

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA RETIREES ASSOCIATION (7/1/20 - 6/30/21)
UMRA ARMCHAIR TRAVELER PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT
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There were three Armchair Traveler Programs offered during 2020-21, all via Zoom. We had approximately 60 people attending each session and the feedback was extremely positive. Programs were offered on Tuesday mornings from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Two speakers presented their pictures and comments for approximately 30 minutes each and then we had 15 minutes per speaker for discussion and questions/answers. My thanks to each of our wonderful presenters. I sent out email announcements a month and a week before each program. Kris Mortensen included a short article about each program in the UMRA Newsletter. Thank you, Kris! I plan to offer three Armchair Traveler Programs in 2021-22.

Here is a brief description of each program and the presenters.

On September 1, 2020, Ryan Mattke, Map & Geospatial Information Librarian and Head of the John R. Borchert Map Library, UMTC, shared his presentation “A Trip Through The Past: Documenting Campus History.” Ryan presented on the University of Minnesota Libraries' Campus History web application, which displays 160 years of building footprints along with historical maps and aerial photographs. The presentation included historical map and photograph highlights, interesting buildings that no longer exist, historical aerial imagery of campus, and information about how the interactive digital map was created. Our second presenter was Dr. Ron Anderson, professor emeritus, Sociology, UMTC. His presentation was titled: “Ethiopia, 1945-2000 - Photos and Stories from Ethiopia.” Ron lived in Ethiopia until age 13 as his father was a missionary and doctor for Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia. Ron and his wife Nancy returned in 2000 to revisit. He had lots of photos and stories from these two travel experiences to share.

On February 2, 2021, Dr. B. Jan McCulloch, professor emeritus, Family Social Science, UMTC took us to Star Island, which she described as “a magical place” of peace and tranquility nestled among the Isles of Shoals, 10 miles off the coast of New Hampshire. Her presentation was divided into three parts: a brief history of Star Island; staying at the Oceanic Hotel; and Star Island photography, including birds, landscapes, boating scenes, and an island celebration. Our second presenter was Dr. Robert Patterson, professor emeritus, Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, and he talked about three of his trips to China. In 1983, he was part of an invited lecture tour; in 1986, he led 20 people from the Twin Cities on a 350 mile bike tour from Shanghai to Nanjing; and in 1989, he was on Tiananmen Square during the uprising to overthrow the government.

On April 6, 2021, Dr. Craig Swan, professor emeritus, Economics, UMTC, presented on the John Muir Trail. We traveled along the John Muir Trail, 211 miles from Yosemite Valley to the top of Mt Whitney, 4,000 to 14,500 feet. We crossed 11 passes, 6 of them at 12,000 feet or higher. We got a glimpse of the grandeur and glory of the High Sierras to understand why it is among America's premier mountain backpacking experiences. Our second presenter was Dr. Donna Chollett, professor emeritus, Anthropology, UMM, and she took us on a journey to the Amazon Rainforest in Ecuador where she spent time in indigenous communities, learning about rainforest ecology and indigenous culture. Her presentation included three parts: the Huaorani Ecolodge, the Kichwa Añangu Ecolodge, and a “toxic tour” of oil exploration sites in the region.