

## **UMRA Armchair Traveler Annual Report 2019-20**

I planned three Armchair Traveler programs for 2019-20 and was able to offer a program in September and January. Our April program had to be cancelled due to restrictions surrounding covid-19 and considerations about the health of our members. Each of our programs was held from 3:30 to 5 p.m. in the Community Room on the second floor of the Highland Park Community Center and Library at 1978 Ford Parkway in St Paul. The Community Room has space for 40 attendees so UMRA members and their guests were asked to email me in advance to sign up.

For the Armchair Traveler program on September 10, 2019, Don Johnson showed pictures and talked about India. Don served from 1987 to 2008 as the curator of the Ames Library of South Asia at the University of Minnesota. Since 1966 he made 25 trips to India, primarily visiting dear Indian friends whom he met when they were all undergraduates at the University of Wisconsin. Thus, he has known them for almost 60 years. Don teaches an OLLI course on Indian textiles. His Armchair Traveler presentation will take us “off the beaten path” in India. Following Don’s presentation, I lead attendees on a fun and interactive world tour to test their knowledge of incredible places. I served as associate director of the Learning Abroad Center at the U of M and dean of International Education at UC San Diego. We had 29 UMRA members and their guests in attendance.

Our January 14, 2020 Armchair Traveler program featured UMRA members Marilyn Joseph, MD, retired medical director of Boynton Health Service, and Warren Regelman, MD, former head of pediatric pulmonology, who showed some of the unique sights, sounds, and wildlife they experienced cruising and hiking Papua New Guinea (PNG) in 2019. We learned that the animals of PNG are found nowhere in neighboring Asia because they live on the Australian Plate, which drifted away from the Eurasian Plate, long ago, forming a deep-water barrier known as Wallace’s Line, first noted by Alfred Russel Wallace, the explorer and co-formulator with Charles Darwin of *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*. The second half of our program featured the Great Northern Lights cruise that Claudia Parliament, professor emerita from the Department of Applied Economics, John Welckle, associate professor emeritus from the Department of Education at St. Olaf, and Carol Urness, professor emerita and curator of the James Ford Bell Library, took in 2015. Their experience took them from Copenhagen northward along the coast of Norway, around North Cape, and then eastward to Murmansk, the Solovetsky Islands, and Archangelsk before the return voyage to Oslo. We had 35 UMRA members and their guests in attendance.

Our April 14, 2020 Armchair Traveler Program was to include a presentation by Ryan Mattke, Map & Geospatial Information Librarian at the John R. Borchert Map Library. His presentation was titled: “A Trip Through The Past: Documenting Campus History.” Ryan was going to present 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 would have included historical map and photograph highlights, interesting buildings that no longer exist, historical aerial imagery of campus, and how the interactive digital map was created. Our second presenter was going to be Dr. Ron Anderson, Professor Emeritus, Sociology. His presentation was titled: "Ethiopia, 1945-2000 - Photos and Stories from Ethiopia." Ron grew up in Ethiopia until age 13 as his father was a missionary and doctor for Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia. Ron, with his wife, returned in 2000 to revisit. He had lots of photos and stories from these two travel experiences to share about this very unusual country. Unfortunately, due to covid-19 we had to cancel this program. I hope to offer the program via Zoom in September 2020.

I would like to offer 3-5 Armchair Traveler programs via Zoom during 2020-21.

Submitted by Lynn C. Anderson, Armchair Traveler Program Chair