Finding Cinggis Qa’an
Among the Hills of Mongolia

Alan Nichols, Esq.
San Francisco — May 20, 2011

Within the elegant hall filled with dioramas from the African plains, and highlighted by live and lively African penguins, we will dine for our final meeting of the year. It will also be the final meeting of Alan Nichols term as chairman of the Northern California Chapter.

On this evening, he wants to thank all who have contributed so much to his success. Just how is his secret, but he has strongly encouraged everyone who is able to attend. It promises to be a memorable evening.

Memorable it will be for this, our first evening at the new California Academy of Science since the building has been completely rebuilt. It is a spectacular venue, a world class working science museum exhibiting a small but dramatic portion of the collections resulting from the field work of CAS scientists. Coming to the academy would be enough in itself, as would appreciating those who shall be honored this evening, but there is more.. Alan will report on his six-week expedition to Inner Mongolia last Summer.

The Expedition was awarded Flag 186 by our club. The goal: to search, in the field, the places where Roy Chapman Andrews worked and to seek the sacred mountains of Mongolia—with particular reference to the burial place of Cinggis Qa’an (“CQ”). Roy Chapman Andrews, the President of the Explorers Club 1931 to 1934 and Director of the American Museum of Natural History, was an international celebrity of the 1920s because of his fossil and dinosaur expeditions and discoveries in Mongolia.

CQ needs no introduction. Mongolia’s most revered figure and a colossus in recorded history. Scientists and adventurers have been searching for the burial site of CQ for almost 800 years. He was reportedly buried secretly in a solid silver casket with extraordinary jewels, weapons, artifacts and scores of warriors, slaves, and horses. His tomb would hold a wealth of historical and material treasure. The history, both ancient and modern, of attempts to locate the burial site is a fascinating story of unsuccessful multimillion dollar attempts. Alan’s research discovered a wholly different burial location on a Sacred Mountain than in northern Mongolia where.. most current expeditions have been investigating. He visited the area on a side trip into Inner Mongolia during his Explorers Club Flag Expedition “Cycling the Silk Web 2005.”

For almost 800 years people have tried to find the tomb of CQ and failed. From all the evidence his burial place must be: (a) on a Sacred Mountain within cart range of the Xia Xia Kingdom; (b) in a secret location unsuspected by anyone; (c) in a place to carry out his afterlife expectations to continue his mission: (i) for revenge against his enemies, (ii) protection for his Mongolians, and (iii) to unify the world under his sword; and (d) to a burial site consistent with 13th century Mongolian Shamanism and Sky Worship. Only one place satisfies these requirements. After almost 800 years of searching until now, no one has found his burial site because they have searched in the wrong places.

Since CQ did not want his burial place discovered, he and his close followers pretended he was to be buried in north Mongolia near his birthplace in order to avoid detection and even investigation into his actual burial place. The mountain range that satisfied all the requirements of burial where CQ could continue in spirit his conquest of China and protection of Mongolia is now in Inner Mongolia and is a part of China. TheYellow River could be crossed from China into ancient Mongolia close to this mountain range.

The Sacred Mountain that Alan has identified contains evidence of CQ’s presence spiritually and satisfies the geopolitical, religious and historical requirements for the burial site. Let him tell you more.

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Robin Ziegler is a wizard with Google Earth, as he should be. As Earth’s Community Developer, he communicates with an assembly of volunteers that, in turn, work together with thousands who aggregate information for this most unusual piece of software. On April 22, he took the Northern California Chapter on a tour of our world, and beyond, with a live presentation.

Google Earth is free; try it yourself: earth.google.com. It is remarkably comprehensive and expanded every day. It contributes to everyone’s understanding of what is where: on land with a comprehensive assemblage of satellite and aerial imagery combined with a rapidly expanding complement of street views gathered by Google’s fleet of roving vehicles and their mounted cameras and lasers. The land imagery is further expanded by user-supplied photographs, each geographically located (the company-owned Panaramio storage), and a mind-boggling availability of time-related overlays. Robin skipped from city to city, country to country, and from century to century displaying information that makes any map-lover appreciative. It is easy to become completely absorbed in probing geography as never seen before.

“Did I say it is free,” he repeated. Clearly our speaker is enthralled with his job. His prior experience as a flight instructor, an entrepreneur as computers grew up with him, as a dive master—a bit of his background—has made him a master teacher. As an evangelist of Google Earth his days are filled to overflowing. Beyond the land, much of the subsurface of the seas is searchable, where data exist. The night sky with its google-sized content is just a click away. Roam the heavens on your computer of choice, take an iPad outside, look up! Those stars you could not remember or the constellations named by the ancients, are still there.

Tour Mars or the Moon. You will see it as no one before. Look toward the earth and watch the weather pass by (with nearly real time content update) or the man-made trash we have placed in space. We live in a time when the content of our researchers and cartographers is readily available to all. Sit back; reflect; this is truly amazing. Amazing, and you can expand it yourself! Overlay your own travels or a time line of your choosing—create an xml or .xcl file, and it falls in place on your own globe.

Mr. Ziegler is a master of his trade. He is his own extension from the teen collector of state highway maps who graduated to accumulate USGS quads, then aeronautical maps. He now roams the double-digit petabyte world stored on his employer’s computers and made freely available. Wow! We can too.

**Award Night: NorCA Grants**—As noted previously, our chapter received $6000 from headquarters for increasing the actual total membership and for the greatest percentage increase of all chapters. On April 29th, the Super Explorers met and poured over applications for grants to be distributed by the chapter using these funds. We have winners!

All the proposals were well presented and worthy. Some of the grants were partially funded and some deferred entirely for now. The winners and their proposals:

1. **Mike Diggles** Sierra expedition student scholarship
2. **Charlette Rygh** Save the Serengeti Cards & distribution
3. **Alan Nichols** Two students (cinematographer and archeologist) for Inner Mongolia technical expedition.
4. **Jim & Von Hurson** Student Expedition
5. **Steve Smith** coral reef Buoy Project
6. **Max Nichols** (student) Production expenses for Chapter Story Night, Mongolia and Chingis Qu’an videos.

Future projects based on revised proposals and clarifications are being considered and will be announced later.

**Election Night**— According to the guidelines presented by the Vice President, Chapters, at our May 20 meeting we will vote upon a slate to continue the Northern California Chapter of The Explorers Club. Requests for all those interested to come forth have been made in recent issues, and a potential team is waiting your approval.

As has been the custom for our chapter, the recommendation for the new chair is placed before past chairs for their counsel. The slate that shall be offered is:

- Chair: Dr. Anders Jepsen
- Vice Chair: Captain Rick Saber
- Treasurer: Joan Boothe
- Secretary: Dr. Stephen Smith

Mike Diggles and Lee Langan will continue their duties as webmaster and newsletter editor.

**The African Hall**— This hall of majestic dioramas first opened in 1934, giving visitors an in-depth look into Africa’s diverse ecosystems. It has been faithfully recreated in the new building, but with some surprises. Sixteen dioramas showcase a variety of mounted animals, including lions, zebras and baboons. Five brand new dioramas contain live animals from the aquarium, including a pancake tortoise, a white-throated monitor, and an entire colony of frolicking penguins.
The Corner Chair— Five years ago I finished the last lap of my bicycle journey from Bursa, Turkey (across the bay from Istanbul) to China’s former capital, Xian. Walking along the Bay near our home, I was trying to think of one word to describe 9 months of cycling over 10,000 rugged miles through eleven countries on what most people erroneously call the Silk Road (should be the Silk Web), “Gratitude” Please come on May 20 so I can thank each of you for the experience I have had as your chair. – Alan Nichols FN84

NorCA Chapter 2011 Contributors

Add Your Name to the above list by sending $25!

Angel Island Field Trip — NorCA Annual Picnic

Our visit to Angel Island to celebrate the end of our talks and meetings for the season is scheduled for June 11 this year. This outing varies in attendance—although word of mouth has bolstered recent years—but it is always great fun for those who join despite the potential of morning fog or unusual heat.

Everyone is rewarded with hikes, a pot-luck picnic, games, and the chatter about explorations and travels.

Plan ahead, and reserve with chair emeritus Capt. Bob Schmieder to take his Bay Tour. You MUST arrive before the Cordell Explorer departs Berkeley Harbor at 9 am sharp. The bay cruise and after-party glow enhance the day. Call (925) 934-3735. <schmieder@cordell.org>

The plans can be minimal: bring food for yourselves. Kay Schmieder will bring soft drinks and some dessert. There are grills on the lawn by the cove. We usually stay around from about 10 through 2 or so.

You can also arrive from Tiburon or San Francisco: check the web for current schedules.

There is no fee for this fun, but please register with Kay to come from Berkeley or tell Sue Estey you are planning to attend so we have a guess as to how many will enjoy the Saturday, June 11th picnic.

Dr. Merle Greene Robertson (1913-2011)

Merle Greene Robertson died on April 22nd; friends and scholars have lost a force in the field of Maya archaeology. Our chapter has lost a loyal friend. Merle was known for her corpus of detailed ink rubbings of the limestone edifices of Maya stele and buildings: these images made the study of this ancient culture’s iconography practical. As a result we know more and more about the lineage of ancient rulers and the sophistication of the Maya calendar. She was equally known as the founder of the Mesa Redonda, an annual working conference where Maya scholars and students present their findings and exchange their theories. First held in 1973, it is continued by Mexico’s Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

Merle was trained as a draftsman and became a wonderful watercolor artist. She entered the field, after raising her children, when invited to join an expedition at Tikal. She loved the Petén, home of the Maya, and especially the spectacularly beautiful site of Palenque. She was awarded The Order of the Aztec Eagle, Mexico’s highest honor for a foreigner, the Orden del Pop by Guatemala’s Museo Popol Vuh, and a Certificate of Merit by The Explorers Club. She carried two flags, to Chitzen Itza and Palenque. She founded the PreColumbian Art Research Institute and maintained a 10,000-volume library.

Merle was best known as a supporter for any one who might contribute their skills to the building knowledge of the Maya. She was completely unselfish in her acknowledgement of these friends. If you wish to know more about her life, you will find her autobiography, Never In Fear, at Amazon or on the impressive Mesoamerican web site, www.Mesoweb.com. Merle was 97.

From the Board— Lee Langan being fingerprinted (and Bill Vartorella awaits) at the last Board of Directors meeting. In the Club’s effort to reinstate a liquor license it is required that all board members submit for the State of New York. Just one more thing your elected officials do for you.

The bar at 46 E. 70th will have lockers for self service; NorCA could potentially reserve one.—Lee Langan FN99

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A hike to the recently opened immigration camp is well worth the walk (above); the views from Angel Island and returning on the Cordell Explorer are a delight: we have watched the new Bay Bridge rise and get close to Alcatraz.
May 20 — Golden Gate Park’s Academy of Science

May 22: Cal Academy of Science, San Francisco

**Date:** Friday May 20, 2011

**Place:** California Academy of Science, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco

**Time:** 6:00 - reception, African Hall
7:15 - dinner
8:00 - talk

**Cost:** $49 in advance; $60 on the 22nd
Students: $17. (2011 dues $25!)

Please mail information to Dr. Sue Estey,
216 Carmel Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530
or email sestey@earthlink.net
or call (510) 526-2216

**Please reserve by May 16!**