

December 2016

A Taste of the USA

Dear Friends and Family,

There follows a pictorial tour of my eight weeks of U.S. travel this fall, which was primarily focused on visiting friends and family. Starting in Alaska in mid September, proceeding down the West Coast via Port Townsend (Olympic Peninsula), WA to Portland, OR (via Amtrak) and then to the San Francisco Bay area.

Following the visit to Peru, I travelled the East Coast from New York City to Boston's north shore (via Amtrak), to greater Washington, DC, thence to Georgia and Chattanooga, TN. Final stops were in the Midwest in Chicago and by Amtrak to Ann Arbor, MI.

I began the trip in Anchorage in order to experience the fall season, as I had only ever visited during spring or winter. Hope, Alaska has a population of 192 and was a gold mining town.



Near Anchorage I had the good fortune to see Beluga whales in Turnagain Arm, then Orca whales and sea lions (sunning themselves on ice floes from glaciers) in Prince



William Sound. Of interest was that these three glaciers were all connected in the water as recently as ten years ago before receding – a clear example of global warming.



On the Glen Alps trail in the Chugach mountain range adjacent to Anchorage we saw mountain goats.



And there are now many interesting murals (urban/street art) embellishing Anchorage.





In Port Townsend I enjoyed the annual film festival plus visits to the Olympic Mountains' Hurricane Ridge with its mountains and view to Canada.



And the ever-present deer in my daughter's yard! Port Townsend is known for its Victorian architecture, wooden boat and music festivals, and the very unique Kinetic Skulpture Race of which we saw a bit.



Often there are great views of Mt Rainier and Mt Baker, but not this visit. The lighthouse on Point Wilson was built in 1879, not that long after the first white settlements in Seattle in the 1830's.



En route to Seattle to take the train to Portland I had a beautiful view of the Seattle skyline.



On my weekend in Portland Oregon I caught the opening of the Andy Warhol retrospective at the Portland Art Museum, enjoyed their collection of art produced by artists supported by the WPA during the Great Depression and their Northwest Native American Art collection.

In the Bay Area in Palo Alto I enjoyed walking neighborhoods past the personal gardens of "desert" landscaping plus the cactus garden at Stanford University dating from the 1880s and Stanford's beautiful church.



It was great fun to be in NYC for Halloween which is a huge event there! For several days people were walking around in costumes and the parade up Sixth Avenue (with a reported 50,000 participants) is a very individual affair with only a handful of floats. I was tipped off to go look at the preparations in advance of the parade, especially the participants' paraphernalia laid out



for them to collect for marching.

This guy we saw being interviewed during prep time and he is heading home when we are. We also enjoyed the view of the Empire State Building in Halloween colors.



I was on boats both to visit Staten Island where I had never been (there is a small historic Richmond Town there) and to see the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island.



At One

World Trade Center the 9-11 Memorial Museum is very moving, particularly the mosaic of 2983 unique blue watercolors commemorating those who died and titled *Trying To Remember the Color of the Sky on That September Morning* .



The only other museum I visited was the Rubin Museum of the Art of the Himalayas which was very



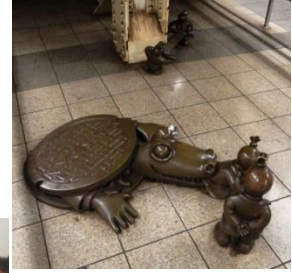
informative and memorable.

For gluttony it was Joe Junior's diner around the corner from our hotel for breakfast every morning where just listening to the conversations was part of the joy, and the memorable pastrami sandwich from Junior's (famous for cheesecake) in Brooklyn and Times Square!

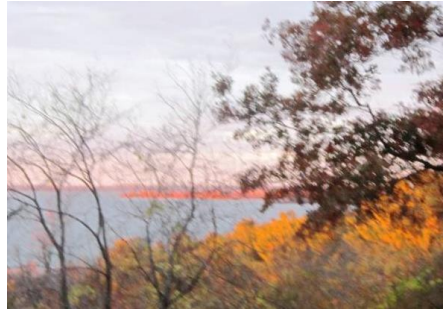


We saw the famous Wall Street Bull and, of all things, whimsical art in the subway!

The train trip to Boston was largely along the coast with lovely fall colors, sloughs and transition to New England architecture.



On the North Shore in Swampscott, Marblehead and Ipswich I had more fall color. Marblehead dates



back to the 1600's and is considered the "birthplace of the American Navy".

I always forget just how much rock there is in New England! Marblehead's lighthouse dates from 1896.



I also went to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts where I found a collection of Benin bronzes some of which resembled my collection. I had not remembered the rotunda and dome created by John Singer



Sargent in his studios in London and South Boston and then applied to the structure..

In Washington, DC I visited the fabulous recently-opened National Museum of the History of African American Culture which I highly recommend. The new location of the Textile Museum on the GWU campus is superb and I enjoyed its then-current exhibition of Batacori textiles from Okinawa.



In the National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden, where I used to often attend jazz concerts in the summer when I lived in DC, I found another one of Robert Indiana's LOVE sculptures (we have one in Paris across from the Louvre), this one AMOR. Outside the EPA Headquarters building were exhibits on how to create rain gardens to provide for good ecological runoff, which two of my daughters have installed at their homes. And in the USAID office there was a temporary Berlin wall exhibit which harkened back to my visit there earlier this year. I was staying in Alexandria and enjoyed walking its historical Potomac

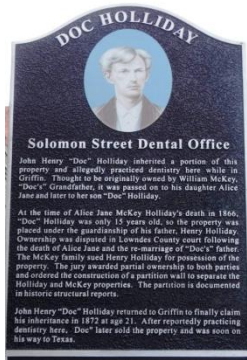


riverfront walk and old town.

A cousin now lives in Griffin, GA 40 miles south of Atlanta. A town that was founded in 1840, laid out with broad boulevards, it prospered due to cotton and the railroad, and has some lovely period



architecture, shops and live theater. Perhaps its most famous native son was the notorious cowboy John "Doc" Holliday. Then the "oreo" cows (Belties) near Columbus, GA captured my



attention.



A friend in Chattanooga is restoring a 90 year old stucco house and we treated ourselves, as usual, to



oysters at The Boathouse on the river.

Chicago was, as always, vibrant. I was invited to a splendid performance of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra with dynamic French guest conductor Emmanuel Krivine, who in January, 2017 becomes the Music Director of the French National Symphony in Paris. I have never attended symphony in Paris and am now very motivated to do so!

The skyline is ever evolving and I paid a first visit to the Driehaus museum, the former Nickerson house



built in 1879. Although the glass dome was not created by Tiffany, there are many Tiffany pieces in the displayed collections.



My trip concluded via Amtrak from Chicago to Ann Arbor. Due to severe windstorms we were held up in Jackson, MI, just 35 miles west of A2 for almost three hours until it was considered safe to proceed!

I visited a new ecologically positive house and found one technology for cooling (i.e. the tower) similar to that I had seen used in Iran centuries ago!

