

# The Adventurers' Club News<sup>®</sup>

Volume 57

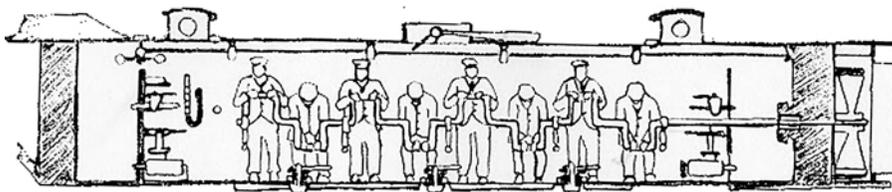
December 2013

Number 12

## H.L. HUNLEY



Resting in stabilized slings in a fresh-water tank at the Warren Lasch Conservation Center following her successful raising on August 8, 2000



The H.L. Hunley crew at their propulsion stations

92<sup>nd</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR!  
See page 2...  
"H.L. Hunley"



# The Adventurers' Club News

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**FRONT COVER: H.L. HUNLEY RESTING IN PADDED SLINGS IN FRESH WATER  
AT THE WARREN LASCH CONSERVATION CENTER.**

**PHOTOS BY NAVALHISTORY.ORG & HISTORY.NAVY.MIL**

<b>DIRECTORY</b> .....	<b>INSIDE FRONT COVER</b>
<b>PRESIDENT'S PAGE</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>RAISING THE H.L. HUNLEY</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>GUEST ESSAY – RICHARD VENOLA</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>THRAWN RICKLE</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>WHAT'S HAPPENING...</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>WALT EHLERS – MOH STAMP RECOGNITION</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>THURSDAY NIGHTS AT THE CLUB</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>FORTHCOMING PROGRAMS</b> .....	<b>21</b>

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## THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Rick Flores (#1120)- President



I want to wish a Happy Holidays to the members and friends of the Adventurers' Club. I can't believe that it is al-

ready December! I am finishing what for me was the busiest year of my life; the time seemed to go by at warp speed.

The incoming Board of Directors faces a number of challenges in the next year. The greatest challenge is the financial situation of the Club. We have lost money the last two years and we cannot continue to do so long term as an organization. During one of our Board meetings this year, Bob Silver challenged each Board member to bring to the Club one qualified candidate for membership during the course of the year. This challenge cuts to the core of the financial problems that we are experiencing. Like many other clubs countrywide, we need to keep our membership growing to remain healthy. So I would like to extend Mr. Silver's challenge to the rest of the Club, if we could all just bring one qualified candidate for membership to the Club next year many of

our problems would be solved.

We also need more members to volunteer for the many tasks that it takes to run a club like ours. We need more people like Doug Brown and Bob Zeman who record the meetings for the *News*, Shane Berry and Stewart Deitz who buy the materials for and make the certificates we give our speakers, Bernie Harris who records the contact information of every new face that visits the Club, Steve Lawson and Larry Schutte who always help out with the audio-visual presentations, and Pierre Odier and Mike Gwaltney who manage our library and exhibits. My thanks to all these members for their contributions to our great organization. Please get involved next year and volunteer!

It has been a great honor and a lot of fun being your president this year. The year was made much easier by the mammoth contributions of five members. Thank you Ralph Perez, Martin Bloom, Roger Haft, and Robert Willisroft for your time, talents, and friendship. I wish to extend a very special thank you to Pierre Odier for sharing his invaluable knowledge of the club's history and traditions with me during our many lunch meetings this year and for being a good friend.

# Raising the H.L. Hunley

Robert G. Williscroft (#1116)

*Editor's note: This article has been compiled from information supplied by several sources including Friends of the Hunley and Oceaneering, with a special thanks to Jon Sears, Oceaneering Diving Superintendent*

On February 17, 1864, under the cover of darkness, a tiny Confederate submarine, *H.L. Hunley*, departed Sullivan Island at the north end of Charleston Harbor. The mission of



Photo aralax.com

*Model of the Hunley as she put to sea on February 17, 1864*

her Skipper, Lt. George Dixon, and his seven crew, was to sink the *USS Housatonic*, standing blockade about four



Photo history.navy.mil

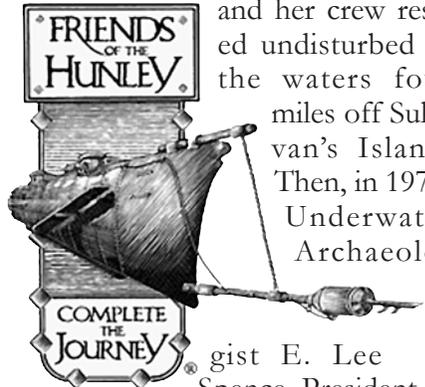
*USS Housatonic from a drawing by R.G. Skerrett*

miles off the coast. This first-ever combat submarine played a minor role in the war between the states, but her fatal mission forever marked her place in history.

That night, the *Hunley* rammed her

spar torpedo into the hull of the *Housatonic*. Witnesses from the *Housatonic* reported that *Hunley's* crew surfaced and signaled with a blue light. The commander of Battery Marshall back on Sullivan's Island reported receiving a mission-accomplished signal, later reported to be two blue lights; but minutes after her historic achievement, the *Hunley* and her eight crew vanished into the sea without a trace.

For more than a century, the *Hunley* and her crew rested undisturbed in the waters four miles off Sullivan's Island. Then, in 1970, Underwater Archaeolo-



gist E. Lee Spence, President of

Sea Research Society, reported that he had discovered the remains of the *Hunley* about one hundred yards off the *Housatonic* in twenty-seven feet of water. In 1976, this location was included on the *National Register of Historical Places*.

That same year, the South Carolina legislature formed the Hunley Commission, charging it with the task of acquiring, recovering, and preserving the *Hunley*, and setting in motion what would ultimately become the salvage of this historic submarine.

The Hunley Commission formed Friends of the Hunley, with attorney and history buff Samuel W. Howell IV as chair, and novelist Clive Cussler among others on the board.

With Spence's research notes and \$130,000 of Cussler's personal funds, the Friends of the Hunley pinpointed the exact location of the *Hunley*. In



Photo Friends of the Hunley

Visibility of a foot or less on the bottom

April, 1995, Underwater Archaeologist and diver Ralph Wilbanks first laid hands on the *Hunley*. The little sub was buried under about eight feet of silt, which appears to have preserved her all these years.

The *Hunley* displaced fourteen tons and was at a forty-five degree angle on her starboard side. She would have to be brought to the surface cradled in exactly the same way as she lay on the bottom. Any bending, twisting, or other stress would most likely have caused her to disintegrate.



Photo Oceanering

Truss and suction piles

Oceanering designed a special spar that they lowered onto two large suction piles they had earlier embedded in the sea bottom at each end of the *Hunley*. Starting at the bow, divers carefully pushed slings under the *Hunley*, and then inflated special



Photo Oceanering

*Hunley out of the water*

foam-filled cushions that cradled the *Hunley* firmly and securely. The entire operation was monitored by computer-controlled sensors to ensure that no damage would befall the fragile *Hunley*.



Photo Oceanering

*Hunley stern with propeller*

On August 8, 2000, at 8:37 in the morning, *H.L. Hunley* once again saw the light of day as the massive Oceanering crane lifted the submarine, cradled

(*Hunley continued on page 4*)

## Raising the H.L. Hunley

(Hunley continued from page 3)

dled in its steel and foam cocoon, to the deck of the ocean-going barge *Karlissa B.*



Photo navyhistory.org

*Hunley in sling in fresh water*

*lissa B.* Once on the deck, saltwater sprinklers kept the submarine surface wet to prevent any further corrosion. The removal operation finally concluded when the *Hunley* was shipped back to Charleston on the *Karlissa B.*



Photo Seattle PI

*Hunley dry and upright*

and safely secured inside a fresh-water tank in the Warren Lasch Conservation Center, which was specially built for this event at the former Charleston Navy Yard.

For the following ten years, archaeologists and technicians carefully emptied the sub's interior and cataloged every bit and piece they found.



Photo OITS

*The Hunley crew's final resting place*

The eight crew members were given a proper burial with the honors they rightly earned so many years ago. Finally, in June, 2011, the *Hunley* was rotated to its normal upright position.

The *H.L. Hunley* now rests as an historic exhibit at the Warren Lasch Conservation Center, where research and restoration continues. It can be viewed on weekends, and where informative videos take the visitor through the submarine's history and the excavation and recovery process. When the research is finally completed, the exhibit will be made more visitor-friendly, and the *H.L. Hunley* will be put on permanent display.



Photo Friends of Hunley

*The Warren Lash Conservation Center*

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## Guest Essay

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Richard Venola (#1071)

*Editor's note: As many of you know, Rich has been out of touch for the last year or so. Rich asked if he could write an essay for the News. As I am always interested in new material, and since we hadn't heard from Rich in a long time, I was happy to give him this podium.*

It was late 2004, I think. I had invited an old friend, Joe, to the Club. Just as we finished dinner, word arrived that the speaker would not be able to make it.

A discussion in the hall resulted in attendees telling stories off the cuff. My guest had certainly lived a life off the beaten path and had a number of brilliant stories. Joe asked me if he should volunteer.

I had known this man since 1980, and he was quite an important figure in many peoples' lives, having helped folks with education, employment, travel, romance, and marriage. He also embellished his stories, sometimes adding trivial details to make them funnier, or to cast the protagonists into more heroic figures. Anyone who knew Joe listened to him with their BS radar turned on.

"Go for it, Joe," I told him. "Just don't BS, or these guys will know it in a heartbeat." Joe manned the podium and started telling a story about a college pack trip gone bad. At first everything was great, but once the audience was hooked, it was as if Joe couldn't help himself. His tone changed as he added one embellishment after the other.

I felt sick to my stomach as the room cooled perceptibly. A couple fellow adventurers exchanged looks and I knew everyone else could tell Joe was spewing crap. After that evening Joe contacted me repeatedly, hoping to return, and wanting to apply for membership, but I always changed the subject.

Joe had done a lot in my life, but the increasing ease with which he lied was cutting into our long friendship. Shortly after his embarrassing performance at the Club, I ended our friendship for good. I still treasure the many memories of good times, and I miss his family and being a guest in his home, but sadly his lack of integrity soured everything.

One of the best things about our Club is knowing that the fellow adventurer – the one spilling his soup across from you while he talks about finding a leech on his glans after crossing the Irrawaddy – isn't blowing smoke.

I treasure my membership in the Club and the coolest part about presenting at the Club is that members will call you out on a story to check facts. My first presentation was on Afghanistan. A hand went up: "You claim you crossed the Konar River in the fall. What color was the water?" "Light blue." My next was on training with the Foreign Legion in French Guyana and the visit we made to the Isles Des Salutes. Pierre asked, "Were

*(Essay continued on page 6)*

you able to visit Devil's Island?" "No, they said it was off limits." He seemed satisfied – as I lived to apply for membership.

My friends asked me, "What are you getting involved with? This guy called and grilled me about your life for half an hour." Think of it: our Club vetted me more thoroughly than the federal government did when I received a top secret clearance. I'm proud to bring guests to the Club because it's for real. And after the ugly incident with Joe, I'm extremely careful about the men I ask to our hall.

The Club is a place for men of accomplishment. Some of us are clearly crazy as loons, and some are reckless in the extreme. But you can believe the stories, because we worked too hard merely to invent tales of daring-do. And the Club actually researches men's claims when they submit an application. This is a most important part of the Club.

If we drop our standards and allow men of questionable character to become members, we risk becoming a mockery. I value the Club enough not to invite some friends, either because they have lived safe, white-picket-fence lives or because I sometimes question the authenticity of their "best" stories. If a BSer can claim he was a guest among us, it taints us by association. It also hurts us if we invite a man to present, and he goes away with one of our framed endorse-

ments. This he can then use to validate his hogwash to others.

Our nation is now suffering a pandemic of Stolen Valor. Two-point-five-million men served in Vietnam, yet seven-and-a-half-million claimed to be Vietnam vets on the 2010 census. The glorification of elite units is at an all-time high, and many men with normal lives (including honorable military service) seem desperate for some of the honor accorded to our elite fighting men. I know I'm not alone in being hesitant to strike up a conversation with someone wearing a veteran's cap or jacket; not willing to risk that social awkwardness when they answer you with the same tired lies.

"What outfit were you with?" "I was a sniper with Delta Force, two tours." "When?" "I can't talk about it..." We've all had this conversation, usually in a bar or at the airport. We should never have to have it at the Club. Any reading on the issue reveals that the problem is massive, and that the BSers are relentless. They will keep it up no matter what.

If a liar wants to continue telling everyone that he was an officer in a secret SEAL team and that his BUDS class was classified so there's no record of it, fine. But he shouldn't be able to tell that story with one of our honorable and precious certificates framed on the wall behind him.

Membership in our Club represents risk, sacrifice, or pain, whether it's emotional from losing a friend on a

frozen mountain or permanent injuries from that crash landing in Paraguay, or embarrassing personal issues from #345 at the Baby-A-Go-Go in Pataya Beach. There are a lot of darned good men who have lived fine, upstanding lives, but who don't rate

membership in our Club. There are others who haven't been willing to suffer the risk, sacrifice, or pain to join us, but who want the credit for it.

We owe it to ourselves to decide politely whom to invite to our Club and whose membership to solicit.

## THE THRAWN RICKLE

*From the Ancient Scottish: thrawn = stubborn; rickle = loose, dilapidated heap*

Robert G. Williscroft (#1116) – Editor



This editorial is a bit shorter this issue to make room for Rich Venola's essay. I trust you will enjoy his

comments as much as I have.

Club members are characterized as "Gentleman Adventurers," and in a sense this is so. Nevertheless, the polished veneer quickly dissipates when facing a life-threatening situation where pure survival is the only option. I've been there on several occasions as I'm sure have many of you.

I wholeheartedly agree with Rich that the lively discussions in the dining room are one of the highpoints of the Club, because, in Rich's words, "It's for real!" As I have mentioned on several occasions, virtually the only thing I miss about not being in Los Angeles is the Club and my fellow-member friends.

Okay, you guys already know about the heavy-duty cold-weather system that has settled over the Denver area

for seven days now. I am told that this is the longest stretch of single-digit cold weather since 1916. What I find fascinating is that this may be the harbinger of more to come. The best climate science minds are forecasting that by 2020 our planet will be on the downward slope of a "Little Ice Age" that may well last until the end of the century. My own research confirms their predictions. This should be fun to watch, since the entire staff of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) still insists that we are in the midst of human-caused global warming, despite every major indicator pointing in the other direction.

If you want to read about the latest scientific details, you can purchase the Second Edition of my book, *The Chicken Little Agenda*, in the Kindle edition online at Amazon. Or email me, and I will send you an excerpt that covers the pertinent details.

Remember that a full color, high-resolution edition of the *Club News* is available online.

## What's Happening...

### Heidi "Boo" Feldstein...OTGA

Alan Feldstein (#1094)

Heidi "Boo" Feldstein has gone On The Great Adventure. She was eleven-and-a-half-years old or over eighty in dog years.

While not a formal member of the Club she was a regular and loved by many in the Club. Steve Peterman kept a box of biscuits for her behind the bar, and he and Martin Bloom indulged her whenever she asked. She was a favorite of John Goddard and was even invited to his memorial service. Sid Halpern always used to joke that he would offer "\$20.00 cash" if Alan wanted to sell her. And no one at the Club had dinner until Emily personally made Heidi chicken and fed her just outside the kitchen door where she patiently waited.

While not a traveler off the beaten path, for a dog Heidi led a full and adventurous life. Known around Studio City, her photo hangs in the local shoe repair shop and dry cleaners with other known and unknown celebrities. She went to the gym with Alan three days a week, and visited most stores around town. A working girl, she appeared in *Desperate Housewives*, the LA Stage Production of *Annie*, and videos for an arts organization.

Photo Alan Feldstein

Heidi was even celebrated with her own Studio City-wide birthday party sponsored by the Patch where she was a columnist. She was a true herder who policed Club Board members attending meetings at her house by escorting each member to the bathroom and waiting outside to escort them back. Once when put in a pen with three sheep that she had never seen before, she had them pinned in less than two minutes and would not let them move.

Heidi was found by world-renowned pet communicator Sonya Fitzpatrick of *Animal Planet* fame in a storm drain in Houston, Texas. Barely alive, trying to keep puppies that she had given birth to, she was rescued by Sonya and nursed back to health. Alan and Diane then flew to Texas to get her. Heidi's and their lives were forever changed after that. This is the kind of dog Heidi was. She had an incredible spirit and touched everyone – dog and non-dog lover alike.

Heidi will be truly missed, not only by those at the Club, but by everyone she came in contact with.

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...."



Heidi "Boo" Feldstein  
May 1, 2002- October  
17, 2013

## Walt Ehlers recognized on Medal of Honor stamp

*Editor's note: The following article written by Tom Berg appeared in the OC Register on November 5, and is reproduced in its entirety below.*

### Local hero recognized on Medal of Honor stamp

He's been invited to every presidential inauguration since Dwight D. Eisenhower. He has a building named after him and an action figure. He's been given our country's highest military honor.

What else is left?

How about a postage stamp honoring Walter Ehlers, 92, of Buena Park.

On Monday, Nov. 11 – Veterans Day – the U.S. Postal Service will unveil its latest stamp, honoring the 464 Medal of Honor recipients from World War II.

Each stamp displays an image of the Medal of Honor. An accompanying sheet includes the names of all 464 recipients from World War II, and photographic images of the last 12 surviving recipients from World War II – including Ehlers.

“Walt is the epitome of what a hero

is,” said Jack Hammett, 93, a Pearl Harbor survivor and chairman of the Freedom Committee of Orange County. “He is the most respected veteran in Orange County, without reservation.”

Ehlers was a 23-year old staff sergeant in charge of a squad of misfit musicians when he landed on Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944. Somehow, he led his 12 men across the beach that claimed 1,500 American lives. Somehow he led them up an

embankment to breach the German fortifications firing machine guns onto Americans below.

And somehow, over the next few days, Ehlers led his squad through the hedgerows on

and near the coast – as the tip of the spear of the American invasion into Nazi-occupied France.

It was among those famous hedgerows that Ehlers single-handedly took out two German machine gun nests; that he led his misfit musicians in a bayonet charge; and finally, after advancing so far that they became surrounded, that he laid down fire to allow his men to retreat. Ehlers was

*(What's Happening continued on page 10)*



shot, yet crawled back into enemy fire to retrieve a wounded soldier and his squad's Browning Automatic Rifle.

For those actions he received the Medal of Honor.

Yet he won't be attending Monday's ceremony at the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.

"He would love to be there, but he is recuperating," Dorothy Ehlers, his wife of 58 years, said on Monday.

Ehlers broke his left femur in June, 2012. Last March, he broke it again, in five places. In July, he broke it a third time. He remains in the Community Living Center at the VA Long Beach Medical Center.

More than 16 million Americans served in World War II, and 464 earned our nation's highest military award. Nearly half of those died in battle. Only nine are still alive.

Just two are expected to attend Monday's event in Washington, D.C.

"Walt is a true gentleman," said friend and World War II aviator George Grupe, of Truckee. "He's certainly deserving to represent all of the Medal of Honor recipients (including those who have died)."

The Postal Service also will hold an Orange County unveiling at 2 p.m. Monday at the OC Fair and Event Center, 88 Fair Drive, in Costa Mesa. Sheets of the 46-cent "forever" stamps will be available for purchase there. They go on sale at all Post Offices on Tues., Nov. 12.

Though Ehlers can't attend, Dor-

othy says the honor is "exciting for him because he loves this."

"He wants to go on trips again," she said – to Medal of Honor conventions, to D-Day anniversaries, to museums and Veterans Day events. But, for now, he can't. So Orange County's most respected veteran will spend Veterans Day in the hospital.

### MAN OF HONOR

**NAME:** Walt Ehlers

**DOB:** May 7, 1921

**HEROIC ACTS:** During two days (June 9-10, 1944) just after the Allied invasion of Normandy, France, U.S. Army S/Sgt. Ehlers displayed "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty," according to his Medal of Honor citation. Among other things, Ehlers led his men against German machine gunners and others, saving one wounded American soldier even as he was wounded himself. He was awarded the Medal of Honor in December, 1944.

**FAMILY:** He lives in Buena Park with Dorothy, his wife of 58 years. They have three children, Lt. Col. Walt (David) Ehlers Jr., Cathy Metcalf and Tracy Kilpatrick.

**CURRENT STATUS:** He's recuperating from a broken leg and hip at the Veterans Administration Medical Center of Long Beach. The family hopes he'll be home soon.

**Pierre returns Club flag from Papua New Guinea**



Photo Shane Berry

*Pierre's Club flag from his recent trip to Papua New Guinea: Remote Western Sepik River Sandaun Region*

**Rick Flores seeks condors**

Rick Flores (#1120)      Photos Rick Flores

Shane Berry and I spent Saturday looking for Condors in the Sespe Condor Sanctuary in the Los Padres National Forest. We drove to Tar Creek through a half-paved road just north of Fillmore. The trail appears to terminate at the creek, but actually continues on the opposite side. The trail beyond the creek is overgrown and in places blocked by boulder avalanches, but it is passable.

The trail leads to Sespe Creek, five miles away past an outstanding view of the confluence between Tar and Sespe Creeks and a patch of native California bunch grass. There aren't too many places left where this grass grows. The two biggest patches I know are in Point Mugu State Park and the Santa Rosa Ecological Plateau. This patch is smaller, but it is

great to locate areas where the native grasses survive.

Like much of the southern Los Padres, this area is mainly sage brush with very few trees. Lucky for us it was overcast most of the day, although the sun came out as we were leaving the canyon. We saw very few people in the canyon and none at all past Tar Creek. We didn't find any Condors, but otherwise we had a great hike.



*Shane and grand vista*



*Sulfur Mountain vista*



*Tar and Sespe Creek Confluence*



*Sespe Creek*

## THURSDAY NIGHTS AT THE CLUB

**October 31, 2013**

*Martin Bloom (#1147)*

### **The Oratory of Abraham Lincoln: The Gettysburg Address and its Place in History**

On Thursday, October 31, our Halloween evening's speaker explained the story of how the Gettysburg Address came to be, and why it is still now such a significant part of our identity as a country.

Michael Oddenino's dramatic style took us back in time and allowed us to see the fascinating characters and events that came together to enable Abraham Lincoln to deliver one of the most important pieces of oratory ever. His presentation allowed us to hear the Gettysburg Address with new insights. His approach permitted us to step back 150 years and hear the unforgettable story which continues to impact our lives today.

Michael L. Oddenino grew up in Virginia, surrounded by the Revolutionary War and Civil War history. After majoring in history as an undergraduate at Virginia Tech, where he studied Civil War history under Dr. James I. Robertson, Jr., (author of *Stonewall Jackson: The Man, The Soldier, The Legend*), Michael received his J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law. He has been a practicing

lawyer since 1978, while maintaining his affection for history.

It felt as if we were taken on an adventure back in time to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, on November 19, 1863. We saw through his eyes, oratory, and the music of the time the characters and events that led up to one of the most famous speeches in the history of the world, the Gettysburg Address. The ses-

quicentennial of that famous speech is fast approaching and it was a great opportunity to better understand why the Gettysburg Address, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution constitute the essential DNA of the United States of America.

*Four score and seven years ago . . . are any six words better known, of greater*

import, or from a more crucial moment in our nation's history? And now after 150 years the dramatic and surprising story of how Lincoln wrote the Gettysburg Address was fully revealed to us by such a knowledgeable speaker.

Michael Oddenino's remarkable understanding of historical and literary works of the time illuminated a speech, a man, and a moment in history that we thought we knew. We were guided on Lincoln's emotional and intellectual journey to the speaker's platform, revealing that Lincoln himself experienced writing the Gettys-



*Rendition by Wendelin*

burg Address as an eventful process that was filled with the possibility of failure, but which he knew resulted finally in success beyond expectation.

We listen through Michael as Lincoln talked with the cemetery designer about the ideals and aspirations behind the unprecedented cemetery project, we were able to look over Lincoln's shoulder as he rethought and rewrote his speech on the very morning of the ceremony, and we shared his anxiety that he might not live up to the occasion. And then, at last, we stand with Lincoln at Gettysburg, when he created the words and image of an enduring and authentic legend.

Writing the Gettysburg Address resolved the puzzles and problems that shrouded the composition of Lincoln's most admired speech in mystery for fifteen decades. Michael showed when Lincoln first started his speech, revealed the state of the document Lincoln brought to Gettysburg, traced the origin of the false story that Lincoln wrote his speech on the train, identified the manuscript Lincoln held while speaking, and presented a new method for deciding what Lincoln's audience actually heard him say.

Ultimately, Michael showed that the Gettysburg Address was a speech that grew and changed with each step of Lincoln's eventful journey to the podium. His two-minute speech made the battlefield and the cemetery into landmarks of the American imagination, but it was Lincoln's own journey to Gettysburg that made the Gettysburg Address.

Finally, we were treated to a marvelous rendition of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address that is one of the most famous contributions to American history.

## The Gettysburg Address

*Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.*

*Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.*

*But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate – we cannot consecrate – we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us – that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion – that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain – that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.*



Photo Oddenino

Michael Oddenino

(Minutes continued on page 14)

## November 7, 2013

Bob Zeman (#878)      Photos Alan Feldstein

President Rick Flores (#1120) opened the meeting and the bell was rung for Bob Mueller (#1123) who passed away. Bob had served in the Navy in WWII and went to many South Pacific island bases. He was a boating enthusiast and traveled to the Hawaiian Islands, Caribbean, Europe, Fiji Islands, Tahiti, New Zealand, Australia, Vanuatu, and Greek islands. He was a popular piano player at our Christmas party for many years.

Doug Brown (#1160) and Sandra Scherf returned from twelve days in Israel. The theme was “Where Jesus Walked” and they were in Tiberius, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and other places. Doug and Sandra then drove north of Sacramento to meet with an old friend who was a pilot and earned the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Doug is leaving for Chicago for a football game. The grandson of his pastor is a running back for the University of Michigan which faces Northwestern.

Alan Feldstein (#1094) attended the Adventure Travel World summit in Namibia. It was the first ever held in Africa. Alan is on the Board of Trustees of the Cheetah Conservation Project and then went there to visit Dr. Laurie Marker.

Randy Boelsems (#1102) returned from the Fort Lauderdale Boat show. It is huge. More than 1,400 boats were on display and thirty-eight that exceeded 150 feet. He is leaving for Amsterdam for another boat show. This features all of the stuff that is built for boats.

Rick Flores hiked up to Mt. Lowe and stopped at Panorama Point and Inspiration Point. While there, another hiker on the trail had a medical problem and Rick

saw the helicopter land and pick up the injured man.

Doug Brown announced that the Post Office is issuing new stamps in honor of those who were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Doug hopes to get some first-day covers on Monday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, Veterans’ Day. Unfortunately, our member Walter Ehlers (#1119) is still in the Community Living Center recovering from his broken legs.

Doug read a ditty from the late George Wurzbarger (#586) on how the Bushmen of the Kalahari used to hunt both small and large game.

### Dedication

Alan Feldstein announced that the Board of Directors had authorized the dining hall be re-named the John Goddard Dining Hall. Carol Goddard, John’s widow, was there to acknowledge the plaque which read in part “to a remarkable and quality man.”

### Africa Without the Benefit of a Safari

While the benefits of seeing wildlife including the Big 5 are still there, Alan Feldstein gave us a program on other features of this continent. Bird watching is excellent and he showed beautiful photos of a saddle-billed stork, weaver bird, and a king fisher.

Some go to Tanzania to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro. Alan’s trek to the top in 2005 on the Ronggai Route took seven days – five up and two down. The first night Alan heard scratching on his tent at the same time he heard the call of nature. He got out of the tent and yelled to scare away the intruder which turned out to

be a porcupine. The 19,000-foot mountain is always in view.



*Alan atop Uhuru Peak in Tanzania*

His last night before the summit was at Kibo Hut at an elevation of 15,520 feet. He arrived at 2 p.m. hoping to sleep before the final trek to the summit at midnight. The group arose in the dark and made it to Gilman's Point at 5,681 meters at 5:01 a.m. They viewed the sunrise over the glacier and continued on to Uhuru Peak at 5,895 meters. Alan was tired but exhilarated.

After the climb, Alan met a man who was interested in kayaking. The two formed a partnership to kayak Tanzania. On Alan's first kayak on Lake Tanganyika,



*Alan kayaking on Lake Tanzania*

he turned right toward the hippos instead of left. His partner warned him away. Most of the kayaking is on the In-

dian Ocean and Alan had photos of a bay near Tanga near the border with Kenya. At low tide, islands of sand appear briefly.

Scuba diving in Zanzibar is also a treat. The water is warm and the coral is beautiful. There are a number of wrecks in water as shallow as forty-five feet.



*Alan diving in Tanzania*

in in five feet of him. The guide told him not to move but Alan was frozen anyway. In Rwanda it took only forty-

Alan has also viewed the Silverback gorillas. He entered Bwindi Impenetrable Forest in southwest Uganda and found the group after four hours. One large gorilla came with-



Photo National Geographic

*Female Silverback gorilla with her baby*

five minutes before the gorillas were seen. One mother gave Alan a look warning him to stay away from her baby. One of the gorilla guides was a porter for Dian Fossey. Permits to enter the gorilla area

*(Minutes continued on page 16)*

*(Minutes continued from page 15)*

cost \$750 and this money discourages poachers.

Kigali, Rwanda, is kept clean. Plastic bags are banned in Rwanda and the last Saturday of the month is designated as clean-up day. Ironically, the current president of Rwanda is believed to be the man who fired the weapon that shot down the plane carrying the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi eventually causing the holocaust.



Photo CCF

*Dr. Laurie Marker, Executive Director of the Cheetah Conservation Fund, with Chewbaaka*

And finally, Alan's current project is the Cheetah Conservation Fund. It has 50,000 hectares dedicated to cheetah preservation. Cheetahs kill by outrunning and tripping their prey. They can lope along at forty miles per hour and can speed up to seventy miles per hour. They do not kill by attacking and jumping.

They attack livestock which causes the owners to hunt and kill the cats. But Anatolian sheep dogs can be trained to bark at the cheetahs to scare them away.

Alan showed a true appreciation for the people and continent of Africa.



## November 21, 2013

Bob Zeman (#878)

Photos Marc Weitz

Tonight Marc Weitz (#1144) brought enough guests to start his own club.

President Rick Flores (#1120) and bell ringer Stewart Deats (#1168) welcomed a Ladies' Night crowd. The bell was rung for Lee Talbert (#879) who went on the Great Adventure at the age of 100. Lee had hiked and backpacked in Arizona and California, was a production foreman on an offshore oilrig in Indonesia and collected Indonesian and Batik art.

Bernie (#1063) and Devera Harris returned from a twenty-eight-day cruise to Hawaii, Samoa, American Samoa and the islands of Tahiti. The two are leaving for Galveston, Texas, for another cruise to Key West and the Bahamas along with Bill and Pat Murrell.

A commercial was filmed at the home of Roger Haft (#1098).

Brian Cruickshank (#1158) returned from Tahiti where he viewed the site where the Bounty was moored.

Doug Brown (#1160) told of the issuance of the new Medal of Honor stamps. The first-day cover included the names of twelve recipients from World War II. Of those only eight are still alive including Walter Ehlers (#1119). Walter is in building 133 off of Bellflower Blvd.

Bill Burke (#1157) said that Sid Hallburn (#1125) turned ninety years of age. The group sang "Happy birthday" to Sid. Sid is a WWII vet, knife-combat expert, and also an accomplished dancer.

Pierre Odier (#988) returned from three weeks in the northeast part of Papua New Guinea. He returned expedition flag number 114. About 700 different languages are

spoken in New Guinea. Pierre visited thirty-five tribes. Many of the natives could not write but they could squiggle.

David Dolan (#1087) attended the presentation of the Lowell Thomas awards at the Explorers' Club in New York. One of the recipients was Lale Labuko, an Ethiopian from the Omo Valley, who has rescued thirty-seven babies who were supposedly cursed and condemned to die.

Bob Oberto (#1124) returned from Oxford, England, where he was working with the United Kingdom space agency studying the sun.

Tom Buttengenbach (#1143) toured the Virgin Galactic facilities in Mojave. He hopes to be in space next year.

Steve Lawson (#1032) and his family went to Montreal and Vermont for maritime research.

## Travels Through the Wild Coast of South America

Just last July Marc Weitz traveled to Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana to see four places on his own.

He flew into Georgetown which is very nice during the day with the old colonial buildings still standing. But it is dangerous at night. Marc likes the music of the 1980s including that of Eddy Grant. Evelyn Waugh visited Guyana in 1932 and wrote a book titled *92 Days*. And Michael Caine married Shakira, a former Miss World runner-up.

The beaches are filthy from the river outflow, and there is a strong undertow.

There are nice hotels but Marc stayed at Jerry's for \$22.50 per night including bugs.

He tried to make reservations for a

plane flight to Kaieteur Falls, but could not. He showed up at the airport and



*Marc at Kaieteur Falls*

the plane was full. He thought “In for a penny, in for a pound” and persuaded the pilot to add another seat which was illegal. But Mark won out and flew to the landing strip. The falls are 741 feet high, but there are no shops, no signs, and no railings. They are the world's largest single-drop waterfall by volume.



*Jonestown – site of the 1978 mass suicide*

He next booked a flight to Port Kaituma in northeast Guyana to view Jonestown. The former name was the People's Temple Agricultural Project, and Monday November 18<sup>th</sup> was the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the suicides.

He then hitchhiked with a gold miner to drive him to the entrance. The area is

*(Minutes continued on page 18)*

*(Minutes continued from page 17)*

Venezuelan border and is heavily overgrown. Here again Marc thought “In for a penny, in for a pound,” and he walked down what used to be a road and saw some machinery and a few posts. The colony was settled on level ground that was not fertile, so the people did not grow an abundance of crops. Marc was alone among the ruins. On the last day of the colony, 909 persons died at the temple many from drinking flavor-aide laced with cyanide, and nine more were gunned down at the airstrip.



*Marc at Ile Royale*

Returning to Georgetown, Marc boarded a mini-van for the Corantijn River and the border with Suriname. The gate to the ferry was closed. And Marc needed some paperwork. He was able to get his papers signed and walk over to the ferry which still had not left. So he and the others waited another hour to cross the river.

He then got a cab to the capital Paramaribo which is beautiful and safe. The main park is 200 yards long with eighty-foot-high palms. He rented a bicycle. The roads are two-lane with no shoulder. He stopped at a closed-down sugar plantation.

Then Marc boarded a minibus to the

Marowijne River and French Guiana. He crossed in a dugout canoe and then rode to Cayenne.



*Prisoner shacks at Ile Royale*

Ile de Salut is composed of three islands – Ile Saint-Joseph, Ile Royale, and Ile du Diable just north of Kourou. All of the small islands held prisoners at one time or another. The cruise ships stop at Ile Royale. There is no way to get to Ile du Diable or Devil’s Island (except for Pierre) but it is visible from the shore. Marc was able to walk around Saint-Jo-



*Prisoner cells at Ile Royale*

seph and saw the prisoners’ facilities. It was a forty-minute walk but not much to see. So (“In for a penny, in for a pound”) he did it again and saw a path blocked off leading inland.

Along this densely overgrown path, he

could still see the cells with no roofs, the high stone walls, and the catwalks above. Guards looked down upon the prisoners and the rain and bugs came in also.

Club member Rene Belbenoit (#485) is now deceased. He had told Pierre of small circular two-inch canisters holding a saw, knife, and other metal objects. These were the total possessions of a prisoner.

Even though prisoners were shipped regularly to Devil's Island, the population did not change because of the large amount of deaths. Body parts were then thrown to the shark-infested waters. There are few sharks now because there are no more deaths.

Finally, Marc had heard of an *Ariana V* Rocket Launch being conducted by the European Space Agency. The site was built in 1968 by the French and turned over to the ESA in 1975. He had applied for a permit to watch the launch and it was accepted, so he joined a couple hundred others in a drive to a spot seven-and-a-half-kilometers from the site to view the launch.



*Ariana V Rocket Launch*

On his return trip he had a twenty-four-hour layover in Curaçao. Here the water is beautiful and the buildings are clean and colorful.

## December 5, 2013

*Bob Zeman (#878)*

On a cold night, President Rick Flores (#1120) opened the meeting with a tolling of the bells by Stewart Deats (#1168). Bill Burke (#1157) announced that the father of Allan Smith (#1069) had passed away.

Eric Strait returned from Mazatlan, Mexico, where he filmed episodes of *Gator Boys*. His group also rescued twenty-one nuisance crocodiles that are now in the aquarium in Mazatlan. The largest was fourteen-and-a-half-feet long. No one was seriously hurt but there were some minor injuries.

Peter Jensen (#1101) returned from camping at Catalina Island. He dove in the waters every day. The water was clear, but there were not many fish.

Jay Foonberg (#1126) and Bernie Harris (#1063) had a rewarding experience visiting Walter Ehlers (#1119) in the hospital in Long Beach. Unfortunately, Walter is on dialysis treatments on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and will probably never walk again. But he is in good spirits. Jay obtained the first-day covers of the new Medal of Honor stamps. They show Walter and eleven others on the border/selva of the stamps. It is illegal to show a living person on a postage stamp.

Kevin Lee (#1163) visited the home of Mike Smith (#1058). The submarine is no longer there but everything else is. This includes diving gear, pumps, and a seashell collection.

Bernie and Devera Harris are going to board a cruise ship in Galveston for a trip to Key West and the Bahamas with

*(Minutes continued on page 20)*

*(Minutes continued from page 19)*

Bill and Pat Murrell. In Nassau they will rent a Cessna 172 for a flight above the islands.

Doug Brown (#1160) read a passage from the “Tales of the Adventurers” Club” on Robert Mahon (#813). Robert was at a base in the South Seas during WWII. He was told that in case of a Japanese attack to jump into a certain trench. He was not told there was a spider monkey in the trench.

A humorous video of a television ad for Doritos chips was filmed at the home of Roger Haft (#1098). It might be shown during the Super Bowl program.

### **Mysteries Mitigated: Aviation Accident Stories in the Deserts in the Deserts and Mountains of California.**

**G**. Pat Macha got interested in airplane wrecks when he was a Boy Scout camp counselor at Barton Flats in the 1950s. He has since surmised that 98% of all wrecks are weather related. He does not deal with wrecks that occur in inhabited areas because they are found and investigated by the FAA.

His Project Remembrance Team wants to find these wrecks to help determine what caused the crash and to pass on to the relatives the details of where the plane landed. He has taken many relatives hiking back to the wreckagees which are now marked with a large yellow X.

Amazingly, more air crew members lost their lives in training, ferrying, and non-combat flights in the United States than in actual combat operations in Europe and the Pacific.

One of the first sites he saw was on

Mt. San Gorgonio when he took a hike to the top from a alternate route. A Douglas USAF C-47B hit the mountain at 11,200 feet and slid down. Three of the crew survived the crash, but were not found in time because of ice and snow.

On October 24, 1941, nineteen P-40s were sent from Massachusetts to California and then to Washington. Pilot Jack West crashed in Kings Canyon and survived for nine days until his rescue by a bomber pilot who dropped supplies. Five other P-40s crashed on the same flight over the High Sierras.

The P-40 of Richard Long went down in 1941 and was not found until July, 1959.

In another incident three B-24s launched and crashed in the mountains. Don Petrazinni survived. B-24 Liberators were found to have a fuel vapor buildup which could easily ignite if a cigarette was lit.

Maria Mitchell Robinson was a WASP (Womens Air Service Patrol) and crashed in a B-25.

There was heavy rainfall on February 11, 1969, and an SP-2E went down in Hagadorn Canyon in the Santa Ana Mountains. Seven men died and left twenty-nine children fatherless..

An A-4D pilot was killed when his chute did not open.

Gertrude “Tommy” Tompkins took off with two other planes and crashed on October 26, 1944. An extensive search was mounted with no success. The search continues. But a Lockheed T-33 was found in the ocean that had crashed on October 15, 1955.

Another underwater search found a UV-

*(Minutes continued on page 21)*

## Forthcoming Programs

- December 5, 2013 – G. Pat Macha – Mysteries Mitigated  
 December 12, 2013 – Kin McCoy – Thrill of Victory and the Agony of Defeat  
 December 19, 2013 – Annual Christmas Party – Members and Invited Male  
 Guests  
 December 26, 2013 – CLUB DARK – Christmas  
 January 2, 2014 – CLUB DARK – New Years  
 January 9, 2014 – Krishna and Bonnie Arora – Camino de Santiago: 1,000-  
 Mile Pilgrimage From France to Spain  
 January 16, 2014 – OPEN  
 January 23, 2014 – **LADIES' NIGHT** – Pierre Odier – Papua New  
 Guinea: Remote Western Sepik River Sandaun Region  
 January 30, 2014 – Mark Harris – North Korea  
 February 6, 2014 – Jeanette Trudell Moore – Arctic research Project  
 February 13, 2014 – CLUB DARK – for Saturday birthday party  
 February 15, 2014 – **LADIES' NIGHT** – Club Birthday Party - Commemo-  
 rate Adventurers' Club Anniversary  
 Bill Burke and Allan Smith - 8 Summits Premiere  
 February 20, 2014 – Bill Altaffer – Hero Cities of the Former Soviet Union –  
 RUSSIA – UKRAINE – BELARUS  
 February 27, 2014 – **OPEN THURSDAY** – Annie Jacobsen – The Defense  
 Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)  
 March 6, 2014 – **OPEN THURSDAY** – Graham Macintosh – Baja  
 March 13, 2014 – Mike Polack – What is under Wyatt Earp's Saloon?

*(Minutes continued from page 20)*

88 German submarine that had sunk.

A T-33 took off from Oakland on its way to Luke AFB on May 9, 1957. It disappeared. There was a two-week extensive search and another two-week search to no avail. The pilot survived near Bishop Pass and walked out after 56 days. No one believed him. He tried to find his plane but could not and died in 1965 with no one believing his story. In 1977 a group of Boy Scouts found the plane.

Another Cessna 185 crashed soon after takeoff at Big Bear Lake near Moon Ridge. It did not have enough altitude. The mother and father survived – one for forty-five days and one for sixty days

– before dying. The two children stayed close to the plane and were rescued.

Another Cessna 136 was found on the last hour of the last day of a search near Bullhead City.

One of the largest losses of life was on a Gamblers' Special DC-3 in 1969. It was flying from Burbank to Hawthorne with thirty-five persons aboard.

Daniel Katz was a veteran of the Israeli Air force. He rented a plane June 3, 2001, to go sky diving. On the way back he disappeared near Lytle Creek. The plane was found September 21, 2008, and Pat found that the Emergency Locator Device did not go off because it was in the off position.



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