

The Explorers Club

Northern California Chapter

March 2012

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

New Findings from the San Felipe Materials lost in 1576, now recovered Edward Von der Porten San Francisco March 30, 2012

Ten Mexico-United States expeditions from 1999 to 2011 to a wreck site along the desert shore of Baja California, and study of newly available documents, have enabled Edward Von der Porten to reconstruct the story of the earliest eastbound Manila galleon shipwreck.

The results include identifying the ship as the galleon *San Felipe*, lost without trace in 1576, recovering her history, and explaining her tragic fate. On May 19, 2006, Sheldon Briener and Ed described the discovery for the Chapter. Since they have made marvelous finds.

They have discovered lead sheathing with iron nails from her lower hull, large amounts of wax from her cargo, more than fifteen hundred Ming porcelain sherds and three hundred stoneware sherds, a piece of Iberian pottery, a set of compass gimbals, a Chinese bronze mirror, the ship's boat's sounding lead, a Chinese Buddhist bronze lion, and a unique cloisonné plate rim.

In addition, they have gained a remarkable insight into the Chinese-Philippine-Mexican trade at this early point in the history of the Manila galleons (1573-1815) and developed a bilingual traveling museum exhibit titled *Treasures of the Manila Galleons*, which uses material from the wreck to reach a wide range of audiences.

A slide series tells the San Felipe's saga, shows how she was rediscovered, and describes the contents and meaning of her recovered porcelains and other artifacts.

Von der Porten FN80 is a member of the Northern California Chapter. Ed is a naval historian, nautical archaeologist, museum director, and educator. He is also a researcher of maritime subjects including pre-Viking through eighteenth-century shipbuilding, Henry VIII's *Mary Rose* and the development of the big-gun warship, Francis Drake's California encampment, early Manila galleon wrecks, early Chinese trade porcelains, and the World War II German Navy.

Now retired from teaching at the Santa Rosa High School and Junior College, he is the organizer and director of archaeological projects in California and Mexico.

Ed's publications include a book on the German Navy in two versions and fourteen editions, one of them a Book-of-the-Month-Club alternate, an article on the Hanseatic League in *National Geographic* magazine, a small book on Drake in California, numerous technical reports and magazine and newspaper articles on maritime and archaeological subjects, and three small text books, one of which is in its fifth edition and thirty-fifth year of publication.

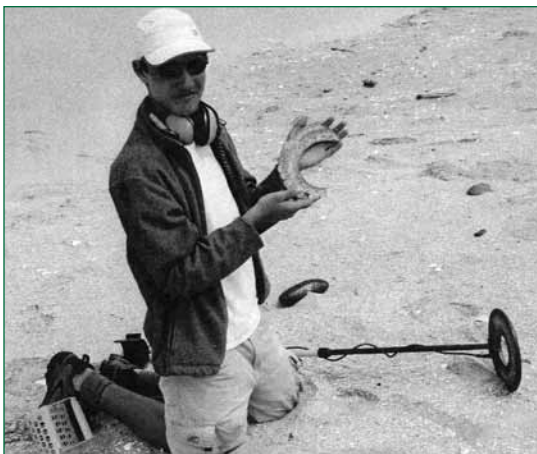
LOCATION

Note venues and dates with care.

In San Francisco, CA, our next meeting is at 6:00 on March 30, a FRIDAY evening, at the City Forest Lodge south off Seventh AVENUE.



Examples of the hundreds of artifacts from the San Felipe (shown above in an artist's conception of her floundering along the empty coast of North America in the 16th century.) Most dramatic are the Ming Dynasty china treasures, some intact, that have been found in an artifact stream pointing to the yet uncovered wreck.



Flying Under the Sea to See San Francisco — February 24

The *Member Moment* on February 24 will feature Lesley Ewing FN93.



Chapter Chair Jepsen congratulates Josh Glovin, wearing his new TEC cap (above); the craft readied for a few-hour excursion ((left); The *Super Falcon* leaps out of the Sea in a whale of a show (below);

Josh Glovin is an enthusiastic participant in the nascent field of winged flight beneath the sea's surface, and he projected that spirit in his description of the first sea trials of Graham Hawkes' *Super Falcon*. At the Northern California Chapter's February 24th meeting, Josh described the latest version of the sub-surface craft that 'flies' through the sea to allow its two observers a chance to follow what they might see.

The unique craft is the next step, up from the *Deep Flight Aviator* introduced eight years ago. (Aviator Pilot Mort Beebe was in the audience.) The positive-buoyant, carbon-fiber undersea plane can fly to 1000' deep. This is a practical limit of visibility; go deeper and you need to bring your own light. If so, you disrupt a major advantage of this oceanographer's new tool—it moves along with sea life without disruption! If one chooses to go into the darkness, use an ROV with high-def video (and it's required umbilical

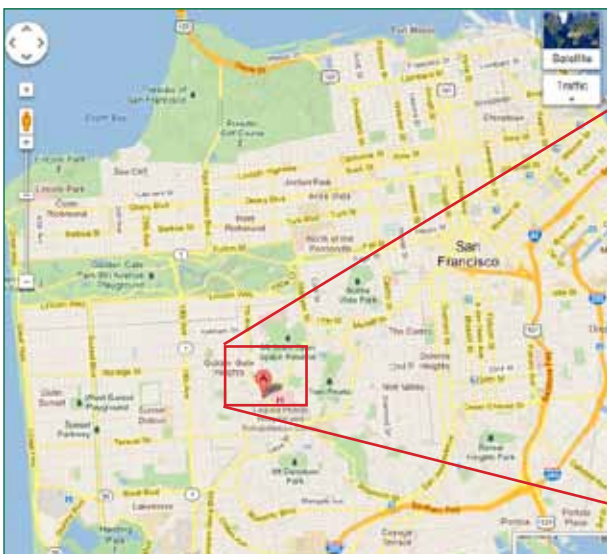
connection to a surface vessel.)

Glovin participated in a first-of-it's-kind near-shore survey of a coastal area--the entire sea border of Jordan in the Gulf of Accaba! In a few days the country's sea scientists were able to establish a baseline survey of the surprisingly clean sea floor: no sunken ships from the past, no amphora, but they did find (and followed) a valuable strip of black coral. In the future they will be able to chart any disturbance along this shore that may result from the cultural build up taking place on the seashore. Josh spoke with pride on the ease of the operation. Not quite as easy as putting your trailer-borne boat into the water, but not too different.

Near the unique spire that juts from the Pacific west of Baja, Guadalupe Island, he showed a video clip of the Super Falcon flying along with a Great White Shark. Pretty murky, but a first. Proof of concept for sure. A new venture in exploration.

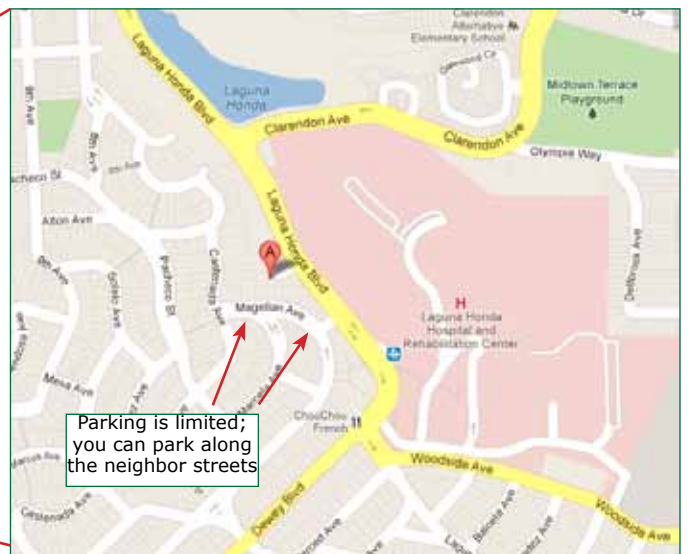


Josh graduated from San Jose State University in 2007; he has been with Hawkes Oceanographic Technology (HOT) going on four years. It is clearly a good match.



City Forest Lodge is in the center of San Francisco near Laguna Honda Hospital.

South of Golden Gate Park, take 7th Avenue. From I280 take Junipera Serra and Potrero. From the east take Market to Woodside. Even easier take the Taraval L line to Forest Hill Station (one block away.)



Parking is limited; you can park along the neighbor streets

NorCA Chapter 2012 Contributors

Amaral, Julia
Anderson, Susan
Azarpay, Guitty
Beebe, Mort
Belcher, George
Blake, Richard
Blumberg, Marion
Boothe, Barry
Boothe, Joan
Cassell, Jay
Chase, Keith
Cheatham, Dan
Chokas, Ann
Cook, Sandra
Cooper, Alan
Cromwell, Thomas
Crowder, Wendy
Diggles, Mike
Durbin, Thomas
Ehrhart, Ken
Ehrhart, Loretta
Engstrom, Dafne
Engstrom, Mats
Estey, Sue
Ewing, Lesley
Ford, Art
Freitas, Anna
Freitas, Paul
Glacy, Char
Glanz, Gina
Glanz, Ron
Guzy, Michael
Hall, Tom
Haringsma, Henry
Herz, Michael
Heydorn, William
Higgins, R. J.
Hurson, Jim
Hurson, Von
Jepsen, Anders
Kennard, David
King, Steven
Kobal, Daniel A.
Kobal, Lois Z
Komarmy, Margot
Kutz, Dida
Kvenvolden, Keith
Langan, Karine
Langan, Lee
Lidicker, William
McFadden, Ian
McGann, Mary
Merding, Charles
O'Kane, Teresa
Pickworth, Diana
Piper, Bob
Prigoff, Jim
Saber, Rick
Smith, Mark
Smith, Steve
Soper, Scott
Tamarelli, Wayne
Taylor, Susan
Walsh, Don
Weiman, Mark

From the Chair— Once again last Friday, the Chapter had a chance to hear a great talk, this time by Josh Glovin introducing a state-of-the-art single person submersible, ‘flyable’ watercraft that can cruise at depth, gathering data and responding to the controls of the pilot. It reminded me of one of my colleagues at Cal, Dr Ugo Conti, who designed, built and tested a towable underwater monitoring system for his PhD. Back then we were thinking about exploring for the manganese nodules found on the ocean bottom near geothermal vents. Today we can send a scientist down to look for himself.

I'm looking forward to finally getting to hear Ed Von der Porten talk about his Manila Galleon. He's been working on this project for years and now he's ready to talk about some of what he has found.

The Member Moment for March will be given by Leslie Ewing FN93, provided she gets back from India in time. Leslie served as Chapter Chair back in 2001-2002. One of her stated interests is ocean coastlines, but we may get to hear about her Really Deep dive.

Since ECAD will take place this month, I expect to have a report on it in the next newsletter. In the meantime, a gentle reminder to those of you who still haven't sent in their 2012 Chapter dues.

Also, our efforts to get permission to park in the church parking lot next door to the City Forest Lodge have, so far, met with a polite ‘Sorry, No.’ There already is a church event that has priority, so for the moment we have been stymied. You may have to park on the neighboring streets.

—Anders Jepsen PhD FN03

As noted by Chapter Member, Dr. Art Ford, the Antarctic Society is pleased to offer a commemorative medallion honoring the 100th anniversary of the first parties to reach the Geographic South Pole. Roald Amundsen and his Norwegian party reached the Pole first on December 14, 1911. Capt. Robert F. Scott and his British party arrived at Pole on January 17, 1912. While Amundsen and his men returned safely and brought the news to the rest of the world, everyone in Scott's party perished on the Ross Ice Shelf only a few miles from a supply cache.

This lovely medallion was created by Jack Chase of Jericho, Vermont, a finalist for the Viet Nam Memorial on the Mall in Washington, D.C. It just happens that Jack lives within a mile of the homestead of the celebrated snowflake photomicrographer, Wilson A. Bentley, who is credited with the conclusion that ‘no two snowflakes are alike.’ One of Bentley's photomicrographs was chosen for this medallion. Antarctic Tony Gow studied snow crystals in precipitation while at the South Pole in December 1961. In that the extreme cold dry temperatures at the South Pole produce snow crystals found only on the high polar plateau, namely simple crystal forms consisting mainly of columnar crystals and bullets (columns conically terminated at one end), the designers came up with the nearest South Pole snowflake replica that they could.

It is available to all and can be obtained, as a pin or necklace. Details may be obtained at http://www.antarctican.org/antarctican_society/whats%20new/whats_new.cfm.

From the Board— There has occurred a disruption in the routine operation of your board. Let me preface by saying this governing entity is composed of some very strong personalities who hold some very strong opinions and desires. Each is dedicated to carrying out their fiduciary duty, and this has erupted into a couple of conflicting situations.

Normally these debates are held within the confines of the boardroom, but these have leaked and become the fodder of gossip. As you may appreciate gossip is not always a representative of truth. As a result, feelings and reputations have been sullied.

Once confidential, the facts that have reached the press and been the subject of member-wide blogs and emails allow me to reveal some details. Two core issues ignited the conflict: a censure of one board member for accepting two seats at a high-cost ECAD table—without advising the board. (We are obliged to do so if a gift exceeds \$100.) The member challenged this.

The second issue is more critical: the fundamental confidentiality of debate within committees as they select flags, honors, grants, even members. One faction of the board tried to breach this, and a contentious debate erupted resulting in the conditional resignation of the Flag and Honors Committee, our most prestigious. The censure and debate leaked to the press. A skewed, some would say, communication was presented to the Chapters. Virile assertions resulted. Those of us who believe we are in the middle have been and are trying to tamp things down; we are not there yet. Sincere efforts are being made, and one of the most effective individuals is our Chair Emeritus Alan Nichols. He deserves a grateful thank you for his role as TEC Ombudsman.

I leave it there. We are striving to right the ship and we shall, but the storm is still upon us.

—Lee Langan FN99

Member Moment, 24 February:

Mort Beebe FN78— Being at the right place, at the right time and seizing the opportunity!

Photojournalism was an early interest on mine generated by a weekly fixation on *LIFE* and *National Geographic*. My youthful dream was to photograph something that would make the cover and inside pages.

Out of UC Berkeley, I began Naval Flight School in Pensacola, Florida. There I was given the opportunity to request where I might want to be stationed: I replied ‘the South Seas.’ I should have said Hawaii; however, I was ordered to report to the Staff of Admiral Dufek, *Operation Deepfreeze*, in the Antarctic. After five months on the Ice I returned to Washington to edit the *Deepfreeze Yearbook*—a great success which became the basis for the books I have edited since.

A few years later I was asked to speak of the adventures encountered with Fuchs and Hillary, the Trans Antarctic Expedition arrival at the South Pole, and the lifestyle at Scott Base and McMurdo Station. I was the youngest speaker ever to present at the Bohemien Grove's Lake-Side-Talk. At this 1965 event, Lowell Thomas, a Bohemien member and Fellow of the Explorers Club, had just returned from a visit to the Ice along with Lewis Cotlow; they both complemented me on my Polar presentation.

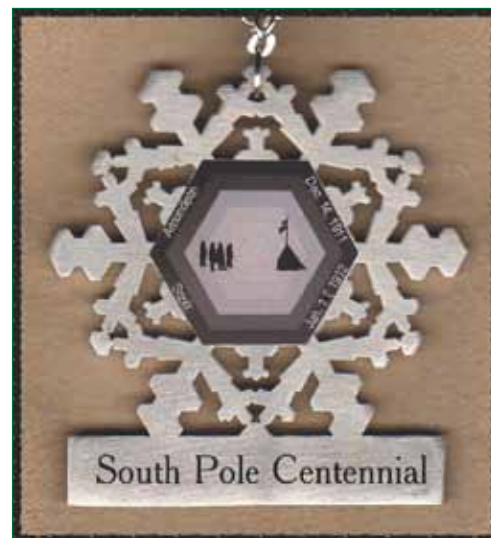
When in NY, a few years later, Lowell Thomas invited me to tour the Explorers Club, resulting in meeting the Librarian who asked what author I might be interested in. I answered Lucius Beebe—the locomotive historian. He had no book by Lucius Beebe but showed me several by Dr. William Beebe, who held a world diving record. Then, to my surprise, he added there also was one by Morton Pritchett Beebe, *Operation Deep Freeze, Antarctica 1957-58*, a part of Sir Hubert Wilkins archive gifted by his widow. That publication I had signed and sent to Sir Hubert recalling we had been bunk mates at McMurdo.

Authoring a book on the polar field science assured my application to join the Club! Thomas and Cotlow cosponsored me for EC Fellow Membership, FN78.

Young ‘Explorers’, never let an opportunity pass you by.



Mort Beebe FN78 was presented with a copy of his 1958 documentary about *Operation Deepfreeze* by USGS Geologist (and fellow Antarctic) Alan Cooper MN08

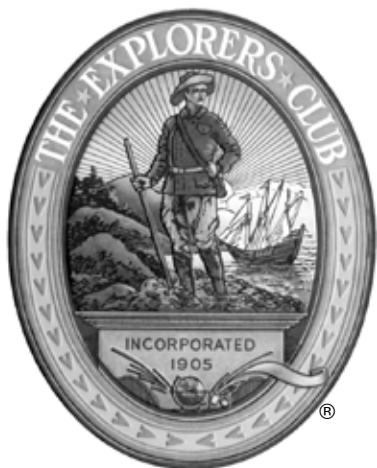


The medallion is 1.75-inches wide; it costs \$35 delivered (\$30 to Antarcticans.)

Dues cover the costs of our newsletter!

Add Your Name by sending \$25 to Treasurer Joan Boothe

March 2012



Chair: Anders Jepsen
925 254-3079
ajviking@aol.com
Vice Chair: Rick Saber
415 457-0345
eagle@rsaber.com
Treasurer: Joan Boothe
415 346-5934
hoodoskr@aol.com
Secretary: Stephen E. Smith
Webmaster: Mike Diggles
Newsletter: Lee Langan

March 30, 2012 – San Felipe

Northern California Calendar of Events

(Venues are identified as soon as known.)

Our Next Event

March 30 Ed Von Der Porten
New Findings of San Felipe. .City Forest Lodge

Upcoming Events (2012)

April 27 Stephen Smith
16 years at KosraeCity Forest Lodge
May 25 Joel Tracey/John Wilus
Fremont's CanonCity Forest Lodge
June 9 Angel Island Picnic

Earlier Chapter Events (2011/12)

February 25 Don Dana
Ethiopian Research Expedition University Club
March 25 Tom Cromwell, MD
Medical DisastersUniversity Club
April 22 Robin Ziegler
Google EarthUniversity Club
May 20 Alan Nichols
Dead Men Tell Tales.California Academy
June 11 Angel Island Picnic
September 23 Jim Westerman
The Osireion, Egypt UC Faculty Club
October 28. Jay Gregory
Discovering BoliviaUniversity Club
November Joan Boothe/University Club
Otto Nordenskjöld's 1901-03 Saga of Survival
December 5 Rick & Aldeana Saber
Member Reception Tiburon
January 27, 2012 (Friday). Expedition Medicine
Matthew Lewin, MD City Forest Lodge
February 24 Joshua Glovin
HOT Ocean ExplorationCity Forest Lodge

Send address changes and corrections by email to Steve at nauticos1@oceanearth.org

USE PAYPAL!

March 30, San Francisco

Date: Friday March 30, 2012
Place: City Forest Lodge
254 Laguna Honda Blvd
San Francisco, CA 94116-1409
(415) 753-8326
Time: 6:00 - reception
7:15 - dinner — 8:00 - talk
Cost: \$49 in advance; \$60 after 26 Mar
Students: \$35. (2012 dues \$25!)
Please mail information to Joan Boothe,
2435 Divisadero St., San Francisco, CA 94115
or email hoodoskr@aol.com or call (415) 346-5934
Reserve ___ spaces for March 30, 2012
Cost: \$49 (for members and sirdars)
\$35 for card-carrying students
Name: _____
Address (if changed): _____
Companion: _____
Please reserve by Mar 26!

We have an established PayPal account.

For those of you who have an account, you can sign up and remit dinner costs to the NorCA Chapter by transferring money to: explorersnorca@gmail.com
There is a PAYPAL BUTTON on our website (www.explorersnorca.org); easy to use!

The City Forest Lodge was sought out as a meeting place in the heart of San Francisco. Location details are mapped on page 2 of the newsletter. The Lodge has the catering and space needs we require, and our January meeting proved it worked!

There is parking, and the location, while unfamiliar to many, is easy to find tucked away just across from the City's Laguna Honda Hospital.

Muni access is VERY easy from downtown via the light-rail Taraval 'L' Line and Ocean View 'M' Line. Exit at the Forest Hill station and walk a block north. These lines can be reached by BART and the Peninsula's CalTrain. (Forest Hill Station is located deeper underground than any other Muni Metro station; so much so that, unlike other stations, most people use an elevator to reach the platform at Forest Hill.)