

## **Toolkit: Armchair Traveler Program**

**Developed and updated by Lynn C. Anderson, Chair, June 2025**

**Background** UMRA's first Armchair Traveler Program was offered on Tuesday, January 8, 2019 from 4:15-5:45 p.m. at the Highland Park Community Room. The Community Room is located upstairs at the Highland Park Community Center and Library, 1974 Ford Parkway, St. Paul MN 55116. There is a free parking lot next to the Community Center and Library. For our January 2019 program we had three presenters for 30 minutes each but the group recommended two presenters for 45 minutes each (including time for discussion/Q and A) for future programs. The April 9, 2019, September 10, 2019, and January 14, 2020 programs were also held at the Highland Park Community Room. Our April 2020 program had to be cancelled due to covid. We resumed offering the Armchair Traveler Program in September 2020 via Zoom. Three programs were offered each year through 2023 and then 4 programs beginning in 2023-24. Attendance at each program has been between 25 and 45. When and if meetings are again held in person, information about room reservations is at <https://sppl.org/faq/meeting-rooms/>. Offering the program via Zoom allows UMRA members to attend regardless of where they live, the weather, and their health.

**Presenters and Locations to date** Jean Kinsey: Dubai and Abu Dhabi; Craig Swan: Mongolia; Lynn C. Anderson: Germany; Ron Anderson: Hong Kong; David Hansen: Poland; Marilyn Joseph and Warren Regelman: Papua New Guinea; Claudia Parliament, John Welckle, and Carol Urness: Great Northern Lights cruise; Ryan Mattke: "A Trip Through The Past: Documenting Campus History;" Ron Anderson: Ethiopia; B. Jan McCulloch, Star Island; Robert Patterson, China; Craig Swan, Muir Trail; Donna Chollett, Ecuador; Charles Muscoplat, Poland/Budapest/Prague; Kathryn Hanna, Baffin Island; Gene Allen, Australia; Frank Busta and Jean Kinsey, Turkey; Bev Moe, Cleveland Way; David Fisher, Mount Kilimanjaro; Pieranna Garavaso and Lory Lemke, Pavia and Verona, Italy; Kathy Jensen and Gary Engstrand, Japan; Marilyn DeLong, South Korea; Thomas O'Toole, Sierra Leone; Nanette Hanks, Camino de Santiago; Janet and Craig Swan, Above the Arctic Circle; Carol Urness, Traveling Closer to Home; Kate Maple, Iceland. Wil Criag Baseball Fields, Janet and Craig Swan Scotland, Paul Letourneau Tanzania Brenda Knapp-Polzin Jerusalem and Egypt, Wayne Potratz Japan, Lynn C, Anderson Norway and Sweden, Ceeya Patton-Bolman Rwanda, Gene Allen islands of the north west coast of the US and Canada.

**Responsibilities** The Chair is responsible for recruiting and orienting presenters, holding a practice session with presenters, scheduling the Zoom meeting, sending an email to all UMRA members with all relevant information, preparing a short article for Kris Mortensen to include in the UMRA newsletter, writing an annual report, and updating the toolkit. If the meeting is via Zoom, no sign up is needed. If the meeting is in person, the chair is responsible for reserving the space, bringing a laptop and power cord, getting the power points from the presenters before the meeting, working with the library staff to connect to the library's projection system, arranging the chairs in the room (and moving tables to the side), adjusting the lights, and providing a sign-in sheet. When meetings were held in person, other UMRA members were very helpful with rearranging the room and managing the lights. Whether in person or via Zoom, the chair is responsible for recording the presentation, introducing speakers, watching the time, helping manage the discussion/Q and A, and thanking the speakers.