Yacht Club  
1 Yacht Road, San Francisco  
**Time:** 6:30 - reception, no-host drinks  
7:15 - buffet dinner, wine  
8:00 - speaker  
**Cost:** \$55 (in advance); \$60 (24th)  
Please mail information (to right),  
to Dr. Sue Estey  
216 Carmel Avenue  
El Cerrito, CA 94530  
or email [sestey@earthlink.net](mailto:sestey@earthlink.net)  
or call (510) 526-2216

Reserve \_\_\_ spaces for April 24, 2009 at  
Christopher Whittier at GGYC  
San Francisco, CA  
Cost: \$55  
(Chapter 2009 Dues: \$25)

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

If you desire a car pool from the  
Peninsula call Helen Klaben Kahn at  
(650) 888-4058!

We have established a PayPal account. For those of you who have these accounts, you can  
sign up and remit dinner costs to the NorCA Chapter by transferring money to:  
[explorersnorca@gmail.com](mailto:explorersnorca@gmail.com)

