

Chapter 16

Travels

It's hard to know where to begin relating the history of our travels. You have already read about our trips to Florida the first two years of our marriage. Perhaps I should step back one generation and point out that our parents were inveterate travelers. My folks were proud of the fact that they had visited all of the fifty states. In addition to the regular fishing trips, my folks took Doug and me to visit Harold and Frances Miller in Denver, CO, when we were about seven and ten years old. We were slightly shocked when Mom hauled out the camp stove and cooked us all bacon and eggs in our motel room with clearly marked signs saying "No Cooking!"

While we were proud of my folks for their traveling accomplishments in the U.S., we were a little disappointed that they never traveled abroad. I know that, with Mom's love of music and Dad's interest in history and science, they would have marveled at the rich culture that Europe provides. However, I sense that our generation was about the first that was comfortable and able to travel world wide. Until air travel became common, travel by ship was just too expensive and time consuming for the average traveler.



Until our children were off to college our traveling was mainly to the mountains of Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, and Canada. Between these climbing/camping adventures were fishing trips, mainly to Wisconsin and two in Michigan. After our children were married and raising families of their own, our financial independence allowed us much more freedom.

Our first trip to Europe took place Susie's junior year in college. We went to France to visit her at the American University in Aix En Provence. She was there the spring semester, and we stayed in her apartment while in France. When we toured Switzerland and Germany, our family of four camped. I'm still amazed we were able to pack our tent and four sleeping bags in addition to normal clothes.

To summarize our travels, we visited Europe about ten times, New Zealand, South America, Canada three times, Mexico at least four times, Alaska, and Hawaii. In the U.S. we've traveled extensively and been in every state in the union. In the Caribbean we've been on a number of cruises and sailed around Tortola twice. For this chapter I will summarize five of these trips - two in Europe, New Zealand, a Caribbean cruise, and Utah.

Our first trip to Europe, after our visit to Susie in France, was to Italy with the tour group, Walking the World. There were two parts of the tour - the first in Grand Paradiso National Park in north west Italy and the second in the Cinque Terre along the Mediterranean in northern Italy. Our guides were Stefano who had his Ph.D. degree on

carnivores animals from the University of Rome, and Arlene who owned an organic farm in Maine, U.S..

On the first day out, we hiked to a shepherds hut high in the mountains. After resting, the stronger group headed on up, around the mountain, and the weaker group hiked back the trail and around a lake near our hotel. I was in the stronger group as was Arlene, Stefano, and a 70 year old gentleman. He told us he had trained for the trip by jogging around the high school track in his



Our Guides



Our First Day Hiking



Arlene, Stefano, and the Texan

home town in Texas. Unfortunately, the Texan's legs gave out about half way through the trip, and Arlene and I had to help him walk by joining arms under his, walking on each side. Stefano ran on ahead to bring the car as close as he could, and then rejoined us and carried the Texan on his back down the trail to the car. From then on we secretly referred to Stefano as "Stefano, the bull!".

The next day our group hiked high in the alps along a fairly good road that the king of Italy built to get him to his hunting cabin. It turns out that the

Grand Paradiso was Italy's first national park. This is fitting, because Italy's highest mountain, the Grand Paradiso, is within the park. At first the king had trouble with poachers killing the chamois and ibex. So he bought them off by making them park rangers with the duty of protecting the animals. We saw several pictures of dozens of dead chamois and ibex shot by the king on his hunting trips. He would sit atop his hunting cabin and shoot the animals his rangers drove down to him.

Italy's national parks now have excellent environmental protection. Helicopters are forbidden in the parks except for rescue purposes. The day we hiked high in the park we noticed electrical power lines not far from the road we were hiking on. I asked Stefano, "Isn't that a little inconsistent with environmentalism?" He told us that Italy had forbidden nuclear power, and those were the power lines coming from the French reactors to power Turin. Just a bit hypocritical!

Another unforgettable event occurred as we were hiking this trail. I was near the front of the group, and Nancy Hennessy, who was quite a ways behind, caught up with me and asked, "Did you lose something?" She then showed me four double A batteries. I checked my Nikon camera, and sure enough, the battery compartment was wide open, and I had been spreading batteries all along the trail. I replaced them, and everything worked fine. I was lucky she had such a sharp eye.

Near the top of the valley we were hiking in, Stefano spotted some chamois.



Our Group High in the Alps

We hiked a little further and spotted a herd of ibex. Chamois are the European version of our mountain sheep, and ibex are the European version of our mountain goats, except that they have huge curved horns. The Grand Paradiso park has a huge number of each, and we saw probably thirty chamois and twenty ibex. The tiny dots in this photo are chamois. We were very impressed!

On our way down from the mountains we stopped at a farm that had a cheese-making shed attached to the barn. The farmer had just milked his cows and released them to go up the road to a high pasture. The curious thing was that a full grown pig was closely following the cows. This pig considered himself a cow and was doing everything they did!

After stirring the milk over low heat for ten minutes or so, the farmer called his



Valley of the Chamois

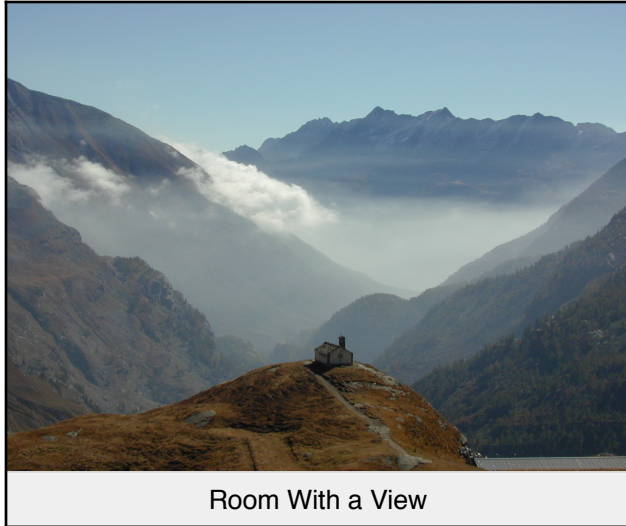
daughter who appeared with a large, porous sack. By this time the milk had turned to cheese and whey. As the daughter held the bag open, the farmer scooped the cheese curds up with his bare hands and put them in the bag. When all the curds were in the bag, the daughter tied it off, now about the size of a car tire. She placed it on a table, put a board on top, and then a large rock on top of the board to press out the whey. This was their cheese making process.

We bought a couple of pounds of the aged cheese, and it was good. We saved most of it for the wine and cheese party we held on our balcony in Cinque Terre. It was a great hit, since most of our group had seen the process producing it.

As we left the Grand Paradiso National Park and headed by bus to Cinque Terre, our guides held a contest,



Cheese Factory



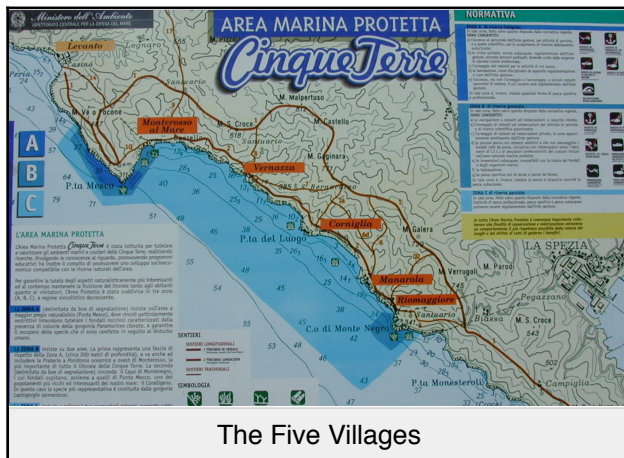
guessing how many tunnels we would have to traverse getting there. I was brave, guessing 25. Nancy was much braver, guessing 95. The true number was 125. So Nancy won the contest but missed the actual number of tunnels by 30. In the last quarter of the drive we were inside the mountain more than outside. It was a memorable drive.

Our headquarters for the Cinque Terre was in Vernazza. Our room had a nice rooftop balcony over a garage. This is where we hosted a wine and cheese party for the group. The Cinque Terre

are five villages connected by train and trail but not by car. So we spent our days hiking from village to village. The first days hike was to Monterossa by the Sea.

In addition to our guides, Stefano and Arlene, Stefano had hired an intern who knew no English at the start of the trip. But throughout, she learned a great deal, and, by the end of the trip, she was communicating effectively with us in English. She was the guide leading the second group back down the mountain on the first day. She is on the right in the Lunch Break photo.

Stefano and Arlene packed the raw materials for our noon time lunches each day. At noon we would break, and they put together very good lunches. Stefano also had a delightful sense of humor. As we were hiking through an olive grove on one of the hill-sides in Cinque Terre, I was at the rear of the group and picked an olive. As I bit into it, Stefano had noticed me doing it. He continued lecturing the group on how poisonous raw olives are, and how complicated the processing is for making them edible. The rest of the group caught the joke.





Our Hiking Path

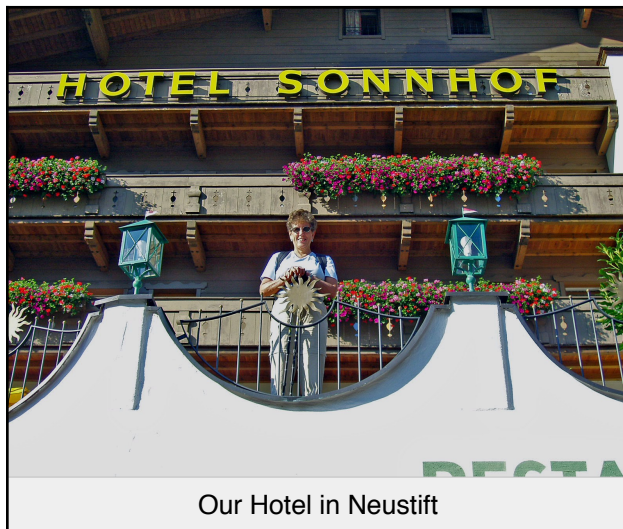


Lunch Break

The second trip that I want to recount will really be a composite story. We began going to Austria in 2004 and continued annually till 2010. Our destination was always the Sonnhof hotel in Neustift, about 20 miles southwest of Innsbrook, Austria.

Google Earth refers to the village as “Neustift im Stubaital”, that is Neustift in the Stubai glacial valley. The Stubai glacier is at the head of the valley, and I may have skied there years before. Our guide every year was Carl Schram, a ski and hiking guide. He knew the mountains like the back of his hand. He and I had a lot in common, and we became good friends.

Here is Carl with our friends, Mary Ann



Our Hotel in Neustift

Staupe and Jean Jacobson. I have Jean in one of my short courses at UW-Parkside, and when she learned of our love of the mountains, she showed us slides of Austria and persuaded us to go the next year.

In 2006 Jean organized a “hut to hut” adventure in which a small group, led by Carl, would hike high in the mountains, going from hut to hut for



Mary Ann, Carl, and Jean

about a week. The Austrian Alpine Club maintains a series of “huttas” throughout the mountains for hikers just like us. They have bunks for 30 to 100 sleepers and usually a food service for hungry hikers.

The hiking was strenuous. The exposed sections, where we would rope up in the U.S., were equipped with cables for our protection. After several days in the mountains near Neustift, we transferred to the Dolomite mountains of Italy. These are some of the most magnificent mountains in the world. They



Our First Hike Down the Valley



Hiking Hut to Hut



The Cable Route



Hiking in the Dolomites



Hiking in the Dolomites

compare favorably with the Bugaboos of Canada and the spires of Cirque of the Towers in the Wind River range of Wyoming.

By no means were our Austrian trips only hiking and climbing. The Sonnhof hotel had the most elegant spa I have ever experienced. In addition to a large, circular pool, it had at least four special side rooms, specializing in things like scent, steam, and so on.

Of course, most Europeans preferred to do the spa *au naturel*. One evening, when I and two of my female companions were in the pool, one of them stated, "I know what you're both thinking. Let's get naked!" So we did, and promised not to tell anyone else. So now the secret is out!

One of the advantages of Austria as a vacation spot is the rich culture it contains. To the west of Neustift is both Munich and Salzburg and to the east is Vienna. During each trip we often had the opportunity to visit one of these centers of culture. In Munich, Germany, we visited the Augustina Beer Garden a week before Oktoberfest. In Salzburg we got the Magic Flute room the most elegant room we have ever had. In Vienna, we saw one opera at the Vienna State Opera and one at the Volks Opera. Both were excellent.

Perhaps the most exciting activities of any of our Austrian trips were my parasailing flights off the Elferspitze launch pad. I had a "pilot" sitting right behind me to



The Sonnhof Spa Pool



At the Augustina Beer Garden in Munich



In the Magic Flute Room in Salzburg



Dinner Before the Opera in Vienna



Ready to Para-sail

control the chute. Later I asked how many flights he had done. The answer was, "Over 1000!" So I was in good hands.

In my first flight the weather was overcast. So we simply sailed down to our landing spot. On my last flight, we had a sunny warm day with good updrafts. So we gained several thousand feet over the take-off pad before my pilot told me, "I have another flight in 15 minutes." So we spiraled down, and I almost lost my dinner. It was very exciting.

The final story I wish to tell is about our climb of the Elferspitze, the jagged mountain overlooking Neustift and the launch pad for our para-sailing. We could take a ski lift from Neustift to the launch pad. Several hundred yard up the mountain was ElferHutte, a great observation point overlooking Neustift and the base of the mountain.

My climbing partners, Sue Albe and Sharon Xxxx, suggested that we climb Elferspitze. Since I had heard that the climb was non-technical except for the last 30 feet or



Down the Valley Towards Innsbruck



Neustift from the Air



My Climbing Partners

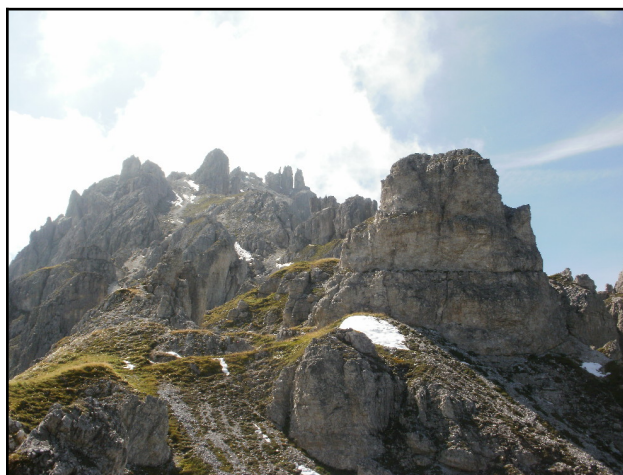


Climbing Instructions

so, I readily agreed. I knew Sue for the previous hut to hut hike and several other hikes with her. Sharon XXXX seemed like a strong partner so I had no problem with either.

We took the ski lift up to the launch pad for the para sailers and continued several hundred yards up the mountain to the ElferHutte. Here we had coffee and prepared for the climb. Several hundred yards up the trail we read the sign designating the "Normalweg" or normal way to the summit. It was a fairly easy hike between rock towers on either side until we reached the summit slab.

The last 30 feet or so were pretty difficult. Both Sue and I made it and found another young couple on top. It was one of the few summits I climbed in the alps, so I was pretty thrilled. From Neustift it was the dominate peak to the south. Both Sue,



The Way to the Summit



The Summit of Elferspitze

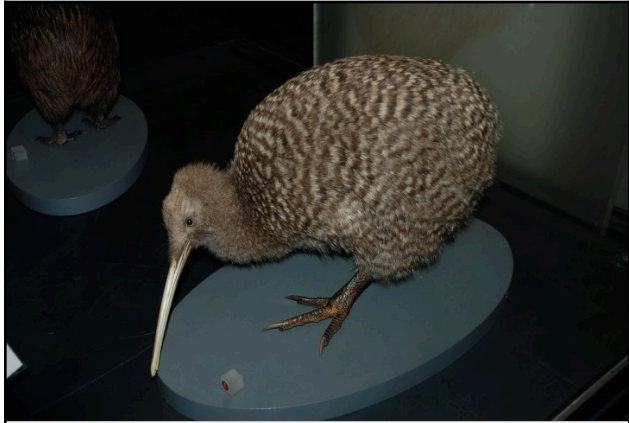


Sharon and I have stayed in touch after the climb, so it was a significant event in our lives.

The third trip I want to relate was to New Zealand. This was a one month trip with nearly one week on the north island with our friends and my mentor at UW-Madison, Murray and Megan Thompson, a short week kayaking, and two weeks hiking, biking, and kayaking with the group Active New Zealand. The Active New Zealand activities all took place on the south island. Murray and Megan had a lovely, big home on the south shore of Auckland Bay, right across from Auckland, the largest city in New Zealand.

Murray had spent his whole professional career as physics professor in the Walker/Erwin/Thompson group at Madison. As previously mentioned, we stayed in their Madison home one summer while I was visiting professor. We spent the week catching





Kiwi



Maori Dancers

up on old times, touring bird sanctuary islands and museums. Their home was marvelously modern. In addition to being wired for 120 volts throughout, it was also wired for D.C. and USB for computers in every room. The four story home was equipped with an elevator, making it convenient for Megan’s mother who had half of the third floor as her apartment. There was a balcony around the whole house, making tea and cookies very pleasant. We had it mid morning and mid afternoon every day.

About five years after our visit, Murray died. We’re extremely happy that we got to visit with them one last time.

The Auckland museums gave us great insight into the fauna of the islands and the Maori culture. Although the kiwi shown was stuffed, one of the museums actually had a live kiwi. They are very reclusive and come out only at night.

Several of the Maori dances that we saw impressed us mainly with their tattoos and the war like nature of the dances. The Maori warriors paddled 70 man canoes in their attacks on neighboring tribes. The Maori were Polynesian who settled New Zealand around 1280 CE.



Emily, Dennis, and Joyce in the Garden



Punting in the Garden



Active New Zealand Group



Beer Drinking Cockatoo

Leaving the north island we flew from Wellington to Christchurch where we met our good friends from Austrian hiking day, Emily Mueller and Dennis Moran. Together we toured the magnificent botanical gardens of Christchurch.

Following a day exploring Christchurch we four joined the Active New Zealand group. Except for one British gentleman we were by far the oldest. However, Joyce and I were both in good shape and never held up group activities. After a few days of getting integrated, we split into three groups: the hiking group, the biking group, and the kayaking group. Since Joyce had had such fun in Dave Pucelys’s kayak and Sandy Christensen’s kayak on Island Lake, we opted for the kayaking group.

On the first night of our group together, we stayed at a farmer’s compound. He had a bunch house for all the Active New Zealand group and he had a cockatoo. Emily is holding the bird in the photo above, and in the next one I’m talking to it. The really amazing thing was, that the farmer opened a beer can, drank the first half of the beer and put the half-empty can in the cockatoo cage. The cockatoo put his beak in the open slot, lifted the can, and drank the remaining half of the opened beer can! We were all amazed!



Exploring Jungle Paths



Pacific Ocean from West Coast



Mountain Parrot Eating Rubber



Taking Photos of the Parrot

We hike many jungle trails and visited many promontories overlooking the ocean along the west coast of the south island. Because of the prevailing winds off the ocean the weather was often rainy and overcast. After we rounded the southern tip of the south island the weather improved remarkably. The moisture had been wrung out by the spine of mountains running the length of the island.

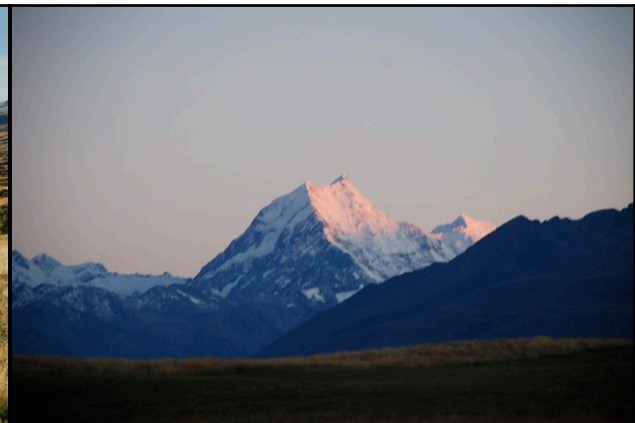
One of the most curious events of the trip was our encounter with mountain parrots. As we were driving through a high mountain pass we stopped for photos. Our minibus was pulling a trailer loaded with bicycles. Several mountain parrots landed on the bikes and began eating the rubber handlebar covers! They actually love rubber! Of course they attracted many photographers.

Our first view of the highest mountain in New Zealand, Mt. Cook, was from a sheep ranch at the end of a long drive. We stayed in nice cabins used by the sheep herders set in a beautiful prairie with Mt. Cook in the background. We all enjoyed wine for the cocktail hour. Joyce is holding mine as I get her picture.

Mt. Cook was beautiful in the glow of early morning light. That day was drove to the park nearest to the mountain. The group divided in two: my group of seven de-



Joyce and Mt. Cook



Mt. Cook and Morning Sun



Our Group on the Summit

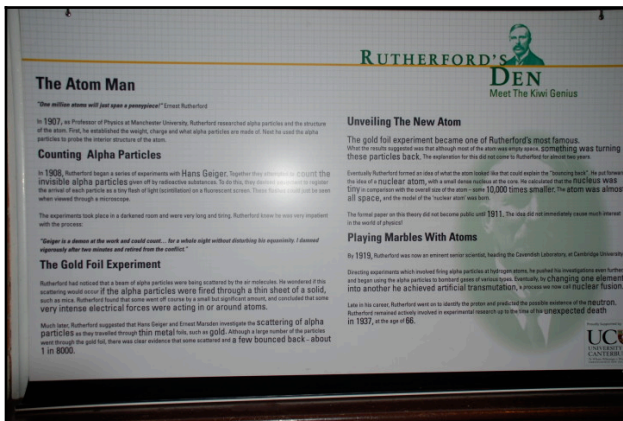


Me and Mt. Cook

cided to climb one of the foothills of Mt. Cook and Joyce's group decided to hike around the lakes at the level of the parking lot. I considered it a sort of challenge to keep up with my younger colleagues. But, no problem. We all made it to the summit at the same time and were elated by the view of the mountain and glaciers. It was about the biggest thrill of the trip.

At the end of the Active New Zealand part of the trip we had several days to enjoy Christchurch and Akaroa. We just happened to be in Christchurch on St. Patrick's Day, and celebrated it with dinner with our friends, Emily and Dennis. It was a pretty rowdy event. New Zealand young people really know how to celebrate! We toured the botanical gardens as we had some weeks before. We also visited several museums and the Antarctic Training Center where Antarctic explorers learn survival techniques for the Antarctic.

But perhaps our biggest surprise was to discover the office and classroom where Earnest Rutherford taught. The University carefully maintains it in the same condition Rutherford left it. They proudly claim him as one of their own, though most of his Nobel Prize winning work was done in Canada and England. He is known as the father of



The Accomplishments of Earnest Rutherford



Me at Rutherford's Blackboard



Description of Our Sailing Adventure



Me at the Helm

nuclear physics, having discovered alpha, beta, and gamma rays. He also discovered the nuclear theory of the atom. He died just four months after I was born.

Akaroa is a quiet, quaint village on a peninsula about 75 miles from Christchurch. We spent the last couple of days of the trip there. One day we hiked several miles along the bay and visited a primitive Maori church. The evening we saw a slightly pornographic movie at the ten seat village theater.

Our biggest thrill came the day we sailed Akaroa Bay. As advertised, I took the helm for about half the trip from Akaroa to the ocean. It was a very windy day and very exciting!

Before I leave New Zealand I must mention kayaking. There were six of us in three double kayaks. Our main voyages were on Kenepuru Sound and Milford Sound. Emily and Dennis were in one kayak, Joyce and I in another, and single lady and our Maori guide in the third. The scenery was spectacular and the paddling smooth. Since we had paddled a canoe together, our strokes were synchronized and we always kept up or led the group. Quite a joy!



Waterfall on Milford Sound



Mountain on Milford Sound



Joyce Walking the Beach in Fort Lauderdale

More photos of our trip are posted at dotphoto.com with password *Morris*.

My fourth travel story involves a cruise we took in 2009 with the Center for Inquiry on the Caribbean. Our ship sailed from Fort Lauderdale. Before we sailed, we spent a day in Fort Lauderdale and a day in Miami, both interesting cities. The week long itinerary included day-long stops in Costa Rica, Belize, and Panama. The Center for Inquiry (CFI) is a secular humanist organization founded by Paul Kurtz, considered by many to be the “father of secular humanism”. The

featured speakers on the cruise were Dr. Laurence Krauss, physicist at the University of Arizona, and Pat Schroeder, former congress woman. The theme of the cruise was the decline of publishing.

Each morning, when the ship was underway, we would have seminars related to the theme. Since Pat Schroeder had been president of the Association of American Publishers she spoke with some authority. At the time, her husband, who accompanied her, was actively involved in publishing and also spoke at the conference. Larry Krauss had published a number of books and was an authority on cosmology. He gave several lectures.

Most speakers bemoaned the coming of the internet as the eventual demise of newspapers, journals, and books. However, some speakers pointed out that the amount of published material had, in fact, increased since the arrival of the internet. Perhaps it is a bit simplistic and naive but I sensed a similarity to a buggy whip convention concerned about the influence of the automobile.

Our first CFI cruise was in 2004 and featured Richard Dawkins as a guest speaker. We got acquainted with Dawkins and his wife Lola on that trip. I had just read *River Out of Eden* and was impress that I could meet the great man. The theme of that cruise had been much more on the philosophical issues central to the CFI's concerns.

The daily excursions into the three Caribbean countries were much more



On a Pirate Ship in Biscayne Bay



Our Conference Ship, the Carnival Miracle

valuable, in my estimation. After a day at sea, the first destination was Costa Rica. Joyce opted for a tour of an organic farm. I opted for a float down a white water river. It was probably one of the most exciting adventures of my life!

The training lesson took about a half hour. Our group had about five rafts, each holding nine or ten people. We were each given life vests and hard hats. We were taught paddling technique - the guide/tiller person would yell "Right" or "Left" and the designated side would paddle like crazy. This way we could avoid rocks. We were



Rafting School



I'm Next to Tiller man in Red Helmet



Down a Chute



Celebrating a Safe Journey

also taught how to float down the river, feet first, in case we fell out of the raft. Not too reassuring!

It turns out a photographer/kayaker preceded us down the river, perching on rocks and taking pictures as we zoomed by. At the lunch afterwards, we were given the opportunity to buy a CD with at least a thousand photos on it. Of course most of the photos were of other rafts, but I got several dozen, four of which I show here. Absolutely spectacular experience!

The Captan's Dinner was really a quite formal affair. In the left hand photo we show Paul Kurtz, Pat Schroeder (in purple), Toni Van Pelt (in white) and Larry Krauss immediately behind her. The next photo shows us in our stateroom, reflected in a mirror. Of course, in the seminars we wore much more casual clothes.

Ever since childhood I've longed to go through the Panama Canal. Our second day adventure allowed us to do this. We docked on the Atlantic side and took a bus to the Pacific side, then boarded a sight seeing ship and proceeded through the locks to the



Paul, Pat, Toni, and Larry



Our Stateroom



Along the Canal

Lock Doors

high lake, Gatun Lake, that feeds both sides. There we disembarked and took a bus back to the Carnival Miracle.

The canal was in the midst of a great improvement program. The locks were being widened by 70 feet, lengthened by 350 feet, and deepened by 20 feet to accommodate mega-freighters called *Post-Panamax* ships. The project was completed in 2016 and is expected to double the throughput of the canal. We went through five locks for a total height gain of 85 feet.

Meanwhile, back on the ship things were going swimmingly. Larry Krauss was the main scientific speaker and gave several seminars on the origin of the universe and dark matter. He was also a particularly good friend of the blond shown below who was a news person from Australia. Both were married to someone else. When they were coming to dinner together, I asked Larry for a picture. He demurred, so I got each of them separately. Their relationship was naturally a topic of a good deal of gossip.



Larry Krauss

Larry's Friend and Toni



At Dinner

Steaming Up the River

I believe it was at this dinner that we met, totally accidentally, our now good friends, Ed and Dorothy Necco. We quickly learned that this couple were Unitarian and were snowbirds in Florida. We told them that we lived in LaCasa, a double wide trailer park, and that we were thinking of buying one of the units. They expressed sympathy for our desires, but indicated that we really ought to look at homes in Sun City Center where they lived. These were real homes, made of cement blocks rather than mobile homes which are a risk in hurricanes. They volunteered to show us around in Sun City Center if we could visit them. We agreed and were tremendously impressed by what we saw. I asked Ed the name of his real estate agent and, as they say, the rest is history!

The final attraction we visited were Mayan ruins in the country of Belize, formerly British Honduras. At the dock where the Carnival Miracle tied up, we boarded a high speed tour boat and headed up the coast. When we got to the appropriate river, we turned up it and traveled several more miles. Eventually we arrived at the restored Mayan village of Caracol and began touring the ancient ruins.



The Major Pyramid

Climbing the Major Pyramid



On Top of the Pyramid



The Ball Field and Ruins

The ruins were dominated by the major pyramid. There was a good path on the back side leading to the summit. We climbed it and the next picture shows us on the top of the pyramid. Facing the pyramid are the ball field and restored ruins. This experience and the guided tour that accompanied it certainly gave us new insights on the Mayan culture. So the seminars, white water rapids, Panama Canal, Mayan village and meeting life long friends, Ed and Dorothy were the highlights of this cruise.

The final trip of this chapter was to Utah in September of 2015. We had seen our friends photos of some of the national parks, and we wanted to see them for ourselves. We flew from Chicago to Las Vegas and rented a car for a little over a week. We stayed in Las Vegas for two days, did the five national parks, a day at each, and finished up the trip by two more days in Las Vegas. It was perfect fall weather every day.

We stayed in our Blue-Green time share between the airport and downtown. It was an easy walk to the main strip. We were as impressed as we had been years before by the imitation cities, especially New York, France, and Italy, and by the beauty of the



Simulated New York



The Excalibur Hotel



Joyce Starting the Hike



Tremendous Spires

Excalibur Hotel where we had stayed on NAS business. Its theme is King Arthur's England.

We took the natural route used by most visitor to what are known as The Mighty Five: Zion, Bryce Canyon, Capitol Reef, Canyonlands, and Arches. The parks are near enough together that from one to the next requires only a couple of hours. The drive from Las Vegas is the longest stretch. Amazingly, the Las Vegas airport seems to be the closest for both the Utah parks and the Grand Canyon.

Zion was our first Utah park. As I recall we took a bus up the main canyon and got off at a recommended hiking trail. The trail was smooth and the rock towers and spires on each side impressive. Along the trail we spotted a deer in the undergrowth and two more deer crossing the valley creek.

After the several mile hike we returned to the main road and had lunch at a lodge. Then we took another hike, this time along the main creek. Finally the train ended up in the creek and to proceed one needed water shoes. We just had our hiking



We Were Not Alone



Moonrise at Sunset



The Aspen-lined Drive between Zion and Bryce



Some White-capped Hoodoos

boots, so we quit. As you can see, we had lots of company.

That evening, the full moon rose over the valley peaks.

On the drive between Zion and Bryce we drove over some high, hilly country in which the Aspen were in full fall glory. Here is one of the shots I took.

We were worried about the heat in Bryce, but the day we arrived it was pleasantly cool. We did two major hikes in Bryce. The first headed left along the canyon rim till the trail headed straight down, threading between the hoodoos, the eroded spires that populate the park. This was a several mile trail with spectacular scenery. On our way up, we ran across a British couple that had a Nikon similar to mine. We visited for some time, and they were well acquainted with Racine.



Along the Rim



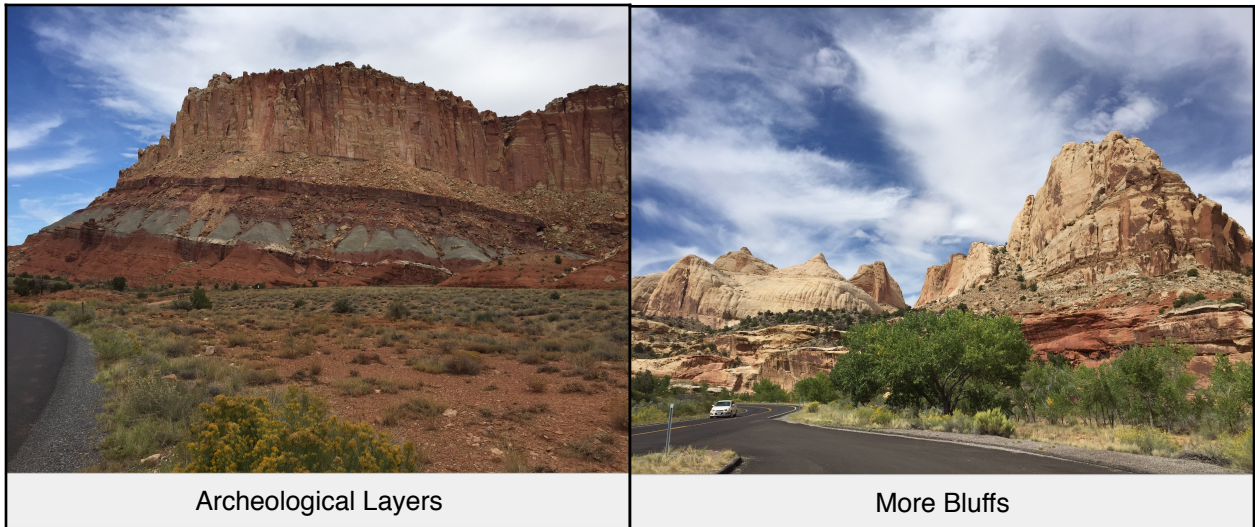
Hoodoos



Bluff in Capitol Reef

Settlement in the Park

Our second hike was along the rim to a prominent lookout. We could see the whole hoodoo lined valley spread out below. Our next park was Capitol Reef National Park. We were quite unfamiliar with this park which we saw primarily through a drive through the park. It turns out that there is a lot of history associated with this area. One oasis we hiked through had been settled and farmed by Mormon settlers in the 1800s. Since we were pretty tired from our Bryce hikes the day before, we did most of our



Archeological Layers

More Bluffs

sightseeing from the car.

But as you can see, the bluffs were impressive.

Our fourth day out we toured Canyonlands National Park. Our only hike was in the *Island in the Sky* portion of the park. After an ambitious hike we reached the overlook to the two-mile wide crater. The origin of this crater is still a mystery, but the best theory is that it was created by the impact of a meteor. It is an impressive crater.



Mystery - A Meteor?



The Two Mile Wide Crator



Canyons carved by the Colorado River



Canyons Within Canyons

Canyonlands is indeed interlaced with canyons, many carved by the Colorado River.

Our final national park was Arches, probably the most famous and photographed of all. We arrived at Arches about sunup. We hiked to the nearest arch and found that it was, indeed, a double arch. The trail led right through one of the arches. After a number of pictures right within the arch, we hike on through and found another trail to a beautiful double arch. We hiked up and around this. It was also quite spectacular.

Returning to the car, we drove to an observation point for the famous Delicate Arch displayed on thousands of T-shirts and post cards. Sadly, it was several miles away. But the Nikon telephoto can do wondrous things. After a telephoto shot bring-



Joyce Hiking Towards the Arch



Splendid Symmetric Double Arch



Delicate Arch



The Organ in Arches NP

ing it up close, we left Arches National Park. On the way out there were several spectacular formations, including The Organ as shown.

So ends the five trips I report. We have done many more trips that I did not want to bore you with. These include trips to Finland, Norway, Russia, Alaska, Hawaii, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, the Maritime Provinces of Canada, the Canadian Rockies, Spain, Britain, Cozumel, Tortola, and Playa del Carmen.