Remembering Forgotten Explorers

As we gather for our annual ECAD festivities, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee invites you to join us to celebrate explorers from the past whose extraordinary accomplishments are either unknown or have not been given the recognition they deserve. These are members of the Society of Forgotten Explorers, overlooked pioneers from the past, with emphasis on indigenous as well as female explorers, and those who were active before The Explorers Club was founded.

DEI Committee Chair J. Robert “J.R.” Harris will host this event to highlight a few remarkable Society members and introduce the present-day explorers who will tell their stories:

“Taqulittuq, Arctic Explorer - Guide and Translator”

Marlis Butcher is an environmental conservationist, author, and photographer. Marlis volunteers as a director on the board of the Royal Botanical Gardens, has served on the board of the Bruce Trail Conservancy, protecting the Niagara Escarpment, a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve, and is a Fellow of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society. Marlis is the Membership Director of the Canadian Chapter of the Explorers Club, and volunteers on various TEC committees.

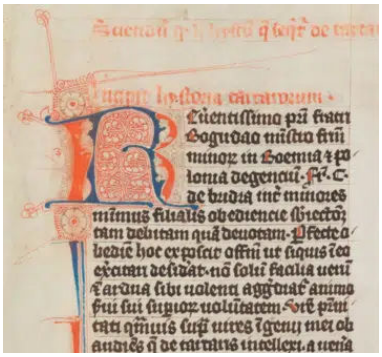
“Antero Cabrera: The Trailblazing Field Expeditions of a Bontoc Cultural Mediator in Early 20th-Century America”

Deana Weibel is a Professor of Anthropology at Grand Valley State University, specializing in the anthropology of religion, pilgrimage, tourism, and space exploration. Her family history connects her to the early 1900s “ethnological displays” of the Bontoc people in the U.S., a practice shaped by colonial power yet legitimized by early anthropologists. A Fellow of The Explorers Club (FN'20), she has a forthcoming book with the University of California Press, The Ultraview Effect: What We Can Learn from Astronauts about Awe, Humility, and Exploring the Unknown.

“Hester Merwin Ayers – A 20th Century Renaissance Woman”

Tina Chiarelli is an elephant biologist and Associate Professor at the University of Central Florida, College of Medicine. Her research focus is on the development of sustainable human-elephant conflict mitigation techniques utilizing Traditional Indigenous Ecological Knowledge. Tina is the current Chair for the Florida Chapter of The Explorers Club.

“Benedict the Pole. From the Pope to the Khan – half a century before Marco Polo”



Marcin Jamkowski is a filmmaker and writer. He has participated in or organized more than a dozen expeditions to five continents with exploratory, archaeological, or scientific goals. He was a TED speaker and a recipient of a scholarship from the Polish Ministry of Culture. Marcin is a Fellow of The Explorers Club '05 and is currently serving his second term as Vice Chairman and Treasurer of the Polish Chapter of the Club.