

EXPEDITION NEWS

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EXPEDITION NEWS, founded in 1994, is the monthly review of significant expeditions, research projects and newsworthy adventures. It is distributed online to media representatives, corporate sponsors, educators, research librarians, explorers, environmentalists, and outdoor enthusiasts. This forum on exploration covers projects that stimulate, motivate and educate.

EXPLORERS MAKE A BEELINE IN BRITAIN

Next month a team of four will attempt to become the first people to complete a straight-line journey from one end of Britain to the other, something never before attempted. The route will travel through some of the most extreme coastal, mountain and urban environments that the U.K. has to offer.

The journey will be completed by sea kayaking, hand bike/road bike and a section of mountaineering over the Cairngorms plateau, one of the most exposed mountain ranges in the U.K.

In addition to kayak coach Adam Harmer, the team consists of a serving RAF aircrew member, a serving army captain, a Team GB Paralympian, and Tori James, 25, who became the youngest British woman and reportedly the first Welsh woman to climb to the summit of Mount Everest.

The team is supported by The Endeavour Fund and will be raising funds for BLESMA, the limbless veterans charity.

Speaking before departure of the challenge, Harmer said, "If we are successful, the team will have undertaken one of the biggest crossings available in British waters. We will have raised the bar and also broken records in the process."

He reports that the trip will be filmed and documented so that they can share the highs and lows of long offshore remote expeditions. "I also plan to use the data collected to predict in detail the effects of wind, tide and the use that sails have on tandem sea kayaks."

For more information: <http://beelinebritain.com/>

EXPEDITION NOTES

Explorers Club 2014 Annual Dinner Round-Up

It was the biggest weekend of the year for the 3,160-member Explorers Club and we were there Mar. 15-16 to report about it right down to the smallest Tasmanian honey-glazed skewered goat penis.

The theme this year was how 21st century exploration is fueled by technology. Said Club president Alan Nichols, recently re-appointed by the Board, “If we embrace rather than resist the future, The Explorers Club will continue as the center of world explorers ... we’ll become the center of world exploration – changing the paradigm of exploration from west centered to world centered ...”

He later predicted the Club would have one million true explorer members by the end of the 21st century. (If so, to paraphrase *Jaws*, they’re gonna need a bigger HQ).

- **Notable Comments**

Emcee **Brian Greene**, American theoretical physicist and string theorist, said his first expedition was at age 10 when he traveled on the Staten Island Ferry. “I started with lunch inside me and finished with lunch not inside me.” Later he said, “We live in a world wracked by strife. The value of exploration is that it binds us together – allows us to imagine and accomplish the possible.”

Renowned physicist **Stephen Hawking**, in a taped address aided by a voice synthesizer, said, “Why go into space? Because it’s all around us. Otherwise it would be like being stuck on a desert island, not trying to escape ... If the human race is to continue for another million years, we have to spread out into space. Life on earth is fragile. ... If there is an asteroid on a collision course with Earth, not even Bruce Willis could save us.”

Astronaut **Franklin Chang-Diaz** is working on a new type of rocket called the Variable Specific Impulse Magnetoplasma Rocket (VASIMR). “I think the first person to walk on Mars is already alive somewhere. Hopefully that person is already on my team.”

Astronaut **Buzz Aldrin** commended Amazon chief Jeff Bezos for funding the expedition that recovered F-1 engines that propelled Apollo 11 to the moon in 1969, as well as locating other Apollo Saturn V rockets. “These were the engines that lifted a nation,” he said. “The most powerful machine ever created by mankind.” Later he revealed fuel consumption on the Saturn V was a mere seven inches to the gallon.

Visionary innovator **Elon Musk** of SpaceX and Tesla Motors said, “We need big rockets and they need to be reusable. ... Aircraft like 747s aren’t thrown away after each flight

and neither should rockets.” He predicts in the future people will be willing to sell their possessions on Earth and someday move to Mars at a cost he estimates will be as low as \$500,000.

Later in the evening, one of the 1,000 guests, **Ian Fichtenbaum**, a space finance professional, tells *EN* he will pass on taking one of Musk’s flights. “I like Earth. It’s my favorite planet. It has the best beaches.”

- **Want Some Antennae with That?**

Speaking of goat penis, there was a lot more animal sex organs this year during the cocktail hour at the Waldorf Astoria, prompting Thrillist.com’s Julie Cereck to write, “Enter NYC’s Explorers Club – the 110-yr.-old organization whose members have been to the North and South Poles, the moon, and some of the deepest points in the ocean, and apparently eat goat penis the whole damn time, which is why the game-filled cocktail hour preceding the dinner proper is considered by many to be the gastronomic highlight of their explorer-y lives.”

According to Gene Rurka, the Exotics chairman of the dinner, 70 items were served including four Explorer cocktails (goat and calf eyeballs containing olives and onions), two of the rarest coffees in the world, 11 varieties of mushrooms with international sauces, two invasive fish species – lion fish and snakehead fish – and numerous fruit and plant varieties. Rurka also says there were three types of jellyfish served, of which one was prepared into a soup.

“Our selection this year included tarantulas, scorpions, cockroaches, crickets, mealworms, earthworms, maggots, and roasted ants,” he tells *EN*.

Want to know what you missed? How did the bull and goat penises taste? (Bleh!) Log onto Cereck’s hilarious story here:

<http://www.thrillist.com/eat/new-york/scorpion-appetizers-alligator-meat-goat-penis-and-more-at-the-110th-explorers-club-annual-dinner-thrillist-new-york>

- ***Kon-Tiki* Flag Goes on Another Trip**

The Norway chapter made a last-minute search for an airline sponsor to help pay for the oversized frame containing Thor Heyerdahl’s Explorers Club Flag no. 123 that flew on the *Kon-Tiki* in the late 1940’s. It was on loan and needed transport to Oslo’s *Kon-Tiki* Museum. They eventually had to take it out of the frame and carry it on board, according to chapter chair Synnøve Marie Kvam Stromsvag, the museum’s guest services manager.

This is the first time since 1947 that the flag is being reunited with the raft. No. 123, which can be seen in the *Kon-Tiki* book that many of us read in our teens, is on loan until August 7.

- **Explorers Club Tells Diageo to Take a Walk**

The Explorers Club is suing the parent company of Johnnie Walker for using its name on a new whiskey brand. Diageo's line of Explorers Club whiskies was launched in duty-free shops in late 2012. According to the *New York Post*, the 120-year-old New York-based Club says it owns the trademark to the name.

The Club sent a cease-and-desist letter to the company last spring. The Manhattan suit filed last month says the font on the Explorers Club whiskey label is "confusingly similar" to the one used by the historic organization. It wants Diageo to stop selling the brand or pay for licensing fees.

Read the *Post* story here: <http://bit.ly/1d7rBsK>

- **Missed the ECAD Opening Video?**

If you missed the dinner's 2-min. opening video, produced and edited by Les Guthman, you can see it here:

<http://vimeo.com/88250314>

WINGS WorldQuest Announces 2014 Women of Discovery Awards

The founding director of WINGS WorldQuest, Milbry Polk, announced this month the recipients of the 2014 Women of Discovery award, bestowed each year to women who have made extraordinary discoveries in the farthest reaches of the world.

WINGS celebrates and supports women explorers by promoting scientific exploration, education and conservation. It inspires people to explore the world around them. It has bestowed more than \$300,000 to WINGS Fellows in support of fieldwork.

Each year WINGS WorldQuest recognizes women who have made great strides in the field of exploration. All awardees become lifetime Fellows of WINGS WorldQuest.

And the winners are:

Earth Award – Daphne Soares, Brazilian Explorer, Neuroecologist

Courage Award – Felicity Aston, British Explorer, Physicist and Meteorologist

Humanity Award – Arita Baaijens, Dutch Explorer, Biologist, Author, Photographer

Lifetime Award – Helen Thayer, New Zealand Explorer, Writer, Educator

Learn more about the awardees here: www.wingsworldquest.org

Astronauts Clean Their Attics

When a flag carried by Buzz Aldrin on Apollo 11 has an estimated auction price of upwards of \$30,000, a motion picture ring sight used on Apollo 15 is expected to net \$20,000 to \$30,000, and an Apollo 11 lunar surface checklist could net \$45,000, you know something big is about to happen on Madison Avenue.

Bonhams Space History sale in New York on April 8 will feature nearly 300 artifacts priced sky-high, all related to decades of international space exploration. The auction includes genuine spacesuits, critical flight items from the famed Apollo 11 mission, lunar-flown American flags, rare photographs and astronauts' personal effects.

Two top lots in the sale are from Apollo 11: an emblem flown with the craft into lunar orbit, and signed by the most famous space crew in history – Neil Armstrong, Michael Collins, and Buzz Aldrin – is estimated at \$40,000 to \$60,000. Also up for bid: a photo of Buzz Aldrin with Neil Armstrong (\$800 to \$1,200), his lunar trajectory notes (\$800 to \$1,000), a broken cassette earphone from Apollo 15 (\$2,000 to \$3,000), and a photo of earthrise signed by 12 moonwalkers (\$12,000 to \$18,000).

You can download the Bonhams catalog here: www.bonhams.com/auctions/21425

Texas Governor Joins MIA Expedition

Texas Gov. Rick Perry will join the BentProp Project in the Republic of Palau, where he will help search for American servicemen who went missing in action (MIA) during air battles over the island nation during World War II.

The governor and first lady will travel to Koror, Palau, from April 5 to 17. “Somewhere in the waters of Palau, or deep within its marshy jungles, lie the answers some families have been waiting generations to hear,” Perry said.

“The BentProp Project has made a mission of finding those answers, and I’m honored to lend a hand to the 2014 expedition, both in the field, and in spreading the word about this exceptional program.”

As part of the expedition, Perry will assist in searching for American aircraft shot down by occupying Japanese forces during combat and air operations over the islands between 1944 and 1945.

The 2014 expedition team is also being joined by teams from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of Delaware, and the Advanced Underwater Robotics program at Stockbridge High School in Stockbridge, Mich.

The BentProp Project has indexed the crash sites of more than two dozen American military aircraft, and is searching for approximately 80 MIAs in the Republic of Palau. As a result of its search expeditions, the BentProp Project has helped locate and recover the remains of eight American MIAs in Palau.

Read the entire story here:

http://www.yourhoustonnews.com/tomball/news/gov-rick-perry-joining-bentprop-project-to-search-for-fallen/article_6d279134-bb3c-11e3-8a36-0019bb2963f4.html

To learn more about the BentProp Project, visit: www.bentprop.org.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“The Cosmos extends, for all practical purposes, forever. After a brief sedentary hiatus, we are resuming our ancient nomadic way of life. Our remote descendants, safely arrayed on many worlds throughout the Solar System and beyond, will be unified by their common heritage, by their regard for their home planet, and by the knowledge that, whatever other life may be, the only humans in all the Universe come from Earth.

“They will gaze up and strain to find the blue dot in their skies. They will love it no less for its obscurity and fragility. They will marvel at how vulnerable the repository of all our potential once was, how perilous our infancy, how humble our beginnings, how many rivers we had to cross before we found our way.”

– Carl Sagan, *Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space* (Ballantine Books, 1997)

Editor’s note: We became a huge fan of Sagan about 20 years ago when we shared a New York City taxi with him after an Explorers Club function. Despite what he could tell us about the secrets of the heavens, we were most interested in his “billions and billions” catchphrase.

With a slightly bemused expression, Dr. Sagan told us he never actually said it; it was originally a Johnny Carson bit that over the years was accredited to Sagan himself.

MEDIA MATTERS

Scott Photos Saved From Auction

Negatives taken by Captain Robert F. Scott on his ill-fated polar expedition have been saved after a major fundraising campaign. The Polar Museum at the Scott Polar Research Institute (SPRI) in Cambridge, England, had to raise £275,000 (\$455,810) by the end of April to avoid the prospect of the 113 negatives being sold at auction, probably to a foreign bidder, according to the story by Ben Kendall writing in the *Western Morning News* (Apr. 2).

The negatives are described as an “extraordinary visual record” of Plymouth-born Scott’s famous 1912 Terra Nova Expedition in which he and his four companions died on their return from being beaten to the South Pole by Norwegian Roald Amundsen.

The negatives had been in a private collection and only emerged in 2012, having been thought lost.

The images are fascinating and can be seen here:

<http://www.westernmorningnews.co.uk/Extraordinary-catalogue-Scott-s-polar-expedition/story-20898627-detail/story.html#ixzz2xygM21Hm>

Bidding on Adventure

British armchair adventurer Franklin Brooke-Hitching, 72, is putting his 1,400-book private library up for sale in London through fall 2015. Sotheby's auction house is valuing the collection at \$10 million, for which Brooke-Hitching paid around \$2.5 million. According to the *Wall Street Journal* (Mar. 21), it includes a catalog of tree-bark cloth known as tapa that Captain James Cook collected in the Pacific, and lithographs and etchings from Shackleton's Antarctic expedition – its spine is made of leather horse harnesses and the binding comes from the wooden boxes of food provisions.

For more information: www.sothebys.com

Apollo “Lunatics” Pulled Pranks

It seems Apollo 12 astronaut Allan Bean's spiral-bound “cheat sheet” of instructions for moonwalkers, worn on his left wrist, was hacked back in the late 1960s. His backup crew impishly inserted hand-drawn cartoons and pictures from *Playboy*.

The *Wall Street Journal* (Mar. 15-16) ponders, “Posterity may wonder why, after years of effort and even loss of life, man's achievements while actually on the moon were seemingly modest – collecting rocks, going for a drive, hitting golf balls. ... as if Columbus had crossed to the New World and spent a day simply gathering shells at the beach.”

Exploring Predigitally

Benjamin Clymer, the founder of the watch website Hodinkee, prefers old-style mechanical watches. In a *New York Times* interview (Mar. 30) he describes watches that assisted in changing history. “When Apollo 13 failed, the Omega Speedmaster was integral to its safe return to Earth. At the time of Edmund Hillary's ascent to Everest and when they went down to the Mariana Trench, a mechanical watch is all they had,” he says.

“These were tools critical to the survival of any explorer and any scientist on an expedition.”

Read the interview by Jake Cigainero here:

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/27/fashion/hodinkee-watch-cheerleader.html?_r=0

A World of Vision

Stamford (CT) Magazine devoted a feature story in March/April to the 2013 Dooley Intermed “Gift of Sight” Expedition to Nepal, covered previously in *EN*. In it, expedition leader Scott Hamilton tells writer C.J. Hughes, “I never set out to be a humanitarian. But when you go to these places and you see a need that’s enormous, and you know that you can do something about it – because if you don’t do it, then nobody will do it – then, a light comes on.”

A PDF of the story can be downloaded here:

<http://dooleyintermed.org/images/uploads/about/STM.MAG-EYE116.pdf>

50 Ways to be a Daredevil Includes Everest Skydive

Skydiving Everest is right up there on CNN’s list of 50 daredevil activities. Surprisingly, rather pedestrian activities such as riding roller coasters, swimming in the Dead Sea, and a 30-min. trip on the London Eye are ranked as well. Go figure. See the story here:

<http://www.cnn.com/2014/03/16/travel/thrilling-experiences/>

The Travel Channel Green-Lights *Expedition Unknown*

Watch *The Travel Channel* for the adventures of Josh Gates as he investigates iconic mysteries across the globe. Gates begins by interviewing key eyewitnesses and uncovering recent developments in the story, then springboards into fully immersive exploration. This authentic, roughshod adventure leads Gates closer to the truth behind these unanswered global enigmas, such as the disappearance of Amelia Earhart’s plane. *Expedition Unknown* is greenlit for six one-hour episodes produced by Ping Pong Productions.

CLIMBING FOR DOLLARS

North Face Grants Encourage More Youth to Explore Outdoors

The North Face announced this month the opening of the 2014 Explore Fund grant-giving program, which will provide \$250,000 in grants to non-profit organizations committed to inspiring the next generation of youth with a passion and stewardship for the outdoors.

During the 2014 Explore Fund giving cycle, grants will be awarded to organizations with activities in one of three areas: Creating more connections of youth to nature and providing an inspiration to explore, increasing access to close to home, front and backcountry recreation opportunities, or engaging a new and diverse audience with the outdoors.

Since the Explore Fund launched in 2010, The North Face has donated more than \$1 million worldwide to organizations helping youth get outdoors. In total, 80,000 youth in the U.S. alone have been impacted by this program as part of The North Face brand's mission to inspire a global movement of outdoor exploration.

Applications for 2014 Explore Fund grants are now being accepted online through May 1.

For more information: www.explorefund.org.

BUZZ WORDS

Evacuation Fraud

The term used to describe helicopter evacuation that is ordered for altitude sickness. Source: Dan Richards, CEO and founder of private security firm Global Rescue, quoted in a Boston.com story by Cindy Atoji Keene.

He continues, "Climbing season in Himalaya starts at the end of this month, and we conduct about a dozen operations there every year. Evacuation in Himalaya is handled on a private basis, and by the way, one aspect that we're dealing with now is the high instance of evacuation fraud. Believe it or not, some trek operators are taking climbers up too fast without enough time to acclimate, which can cause severe altitude sickness. Then helicopter transport takes place and the trekking company and others are able to tap into insurance premiums. We're actively involved with combating these fraudulent actions."

Read the entire story here:

http://www.boston.com/jobs/news/jobdoc/2014/03/private_security_team_comes_to.html

Competitive Travel

The art of extreme travel – attempting to visit the most countries, territories, autonomous regions, enclaves, geographically separated island groups, and major states and provinces in the world. Source: Charles Veley, 48, who owns nine passports. He was profiled in *New York Times Travel* (Mar. 23).

IN PASSING

Journalist Matthew Power (1974-2014)

Condolences to the family of Matthew Power, a freelancer on assignment for *Men's Journal* in Uganda – "a classic MJ story" is how he pitched it. He was accompanying a British explorer, named Levison Wood, while he attempted to walk the length of the Nile. The Brooklyn journalist was only dropping in and walking with him for a week. On Mar. 10, Power fell ill, lost consciousness, and died a few hours later. His travel companions believe the cause of death was heatstroke. He was 39. A prolific writer, his body of work can be seen here:

http://matthewpower.net/Matthew_Power/Home.html

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