

The
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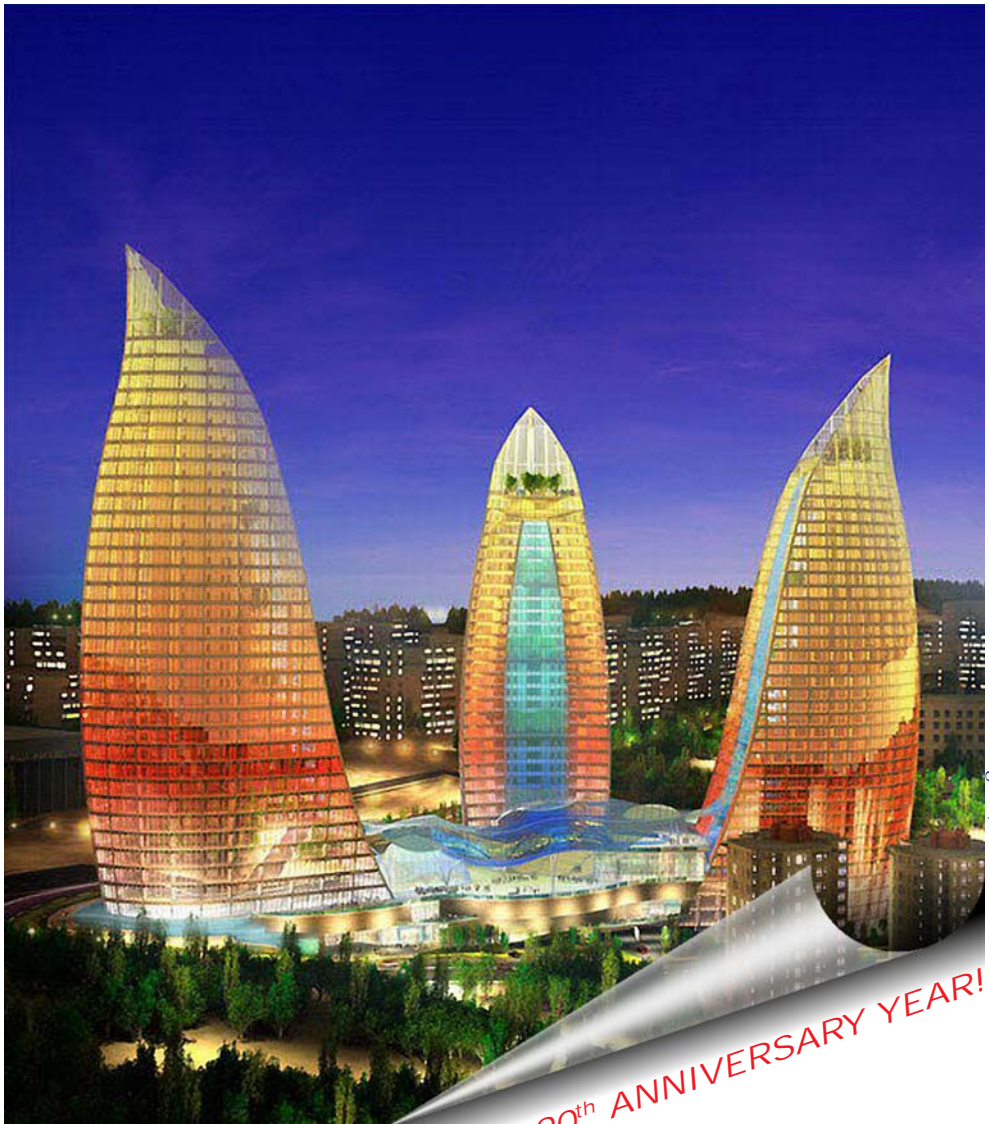


Photo Technologica, Moscow

90th ANNIVERSARY YEAR!

The Flame Towers, Baku, Azerbaijan

The Adventurers' Club News

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THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Marc Weitz #1144 - President



Our 90th Year started off well with some very good programs. Chuck Jonkey brought in his spiritually possessed musical instruments to play for us, Grant Graves reiterated that adventure is about “because it is there,” two snake handler documentarians came by (which you won’t find at LA Public Library lectures) and we had a members’ showcase.

The members’ showcase featured board members talking about their lives and adventures. I have to admit that I was skeptical of the members’ showcase at first (and so were many of you judging by the low attendance), but it was fascinating to hear the stories of fellow members whom I have been eating dinner with and sitting next to on Thursdays without knowing their true selves. I saw many of them in a new light after hearing about their lives. We forget that we are a club of adventurers who come together to share stories. We will have another members’ showcase featuring new members in

March. I recommend coming.

Good news! We finally got a defibrillator for the Club. So please feel free to have a heart attack anytime you like. We are prepared. It’s located in the President’s office. It has voice instructions that explain how to use it. It’s designed to be used in conjunction with CPR. For those who want to learn CPR, it’s easy to learn and free online. I took me just 15 minutes on <http://www.firstaidweb.com/> to get instructed. Please do it. It could save a fellow Club member’s life. Plus, you get to be a hero, and the person whose life you save might buy you a free dinner!

Lastly, I want to talk about dress code. There is no dress code. We are a bunch of iconoclasts who hate rules, but we are gentlemen adventurers who want to portray our Club as exactly that: a gathering of gentlemen adventurers. The board has decided to set the example by wearing sport coats to every meeting. I won’t be holding anyone’s feet to the fire, but I would hope that we dress at least business casual to demonstrate the Club’s stature and cache. Just remember that Stanley put on his best bush outfit and pith helmet to meet Livingstone in the wilds of Africa. And, yes, pith helmets are welcome.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the Club.

Trans-Caucasus – Azerbaijan, Georgia & Armenia

Bill Altaffer #1095

The last week of August, 2011, eight of us met our favorite (and excellent) tour manager, Paul Schwartz of MIR Corporation, in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, for a custom trip that would begin in the Caucasus Mountains and end in Greece, covering a widely diverse group of countries and experiences. The Caucasus provides an excellent vehicle for studying man's early development as well as for witnessing the long-standing cohabitation of peoples of Moslem and Christian faiths.

Current day Azerbaijan was created by "Uncle Joe" Stalin as a former Soviet republic on the west bank of the Caspian Sea. It has done an excellent job of overcoming its former dusty, desert image. It is a Moslem nation on the relaxed, casual side. I had visited Baku 15 years ago. I was amazed at the dramatic changes it has undergone in such a short time, primarily as a result of the country's oil

wealth. These changes are immediately apparent in the multitude of ultramodern buildings lining the new road from the airport, ongoing construction everywhere in the city, and the preponderance of expensive automobiles on the streets. For accommodations, there are now many multi-star hotels to choose from. Across the busy six-lane street from our hotel, a slick, high-end shopping mall blocked our view of the Caspian Sea and marked the beginning of a wide, landscaped park that fronts the Sea for a



Photo Bill Altaffer

Flame Towers in Baku during construction as Bill witnessed them, and as they will appear when they are officially opened in April, 2012

good mile. Baku is a busy port with ferries departing frequently for Iran, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. These trips take about 24 hours.



Photo Sherminivast

Venturing a couple of hours from the city, we visited Gobustan, a complex of prehistoric caves with thousands of well-preserved ancient petroglyphs. This was our first UNESCO site of the trip. On returning to Baku, we visited its old town (Icheri Shere) inside 14th century walls and the Shirvan Shah Palace com-

plex, our second UNESCO site. At the Azeri Carpet Museum we admired displays of Azeri, Caucasian and Iranian carpets with their vivid colors and bold designs.

The following day, we flew for over an hour to Nakhchivan Autonomous



Photo Mike Connor

Noah's tomb

Republic, an exclave of Azerbaijan surrounded by Armenia, for the day. "Nakhchivan" means "place where they descended" and is believed by locals to be the spot where Noah settled after his descent from nearby Mount Ararat. We were taken to a newly restored site claiming to be the tomb of Noah followed by a visit to a very interesting abandoned salt mine now used as a health spa. We walked half a mile into the mine where the main tunnel branches out into a number of very large rooms full of beds. No one occupies these rooms during the day but we were told that at night, many of the hundred-plus beds are used by people seeking therapy for respiratory issues through breathing the salty air.

From Baku we flew to Tblisi, the capital of Georgia. The city was

founded in the 5th century. It is nestled in green hills on the banks of the Kura River, which starts in Turkey and enters the Caspian from Azerbaijan. On the highest hill, a large Mother

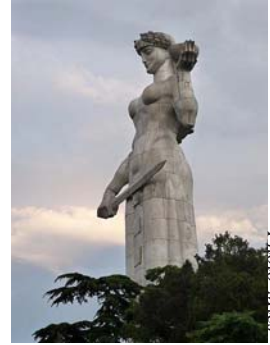


Photo Miles

Georgia statue surveys the city. In one hand she wields a sword for her enemies and in the other she holds a bowl of wine for her friends. Historically, Tblisi has been home to peoples of diverse cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. It is a charming city with beautiful old architecture (a mix of

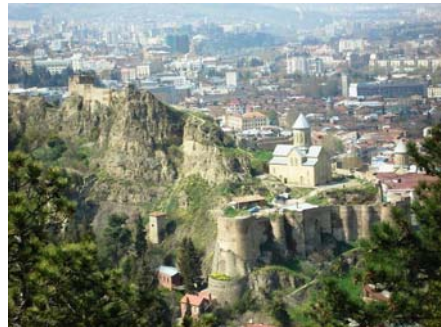


Photo Kober

Old Tblisi

medieval, classical and Soviet structures), outdoor cafes and lots of atmosphere. One interesting aspect of the city is that it does not "get going" until some stores start opening at 11 AM and does not "shut down" until

(*Trans-Caucasus continued on page 4*)

late at night. We stayed at The Marriott Hotel, which is very elegant and



Photo Kober

Downtown Tbilisi – At the Philharmonic

well-appointed. The breakfast buffet was so nice that photography was prohibited. Tbilisi is one of few places in the world where a synagogue and a mosque are located next to each other, but like the rest of Georgia, it is predominantly Christian.

Christianity came to Georgia in the 4th century. The country is full of old Christian churches and ancient monasteries. Many are UNESCO sites. We visited two of these in excursions from the city, the Jvari Monastery and Mtskheta. We also visited a cave town, Uplistskhe, dating from before 1,000 BC.

We drove to Gori, the birthplace and hometown of Joseph Stalin, where we toured a modest but interesting museum. It houses many photographs of Uncle Joe. Its grounds feature the humble house he was raised in (two small rooms) as well as his private train car. These are kept locked but a museum curator opened them for us to enter.



Photo Bill Althoff

Stalin's museum in Gori, Georgia

Our excellent local Georgian guide described growing up in Soviet times. She thought her family was vegetarian, to learn later that they had not eaten meat because they could not afford it. Now, it is a different story. The people of both Georgia and Armenia (our next country) are very proud of their history and culture as well as their high-quality fruits and vegetables. Even the air and water of both countries have a natural purity. The spring water of Georgia is world-famous. Georgia was the one country that our group most wished we could have stayed in longer.

We drove a few hours on mountain



Photo Exotic Armenia tours

Lake Sevan in Armenia

roads winding through green forests to the border of Armenia where we

met our next local guide, also excellent. The border crossing was easy.



Photo Advisor Travel

Yerevan, Armenia with Mt. Ararat

We made several very interesting stops at two old monasteries (both are UNESCO sites) and Lake Sevan, one of the largest high-altitude lakes in the world and the largest in the Caucasus region. It is one of the three great lakes of the historical Armenian Kingdom, covers 5% of Armenia, and is highly revered by locals. It has a seaside atmosphere with numerous beaches and resorts.

We spent two nights in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia. It is a lively mix of modern and very old. Looming over it is Mount Ararat, its ice-covered peaks making a dramatic backdrop to the bustling city. The city was founded in 783 BC, earlier than Rome. Our hotel was close to the city center, an easy walk to the city's large central square along bustling streets full of shops and cafes.

A highlight of our stay in Yerevan was the Matenadaran Museum, an archives that holds thousands of manuscripts, fragments of books, ancient records and documents in a number of languages. Its main

point of interest is a collection of miniatures and rare, ancient book bindings, many of them restored. The room where these are displayed is small, with only a choice few items out to be viewed by the public. The oldest items on display are about a thousand years old with many others 600 to 800 years old. They were fascinating to see. The beautiful illuminated books, with their tiny, intricate drawings in brilliant colors and gold leaf are truly amazing.

A must-see in Yerevan is the Genocide Memorial located on top of a hill overlooking the city. It commemorates the million and a half Armenians who were slaughtered by the Ottoman Turks between 1914 and 1918. The story of this genocide is little known elsewhere. The Memorial tells it in a truly moving fashion that left us very subdued.

In contrast, Yerevan is famous for its brandy. We had fun visiting the Yerevan Brandy Factory where we enjoyed a brandy tasting after our tour. Churchill allegedly ordered 400 bottles of brandy a year from this factory.

In all three countries of the southern Caucasus, we saw the remains of prehistoric man, the early Christian era, and all the stages of human development to the present. The historical clash of Christian vs. Moslem is apparent and will likely persist into the future of this fragile geography. This was obvious when we drove to the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, a mountainous Swiss-like part of Armenia and the stage of war twenty years ago between Armenia and Az-

(Trans-Caucasus continued on page 6)

Trans-Caucasus

(Trans-Caucasus continued from page 5)

zerbaijan which resulted in the displacement of many people from both



Photo ACUS

Nagorno-Karabakh

sides. As yet, there has been no formal ending to this war and ownership of this territory remains in dispute. Though it is part of Armenia, there is a border crossing into Nagorno-Karabakh where less than \$10 buys a colorful visa allowing entry. We spent



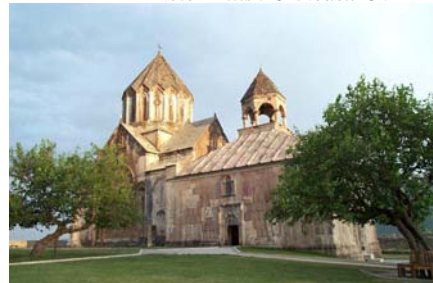
Photo: Bill Alaffer

Bill at the “We Are Our Mountains” memorial near Stepanakert. It depicts giant heads of an elderly couple from Artsakh, in traditional Armenian headdress. Also referred to as “Grandpa and Grandma,” it symbolizes the tenacious attachment of the people of Artsakh to their land and culture, and points to their legendary longevity. It is made of Armenia’s orange volcanic tuff stone and is widely regarded as one of the state symbols of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic.

two nights in Stepanakert, a friendly village-like city that was formerly a prime holiday destination for top Soviet officials. This Soviet influence remains apparent today.

Approximately an hour outside of the city, we visited the monastery of Gandzasar. According to legend, it was built in 1216 over the resting place of John the Baptist’s skull. The

Photo British Orthodox Church



Monastery of Gandzasar – Nagorno Karabakh Republic (Armenia)

driving in this area is slow, with winding switch backs through beautiful wooded mountains with views below of small rivers. Of interest on the hills outside of Stepanakert are high, heavy-duty wires strung from hidden towers for the purpose of slicing into enemy helicopters.

We returned to Yerevan for one night before leaving the Caucasus region and the Asian Continent. A final note about the political geography of the Caucasus region: it is the intentional result of Stalin’s plan, also followed in the Stan countries to the east, to create stress among displaced people by placing arbitrary borders on the map.

A LITTLE SOUTH PACIFIC TALE

Ed Boden #659

Editor's note: Aitutaki Island in the Cook Islands, scene of the above incident, was the Bounty's last port of call before the famous mutiny where William Bligh and many of the crew were set adrift in a small boat.

In the event this should fall into this wife's hands, I'll just call him Earl although she probably has a handle on the following and a whole lot more.

Earl was just the sort that should have gone knocking around the South Pacific of twenty years ago. Intelligent, articulate and good looking, he had curly blond hair and an athlete's physique. He had a sense of adventure and a perpetual grin that befitted a keen sense of humor. All this equipped him for what the South Pacific had to offer in abundance.

He had a few handicaps, however, one of which was impaired eyesight and an almost total lack of night vision ameliorated only slightly by eyeglasses.

This can be distressing and dangerous on an ocean passage at night but

it can also lead to some interesting situations – at least ashore.

One evening he was groping along a fence on his way to an assignation with Tangi, one of the local sweeties. He wasn't doing at all badly, considering that he could hardly see where he was going, when out of the dark he was greeted by a girl's voice he didn't recognize.

Well, it wouldn't have done to explain what he

was up to so he just settled down for a spell to pass the time of evening with this girl's voice. One thing led to another and the inevitable (or at least inevitable

for the South Pacific) came to pass. Afterward they bid each other good evening and went their separate ways and he never did learn who she was!

Oh yes, he made the assignation all right and therein lies another tale.

Drawing Jay Scott Pike



Aerial View of Aitutaki Island

Photo Queen Manurangi

Robert G. Williscroft #1116 – Editor



Take a moment to review this month's cover – the Flame Towers of Baku in Azerbaijan.

Bill Altaffer's cover article

with its photo of an unfinished, oddly shaped building piqued my interest. As it turns out, Baku is filled with some of the most interesting modern architecture. The Flame Towers are a striking new addition to the Baku skyline, inspired by Azerbaijan's long history with fire worshipping.

Scheduled to open this April, the towers sit on a hill overlooking Baku Bay on the Caspian Sea.

Baku means “City of Winds” in Old Persian, and Azerbaijan means “land of fires.” Design of the Towers reflects ancient Azurbaijani fire worship, providing a new eternal flame for modern Baku.

Tower construction commenced in October 2007. The southernmost tower accommodates ultramodern residential apartments, capped by the Presidential Suite, occupying the top three levels. Views from the southern and eastern sides of the tower take in the Caspian Sea. The northern face looks out across the Hotel and Office Towers, and beyond to the old city of Baku.

The Hotel Tower, occupying the northern corner, is the most programmatically complex of the Flame Tow-

ers. It consists of 228 rooms and sixty-one serviced apartments on thirty-one floors. Like all modern hotels, it sports spas, fitness centers, and plenty of convention space.

The Office Tower on the western side of the complex provides over 315 thousand square feet of commercial office space on twenty-nine floors. The space is grouped together into four tiers with each boasting a dramatic seventy-five feet of open atrium above a communal Sky Garden. The Cloud Space occupies the top of the Office Tower, forming a spectacular multipurpose space.

I know this sounds a bit like a commercial, but the concept grabbed me, so that I wanted to share it with you.

A reminder that we are in our Club's ninetieth anniversary year. Program Chairman Steve Bein is planning several spectacular events for later this year. If they come about, you will not want to miss them, and if you live outside the immediate area of Los Angeles, you just might want to schedule a visit to the City of Angels in time to participate in Steve's planned celebrations. Stay tuned for more information.

This month's book, *Mission of Gravity*, is about genuine high adventure as we love it – in an entirely different setting than any of us are familiar with. Read it – I promise you will love it!

The password for the online full-color edition is “*acla1202*”.

BOOK REVIEW: MISSION OF GRAVITY

Hal Clement; Orion Publishing, London, 8.5x5.5 softcover, 203p, ISBN: 978-05750 70943 Review by the Editor, adapted from material supplied from the publisher and other sources.

Hal Clement, pen name for Harry C. Stubbs who went OTGA in 2003, taught the physical sciences to thousands of secondary-school students, and more esoteric kinds of physical science to millions of “hard” science-fiction (“SF”) readers.

Hard SF is called “hard,” because it is about the “hard” or physical sciences; it extrapolates from these in strict conformity to known scientific laws and principles. There is no fudging for fictional purposes: Once the author has established the varied conditions for the world on which he intends to place his story, he must follow it through to the bitter end.

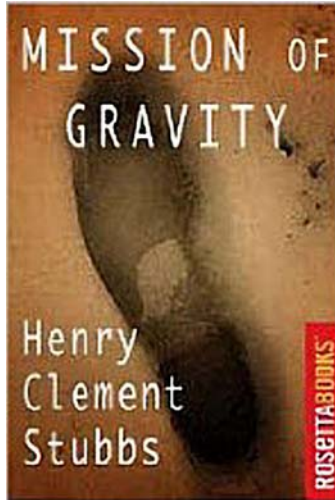
In *Mission of Gravity*, the planet Mesklin is so big that its gravity is several hundred times that of Earth’s at the poles. Its natives evolved at the poles as tiny caterpillar-like creatures, built to withstand the crushing gravity and accustomed never to rearing upright lest they risk a deadly fall, and never getting under anything that might fall, because it disappears from above and appears below mashed or broken. They have a natural, built-in fear of heights. Mesk-

lin, however, turns on its axis so rapidly and has an equatorial bulge so great that near the equator the gravity is only two or three times that on Earth. And the Mesklinites have begun to explore the areas near the equator in their raft-like sailing ships.

The Earth scientists who are exploring Mesklin have dropped a device at the pole that has stopped working. The scientists can scarcely bear the gravity near the equator; if they want to recover the device, and its precious information, they must persuade the Mesklinites to do it for them. That involves great courage and adventure.

Just as humans have been shaped by their physical world, the Mesklinites have been shaped by theirs, and Barlennan and his crew, different in shape though they may be, share something very human with their readers: the desire to explore the unknown, and to understand what in their behavior is conditioned by environment so that they can act as they will and not as they must.

Available as an eBook from Amazon.com, and as a book online and wherever books are sold.



The Race to the Moon – It's not over yet!

Frederick Hareland #1138

Peter Pesavento, veteran space research writer, Soviet space history expert, and Cold War space race archaeologist has been digging into untold numbers of declassified government documents for the last fifteen years to uncover the real truth about the Moon Race, how close they were to beating



Photo: time.com

Soviet Zond 5 spacecraft

the U.S. to the moon, and how much of this our own government knew about at the time. Pesavento's latest findings appear in the January 2012 *Griffith Observer*. *Excavating for America's Secret Knowledge of the Soviet Space Program* takes up a full nineteen pages out of this twenty-three page journal.

In his beginning story, *Zond 5: Stumbling Upon a Previously Undisclosed Secret*, Pesavento mentions Fredrick G. Hareland's (#1138) Feb. 2009 *Sea Classics* article that details the role played by *USS McMorris* during the Soviet *Zond 5* Indian Ocean recovery in September 1968. It is not well known, but the *Zonds* were modified and lightened *Soyuz* capsules, meant to perform a manned translunar flight, a feat that could have enabled the Soviets to claim that they sent men to the moon ahead of the United States.

The Soviets had a lunar launch window a few weeks ahead of *Apollo 8*. They had Cosmonauts inside a *Zond* spacecraft on the launchpad ready to go, however their moon system suffered a technical glitch that prevented their launch. After *Apollo 8*'s success, the Soviets changed tack, con-



Photo: addium

Apollo 8 spacecraft

centrating on building and manning space stations, and denied that they were ever in a Moon Race with the U.S. This denial lasted up until the late 80s when information about their moon plans started to proliferate in newspapers and magazines and is continuing to this day, thanks to the efforts of people like Pesavento.

There is an irony of late concerning the Russians and the moon race. They may very well win the civilian moon race by flying the first two paying customers to the moon and back: our own James Cameron (#1129) most likely being one of them! We can look forward to his future moonflight report at the Club, and make the trip to the moon and back to good old earth vicariously through him!

What's Happening...

Chuck Yeager not the first?

Bob Walters #1047



*P-38 courtesy of
Planes of Fame*

*Bell X-1
courtesy
of USAF*



Article on the P-38 aircraft in *Life Magazine*, August 16, 1943, p. 58, concerning Pierre Odier's stepfather, Cass:

"The latest report on the plane's speed was made last week by the Army in announcing a vertical dive made over England by Lieut. Colonel Cass S. Hough, technical director of the Eighth Air Force Fighter Command. Hough took a P-38 to 43,000 feet and power-dived it almost five miles to 18,000 feet. The Army kept its maximum speed a secret but noted that it was faster than the speed of sound (780 m.p.h.)."

This was, of course, years prior to Chuck Yeager's historic flight in the *Bell X-1* which is credited as being the first to break the sound barrier.

Editor's note: Yeager's flight was the first "controlled level flight" above mach-1.

Cameron does it again!



*James Cameron
courtesy
TheWrap*



*Cirque du Soleil
courtesy
DealCentral*

Avatar director James Cameron (#1129) has come aboard to produce an untitled family film that will combine narrative storytelling with the dazzling visuals of *Cirque du Soleil*.

Andrew Adamson (*Shrek*) is directing the ambitious hybrid project, which is being financed primarily by *Cirque du Soleil* and is already one-third completed.

Cirque du Soleil's various themed shows in Las Vegas are currently being captured in 3D, as the troupe's live performances will serve as the backdrop of a magical world where the film's lead character has been transported. The plan is for the movie to launch a series of family films that incorporate *Cirque du Soleil's* eye-popping performances into their storylines.

Editor's Note: Each month we will feature recent activities of members and friends on this page. Please send your material along with any photos to the Editor by email or snail mail. Designate it for "What's Happening...."

THURSDAY NIGHTS AT THE CLUB

January 5, 2012

Marc Weitz (#1144)

Those Returning from Adventure

Doug Brown #1160 – Returned from 11 days in Ireland where he finally got used to driving on the left side.

Steve Bein #1057 – Went to Arches National Park where he climbed up Delicate Arch and watched a battle of bighorn sheep.

Eric Streit (Guest) – Spent 90 days in the Florida Everglades capturing alligators and pythons for a new TV series called “Gator Boys.”

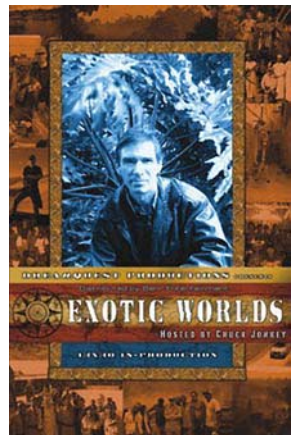
Alan Feldstein #1094 – Traveled to Tanzania, Kenya and Namibia on a business trip to expand his kayak business. There he met up with Laurie Marker, a former speaker at the Club on cheetahs. He ran into some trouble in Tanzania and had to do some walking. He also visited a Masai in Kenya that he'd been supporting.

Exotic Sonic Safari Adventure to Bali

It was past midnight in Bali, and **Chuck Jonkey #1026** found himself in an ancient Hindu temple watching a ceremony that occurred every 100 years. People danced themselves into a trance to the rhythm of the gamelan, stories were told, and masked men toyed with the temple goers. A man wearing the fanged mask of the evil witch Rangda touched one of the worshippers. The worshipper fell into a trance. The oth-

er worshippers carried him off to have the spirit that struck him extracted. This is the life and travels of Chuck Jonkey, the Indiana Jones of music, who searches the world listening to, and recording exotic music. Tonight he spoke about his experiences in Bali.

Chuck got his start collecting instruments when he was nineteen. He went to college to study dentistry but found himself becoming more involved in music.



Chuck's Exotic Worlds TV Poster

Soon he dropped dentistry and made music his career. Chuck teaches; and he mixed the sound on a number of films including *Rocky 4*, *In the Mix*, *Survivor*, *The Doors*, and *J.F.K.* Chuck is unique in his anthropological study of music. His adventure is visiting remote parts of the world discovering exotic music, such as a trip to the jungles of the Amazon to record tribes whose music had never been heard by outsiders. Another time in Java, he recorded men playing “cave music” by hitting stalactites with mallets. In Marakech, he sampled Berber music in the middle of the

desert. He has recorded Mayan music in Guatemala, Javanese music, Korean music, and African drum music. One time, a guitar student of his invited him to India with full expenses paid. Skeptical at first, he accepted and found himself on a musical journey that culminated in a meeting with Ravi Shankar.

Chuck went to Bali to document their music and ritual. He was already familiar with Balinese music from meeting bands of touring musicians who came to the United States. At Cal Arts he was introduced to the gamelan. He found the sound weird and powerful and wanted to learn the instrument himself. The result of his trip to Bali was a documentary called, *Chuck Jonkey's Exotic World*, which he screened to the Club tonight. The video opens with Chuck in front of Tanah Lot, the famous Balinese temple built atop a rock and surrounded by water. Chuck then shows us a Balinese cremation ceremony. In Bali, the priests decide which day is best for cremations. On that day, the body is carried through the streets in an elaborately designed float. Once the ceremonial area is reached, the body is cremated into its original elements.

The video shows the origins of the instruments. Metal for Balinese instruments is forged from bronze. The makers forge the bronze in such a way that it will hold the correct note. After the instrument is created, a priest imbues it with a spirit. Masks and

sacred art for the rituals that accompany the music are prepared in a similar manner. The masks are used to tell stories and prevent diseases and natural disasters.

Next, Chuck traveled out to Lake Batur and took a boat out to the island that was created by the restive Batur Volcano. On the island is a graveyard where bodies are laid out above ground. Because of the climate, the bodies don't putrefy but dry out. The skulls are then separated and arranged decoratively on rocks. He also visited a holy bath where the Balinese cleanse themselves and make offerings to the gods. In a small village, he was able to film for the first time a ceremony involving vocal percussion music. Men use their voices as the beat for the music while a young girl dances out a story and involves members of the village. At one point, Chuck was asked to get up and dance. He visited another ceremony that depicts a woman being kidnapped and then rescued by the monkey general. Chuck attended a late-night ceremony in a small village where he was asked to play along with the villagers.

After screening his documentary, Chuck demonstrated some Balinese instruments. He showed the Club a beautifully engraved gamelan that looked like an elaborate xylophone. Chuck joked that he had ordered one that was not elaborate, but what the Balinese consider elaborate and not

(Minutes continued on page 14)

elaborate is a different story. The sound of the gamelan comes from the bronze keys. The keys occasionally need tuning, but older bronze instruments tend to hold their tuning longer. Chuck played a little for us, demonstrating how each key has to be dampened with his hand before the next note is played. Otherwise, the notes begin to meld into one another. Chuck had mentioned earlier that the instruments are imbued with a resident spirit. The spirit must be respected and given offerings, or it will stir up trouble. Chuck told the story of an instrument that went rogue at the Indonesian Consulate in Los Angeles. The consulate holds gamelan sessions most Sundays. One week, an instrument crashed with a loud bang. A priest was called in to pacify the spirit with an offering. Chuck was told that the consulate doesn't take good care of its instruments, and the spirits get mad.



Mask from Bali

Photo Chuck Jonker

Chuck showed off a mask of Rangda that he brought back from Bali. He admires the Balinese artistry so much, that he brought over a couple of guitars that he had elegantly engraved. Chuck ended his talk by playing a recording he engineered of the Kecak Monkey Dance set to western music.

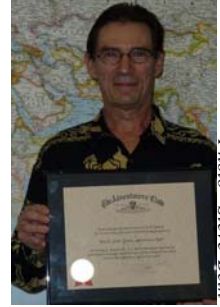


Photo Steve Bein

January 12, 2012

Bob Zeman (#878)

President **Marc Weitz** called the meeting to order at 8 p.m. with the tolling of eight bells.

We greeted **David Dahl** #993 who is now living on a ranch in Wellington, Nevada, about an hour south of Carson City. David went on a week-long backpack in mid-September in the Ruby Mountains. He started at the trailhead at 7,000 feet, and went over Liberty Pass at 10,400 seeing high alpine lakes. At the end of September he hiked the Pacific Crest Trail from Sonora Pass to Ebbets Pass. David is looking into goats weighing up to 250 pounds as pack animals. They will eat anything.

Bob Zeman #878 reported on the results of the annual Christmas Bird Count in Santa Barbara. The SB group totaled about 214 species which should put it in the top five in the

country. Bob saw a nutmeg manikin on his trek, but this is still considered an escapee after 15 years in Santa Barbara and is not a countable bird.

Jay Foonberg #1126 hobbled in as a result of a pinched nerve.

Bernie Harris #1063 dressed in full regalia of the Continental Army for a presentation in Orange County. Unfortunately, he got a flat tire and was eyeballed by the officers, towing company and repair shop personnel.

Alan Feldstein #1094 will be manning his booth on Kayak Adventures at the Long Beach Adventure and Travel Expo in Long Beach this weekend.

Roger Haft #1098 is scheduling his flight on a jet trainer which he bought (the flight, that is) at NOHA.

Members' Showcase

Jeff Holmes #1148 has planned his life so he could travel. By the age of 16 he had visited every state in Mexico and seen many of the archeological sites. He attended college and law school and joined a big law firm. He left it to work for 20th Century Fox in film distribution. After some years there he went traveling again. Now he practices law leaving plenty of time to travel.



Photo Jeff Holmes

Roger Haft #1098 was raised in Cincinnati and developed a strong work ethic. He started collecting time cards and went into the auto industry in Detroit. He was called in by the president to help build a Dodge race car for Lee Petty. Roger later got his crewman's license on a ship, a private airplane license and rode a truck to Herat. He then hitched a ride by helicopter to Shiraz to view the ruins of Persepolis and then got a very nice car ride to Tehran.



Photo Roger Haft

Martin Bloom #1147 was born and raised in New York City. He learned how to run, fight and negotiate and he sailed on Shepherd's Bay in Brooklyn. He went to college in Wyoming and then joined the Navy. He became a bomber pilot on the *USS Kittyhawk*. He had 102 combat missions in an A-6 Intruder during two deployments over Vietnam in 1971 and 1972. He has sailed down the west coast to Acapulco and also down the east coast. But his favorite is sailing in the Caribbean. He is also a scuba diver and witnessed the survival of a diver who ran out of air at 120 feet



Photo Martin Bloom

(Minutes continued on page 16)

(Minutes continued from page 15)

down. Martin also has an MBA in finance from the University of Chicago. He worked for Northwest Industries and started its mergers and acquisitions business.

Mike Gwaltney #1128 was born in Suffolk, Virginia and moved to North Carolina at age 5 and to California at age 13. He



Photo Mike Gwaltney

went to Huntington Park High with **Jim Dorsey**. He entered the Army and qualified for special forces. He went to Germany and joined the HALO team making numerous high-altitude jumps. He was trained in Russian. He left the Army and became a police officer, then a sergeant and later a lieutenant. He went through winter training in Fairbanks when it was 95 degrees and later when it was 80 degrees below. Mike retired after 34 years as a police captain doing patrol and investigations. He has collected 3,200 police hats, including the only surviving hat from the Warsaw ghetto. He enjoyed his trip to Benin, Togo and Burkina Faso with **Pierre Odier** #988, **Jim** and **Alan Feldstein**.

Jim Heaton #1020 was born and raised in Los Angeles except for two years at Fort Gordon. He met Marvin Epstein in a camera shop and came to a presentation at the Club by Bob

Gilliland. He graduated from USC with a degree in architecture. In his twenties he flew down to Malarena Beach in Baja.



Photo Mike Gwaltney

This is where the Japan Current flows down and drops off the material that has been carried from Asia. There were numerous military and cargo artifacts including a torpedo. They landed at Guerrero Negro after flying over Scammons Lagoon, and then blew a tire. The plane was damaged and he had to be flown out by a wealthy industrialist. Jim also took a dory ride down the Snake River. The dory flipped, and he came up under the boat for air and cracked his skull. His life passed before him. He took 12 stitches but resumed the river ride. Jim has also been to the Galapagos, Easter Island, and Iceland.

Marc Weitz #1144 is a big fan of Richard Halliburton. Marc participated in the Semester At Sea Program, a ship-based, study abroad program



Photo Marc Weitz

where classes are held aboard a ship that sails the world. In Egypt, he and some friends bribed the guards to shut off the lights so they could climb the

Great Pyramid. He was unable to get by the guards to swim in the reflecting pool of the Taj Mahal. While in Cambodia, he got a ride into town. He went to a bar and drank with the soldiers. The soldiers soon become drunk and belligerent. Marc decided to leave and eased out of the nightclub.

Bob Silver #728 told of a border crossing at Iquique in northern Chile at age 25. He was in a room and heard the neighbor who sounded like Ernest Hemingway. Finally, Bob had to knock on the door to check it out. It was not Ernest, but the two had some great conversations.



Photo Bob Silver

Bob was stopped in India as he tried to cross the border into Bhutan. The cop asked for his papers. Bob pulled them out and a bear came over during the reading. A bus arrived, Bob grabbed his papers and hopped on the bus, leaving the cop and the bear still wondering.

January 19, 2012

Marc Weitz (#1144)

Photos Grant Graves

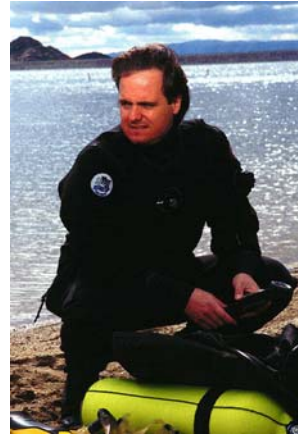
Those Returning from Adventure

Ralph Perez #1150 - made the cover of *JPFreek* magazine for his recent trip jeep trip from Haines, AK, to Bellingham, WA.

Adventure by Luck and by Accident

The first definition of adventure is an exciting or unusual experience.

So began Grant Graves talk about his life of adventure. Grant's philosophy on life is that adventure can be found anywhere and should be



Grant Graves

done just for the sake of adventure. "We have gotten away from 'because it is there.'" He continued by saying that the press is always looking for justification for the risks adventurers take, whether they be for research or science. Grant calls himself a mad generalist and displayed the list of titles he's had in his life. In this talk, Grant examines his life and the choices that led him toward adventure.

Grant Graves is forty-four years old. His father was a scheduling optimizer who hated MBA's and correctly predicted that they'd someday take down the financial system. Grant grew up in Malibu around the Sunset Mesa area. He immediately fell in love with the sea. At age six, he was hitchhiking to the beach, sneaking through holes in the fence, and surfing six-foot

(Minutes continued on page 18)

waves. The sun turned his hair bright blonde and fried his precancerous nose repeatedly, much to the chagrin of his current dermatologist. His heroes were the men on Sunday night TV: Jacques Cousteau and Marlin Perkins. Grant got himself a mask, snorkel, and pole spear. He speared his own fish that he brought home to his grateful family. Leveraging his ability to bring home free fish, he told his family that if they bought him a spear gun that he could bring home even bigger fish. His father agreed. It wasn't until age twenty-five that Grant ever bought fresh fish from the market.

Watching Cousteau, the undersea scuba world seemed like a fantasy until he met a real-life scuba diver in Malibu. Grant trained with zeal and became a dive instructor. A boat called the *Sandy Bay* gave him a job that paid him \$40 a day to clean and scrub it, but the best part was that he got free trips out to dive Anacapa Island (now a National Park). Kelp and the wildlife surrounding it are what attracted Grant to the undersea world. Kelp grows at two to three feet a day and produces ingredients for many of the products we use every day. Grant and his friends wanted to dive the Matterhorn, an underwater mountain. He misinterpreted the navy dive tables and wonders to this day how he didn't get bent. But the sea wasn't the only adventure for Grant early on. He ski raced in both

high school and college. In Mammoth, he and his friend would often go off trail to see what was there. Grant marvels at how he survived taking these risks, but he saw some amazing things.



Grant climbing Desert Dome in Omaha

School was never the thing for Grant. He found studying too abstract and preferred the sea; the sea was straightforward and played no games. He was diagnosed with dyslexia in his last year of college. By then he had learned to adapt and graduated from Long Beach State with a degree in marine biology. Grant was still taking risks. He began using a line to explore underwater caves without at first realizing that this was cave diving. Grant got his captain's license and cave certification and took to underwater cave exploration with fervor. He became involved in the Nohoch Nah Chich Project. Nohoch Nah Chich is a system of underwater caves located in a remote area of Mexico. He and the team he was working with had to cart in their

equipment by horse. The underwater caves were once dry and used by the Mayans. Remnants of their charcoal



Grant & his diving team

pits can be found 150 feet deep. The beautiful caves feature stalactites and stalagmites bleached white by a fire before the system was flooded. The divers' mission was to explore and map the cave system. They would often have to swim a mile in the extensive cave system before they could begin exploring. Like a trail of bread crumbs, they used lines to find



Grant underwater

their way back to the entrance. The hours-long dives required multiple canisters of air until the invention of rebreather technology. Grant is a big

proponent of rebreathers, which take the diver's exhaust, scrub it of CO₂, and add more oxygen as necessary. This technology allows the divers to remain submerged for hours. Another problem of these long divers was the battery life of their equipment and especially lights. With LED technology, battery life has become a non-



Reef diving

factor. The divers at first hazed Grant, as they do to all newcomers, but soon he became part of this team of quirky explorers who taught their Mexican helpers English curse words and named their discoveries after Star Trek and Star Wars locales. Grant later worked on a similar project in the Sistema Camilo caves. Unfortunately, sewage from landfills is seeping into both cave systems creating rancid conditions.

Grant later got involved in the *USS Monitor* Project. The *Monitor* was the first ironclad warship commissioned by the U.S. Navy. The *Monitor* squared off against the *CSS Virginia* in a major naval battle of the Civil War. The ship was later swamped by waves off North Carolina and sunk. Grant par-

(Minutes continued on page 20)

(Minutes continued from page 19)



Photo US Navy

USS Monitor wreck

participated in a project to explore and recover the wreck using saturation diving, which involves living underwater for days at a time. The most common artifact they found were bottles of hair tonic. No alcohol was allowed on the ship, but the crew brought on plenty of the 80-proof hair tonic for their consumption.

Today, Grant spreads his time



Grant hanging on a line

among his many adventurous pursuits. He is a sports photographer, teaches skiing, and is a freediving judge. Freediving is an

underwater sport whose athletes compete in different events designed to test how long they can hold their breath. These athletes can hold their breath without moving for twelve minutes, swim down to 400 feet un-

aided, or down to 700 feet with a weighted sled. Grant has been voted one of the best judges in the sport, an area of pride for him, but this job also gives Grant the best seat in the house for his sports photography. Grant showed us a portion of the documentary *Sink Faze* about the sport.

Grant ended the talk by telling the story of how he was in Japan shooting a documentary when they decided to stop by the side of the road and discovered a samurai sword maker whose family had been in that location making swords for 700 years. Grant reemphasized that you can find adventure everywhere, as long as you're looking.



Photo Ingersoll

Dresden, Zwinger-Museum. 16th or 17th century Samurai swords: The sabre with the white handle is a tachi, and the one with the dark one is a katana

Forthcoming Programs

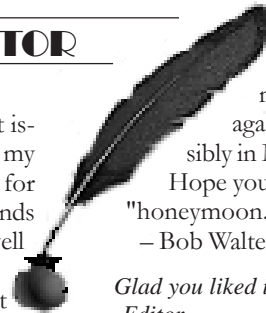
- January 26, 2012 – Eric Streit – Snakemen of Appalachia
February 2, 2012 – Knut Oxnavad – Large beasts of the Oceans
February 9, 2012 – **LADIES NIGHT** – Gary Ziegler – Extreme Archaeology and Exploration in the Andes
February 16, 2012 – Glen Gordinier PhD – Cold Water Surfing East
February 23, 2012 – Jim Dorsey – Guests of the Maasai
March 1, 2012 – Members Showcase
March 8, 2012 – Nissen Davis – Morale Entertainment Foundation Visits to our Servicemen
March 15, 2012 – Dr. Phil McGillivray – Going to Extremes: Exploring The Oceans' Polar Regions
March 22, 2012 – **LADIES NIGHT** – David Finnern – Sunken Mysteries of Idaho: Wrecked Steamships, Sunken Trains and Indian Canoes
March 29, 2012 – Georgia Durante – Stunt Lady: The Company She Keeps
April 5, 2012 – Harry Chittick – Modern Piracy
April 12, 2012 – [OPEN]
April 19, 2012 – Emory Kristoff – Deep Thoughts
April 26, 2012 – **LADIES NIGHT** – Annie Jacobsen – Area 51

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:

Just returned to SoCal and found latest issue of Club News. Great job of putting my submission into publication. I did look for photos, but only had a couple showing friends and nothing related to text. But you did well with the inserts.

Almost made it to Lewiston but last



minute weather worked against it. Will try again, possibly in March.

Hope you and Jill are enjoying your "honeymoon."

– Bob Walters #1047

Glad you liked it. Honeymoon...what's that?
– Editor

Notes



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