

CHUCK HATTERSLEY

**OVER and UNDER,
AROUND and
THROUGH**

**Stories of Travel, Adventure
& Times to Remember**

Over and Under, Around and Through
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Charles Marshall Hattersley

Fathers' Footsteps
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Cover picture: Walter's Wiggles on the trail to
Angel's Landing, Zion National Park, Utah

*This book is dedicated to my lovely wife Ruth
for her constant companionship and support.*

*Much appreciation must be addressed to our
oldest son Mark who served as editor and
technical consultant, as well as being the
author of the last entry, Fathers' Footsteps.*

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Fathers' Footsteps

PREFACE

I was born in Burma (now Myanmar) in 1923 where my parents served as Baptist missionaries for over ten years. We moved back to the United States when I was but a year old, and I have pleasant memories of growing up in Monrovia and then Pasadena, California with my philosophy professor father, my earnest and caring mother, my sister and two brothers.

After serving three and a half years in the army during the Second World War, the last year and a half in Germany, I graduated from the University of California, Berkeley and married a lovely lady named Ruth who was working as a Sears Roebuck catalog copywriter at the time. I worked for Sears for 25 years in Chicago (where I met Ruth) and another 10 years in Los Angeles, then spent the last 10 years of my working life as Vice President of Marketing at Covercraft Industries in Northridge, California. Retiring at age 65, I served as editor of the monthly newsletter for the Point Vicente Interpretive Center, a small marine museum in Rancho Palos Verdes, California for over 18 years, during which time I wrote most of the stories that follow.

This book will devote its attention primarily to interesting and sometime amusing events experienced over these past ninety years. Most of the stories take place in the United States, but once or twice we visit Europe or some other far away place for a special happening or object of interest. Descriptions of scenes of great natural beauty and interest are included, and most chapters are arranged in roughly chronological order

although they are sometimes grouped around similar experiences that took place at different times.

The period covered is from the late 1920's to 2013, the year I reached my 90th birthday and retired to the sanctity and bliss of home in Rancho Palos Verdes, California with Ruth, my wonderful wife of 57 years. Together we raised three great children, all successfully living near us in Southern California, and we now count four fine grandchildren among our family members.

Over the years, I have managed to squeeze in many rounds of golf, many miles of hiking and, with Ruth, countless miles exploring various parts of the U.S. and Canada by car and truck with our fifth-wheel trailer. Join me in the stories that follow, as I revisit some of the unforgettable people, events and places that have made life full and memories rich.

Chuck Hattersley



OVER and UNDER, AROUND and THROUGH

**Stories of Travel, Adventure
& Times to Remember**

CHAPTER 1

STAR LIGHT, STAR BRIGHT, A BILLION STARS I SAW THAT NIGHT

Summer vacation time was here and I, at age four, was ready for adventure. My parents, two older brothers, older sister and I were going camping at Mammoth Lakes on the east side of the Sierras and the trip promised to be a long and arduous one. Nowadays, it's an easy six-hour drive on Highways 14 and 395, but in 1928 the journey from Los Angeles to Mammoth was far different. To begin with, there were no freeways. And then there was that nasty stretch of unpaved road from Mojave to Lone Pine that we would have to navigate.

We had a 4-cylinder Buick "touring car" which would be pulling a luggage trailer filled with our camping equipment. Forty-five miles an hour was top speed pulling that heavy load with the six of us crammed into the old auto. On top of that, the car's normal procedure was to boil over any time we climbed a hill of any length. As a result, the family had given it the biblical name of *Job* because, like Job in the Bible, it had so many boils.

We left our Pasadena home about noon, planning to drive through the Mojave Desert at night to avoid the blistering heat. The first part of our trip was uneventful except for a couple of minor boils as we made our way through La Canada and Newhall and then up Mint Canyon, following the route to Palmdale and Lancaster. Those future cities were then merely wide spots in the road, so we pushed on to Mojave, filling up with gasoline

to prepare for the rough road ahead. Being the smallest, I was crammed into the middle of the front seat between my father and mother and we were all hot and miserable. Car air conditioning was but a twinkle in the eye of some future inventor and we were paying the price for our early adventurous nature.

Darkness was falling as we pulled out of Mojave heading north and the narrow road soon turned to dirt with an unpleasant, washboard surface. Bumping along at 25 to 30 miles per hour, the city lights quickly disappeared in the background and the stars came out in magnificent brilliance on that moonless, crystal clear night. We pushed ahead through the desolate, trackless desert following the bright patch laid down by our headlights until, suddenly, it was pitch black. Our headlights had shut off without warning and we were forced to pull quickly to a stop. No light could be seen in any direction except that from the stars overhead. Driving further was impossible.

To make the best of a miserable situation, we flung our bedrolls out on the ground and clambered into them to wait out the sunrise. There in the middle of the Mojave Desert I hunkered down, eyes tightly closed in my cozy sleeping bag with my senses telling me that nothing existed on the face of the earth but the close-at-hand members of my family. Only at that point in time did I gain the courage to gaze skyward and drink in a milky way so brilliant and clear that it seemed close enough to touch.

Shooting stars danced across the sky, highlighting the celestial wonder. My four-year-old eyes were filled with amazement as I slowly drifted off to sleep. Since that night long ago, I have never seen such a wondrous display, such an awe-inspiring sight, such a heavenly spectacle. I think of it at times these days as I lie in bed dreaming and wondering where this old world came from, and where it is going on its long journey.



Chuck Hattersley, ready to hit the road in 1928

CHAPTER 2

FLASH FLOOD SURPRISE

The year was 1929. My family and I were headed on a vacation trip to a camping spot near Flagstaff, Arizona, our small car jammed with the six of us and pulling a small luggage trailer. It was the middle of June and the weather was insufferably hot with the result that we were traveling in the middle of the night to escape the searing temperature. The moon was bright, but now and then ominous clouds masked its light, and flashes of lightening could be seen in the distance. We were in the middle of nowhere. No city lights were visible in any direction and, since the main highway was under repair, we had been diverted to a rough dirt detour that stretched endlessly into the night.

A big bump at the bottom of an arroyo woke me from a fitful sleep and, as we climbed out the other side of the dry wash, I complained wearily that it seemed like this night would never end.

A couple of hundred yards further, we came to a fork in the road but the signs giving directions had been obliterated. Which way should we go? My father had seen a man sitting on the bank of the arroyo – maybe he could give us directions. Rather than turning the car and trailer around, father walked back to query the man as to the right route to Flagstaff while the rest of us stayed in the car trying to squeeze in a few moments of sleep while we were stopped.

Soon father reappeared, asking us all to come with him. Sleepily and grudgingly we obeyed, but just a moment's walk brought us to a sight that literally took our breath away. The dry arroyo through which we had passed not five minutes before was filled from brim to brim by a raging torrent. The clouds we had seen had apparently dropped their load somewhere upstream and we had just beaten the resulting flash flood. Flashing through our minds was the horror of what would have happened if we had been in the middle of the wash when the flood came – we would surely have been a headline about a family losing their lives in an Arizona arroyo.

The man father had gone back to see was sitting on the other side of the raging waters, much too far away for verbal communication, so there was nothing for us to do but guess at the right direction and continue driving. We apparently guessed right, because we soon came to the end of the detour and found a sign pointing toward Flagstaff, our eventual destination.

There is luck in this game of life, and we had just experienced a good share of it!



Siblings Joe, Marion, Chuck and Paul Hattersley

CHAPTER 3

THE LONG BEACH EARTHQUAKE

It was ten minutes before 6 p.m. on March 10, 1933 and I, a skinny nine-year-old kid, was romping around in the front yard of our house at 1038 Elizabeth St., Pasadena. The sun was sinking in the west and my mother would soon be calling me to come in for supper when something very new, strange and frightening occurred.

Suddenly “Terra” was no longer “Firma” as the earth danced around me, the ground swaying and shaking, and frightened people streamed out of their houses and into their yards. Cars driving by on our quiet, tree-lined street stopped and questioned the growing crowd: “What happened?” they asked. “An Earthquake!!” we responded. Since there had been few if any quakes in Southern California for as long as most people could remember, we were getting a first-time-in-a-long-time demonstration of the power of Mother Nature.

I vividly remember that evening. My oldest brother and sister were away from home at college and my other brother was off somewhere, too. I do recall that my parents and I were the only ones in town and my parents had to go to some kind of a meeting that night which left me at home all alone. I remember going to bed and waiting in dread for the scary aftershocks which kept coming and coming, hoping and praying that they would stop, and wishing that my parents would come home so I wouldn’t be alone. After all, I was just a little kid. The

folks finally returned and I dropped off to sleep as the aftershocks slowly died away.

We were all familiar with the sinister San Andreas Fault, which sliced the state of California into vertically oriented sections, but it hadn't displayed a case of upset stomach since the mid 1800s. We had heard about the terrible San Francisco quake of the early 1800s but nothing had happened recently and, as a result, nobody paid much attention to the possibility of danger from earth movement and even less to the quality of home and building construction. This became abundantly clear to us a few weeks later when the streets of Long Beach had finally been cleared and we were able to drive down there to see what it looked like. What we saw was a frightening shock!

Long Beach Polytechnic High School was the crowning example. The top of the school held a giant dome, which had collapsed and crushed the area below it. It was just lucky that the quake hadn't come 'til nearly 6 pm, well after all the students had departed, or hundreds would have been killed. Many brick buildings had collapsed, houses were shaken off their foundation and streets were badly damaged. Much work would be needed to return the city of Long Beach to a habitable condition.

The drastic damage done by this mild quake raised the awareness of the citizens of California to the fact that we needed stricter building codes, and the state legislature went to work on it immediately. Longfellow Elementary, the school I was attending, along with a number of other

schools, was condemned and our classes for the next two years were held in tents while the main building was rebuilt and reinforced.

The culprit had been the Newport-Inglewood Fault that had delivered a relatively mild 6.3 (Richter Scale) shake to the area with the epicenter three miles southwest of Newport Beach. The Long Beach earthquake had done a lot of damage but loss of life had happily been minimal. It fortuitously served as a warning of the dire necessity of improvement in construction and building standards in Southern California.



Chuck in the pre-skateboard era

CHAPTER 4

LIVER DIE – I THINK I'D RATHER DIE

Once a month, the dreaded day would arrive. Liver was to be served that night, and my brother Joe and I girded for the mighty battle. Would we succumb and eat the noxious stuff? The rules for the skirmish were clearly understood: We must eat the liver before we would be given our dessert or could leave the table.

It didn't take us long to consume the rest of the meal, leaving the lonely liver languishing there on our plates. Now the battle of the wills began. Could we please look so agonized, so miserable, so revolted, so nauseated that our parents would feel compassion and release us from the dreaded task? The chances seemed faint, but we resolved to give it our supreme effort.

Now I must digress and tell you that brother Joe, two years older than me, was a very good boy, almost always doing what he was supposed to. But in our dining room were tall built-in cabinets with hollow wooden posts at their corners stretching nearly to the ceiling. Our parents had given up on our eating the liver quickly, and had left the room. Imagine my amazement when solid-citizen Joe grabbed his serving of the dreaded liver in his hand, dragged his chair over to one of the cabinets, stood up on the chair and dropped the offending morsel down the post, quickly returning to the table.

Now he sat there with a guilty smile on his face, and I was flabbergasted! Joe never did things like that. And

his move was too obvious! He couldn't have eaten it that fast. Our parents would be suspicious! But his empty plate looked extremely attractive compared to mine, and about ten seconds of hard thinking brought me to the realization that down-the-post was the only answer and I'd have to take my chances. So down the post my serving of liver went and I, like Joe, sat there with a slightly sheepish look on my face.

A few moments later, Mother returned to the dining room and, seeing our empty plates exclaimed, "You good boys!" It didn't seem to occur to her that we had pulled a remarkably fast disappearing act. She brought us our desserts and we downed them quickly.

Either because Mother, in the back of her mind, suspected some kind of trickery in regard to the fast disappearance or because she decided that the battles involved in getting us to eat the stuff were doing more harm than the good we were receiving, she stopped serving liver. And the tasty morsels just lay there at the bottom of the pillar, rotting away, undoubtedly nourishing some hungry termite and possibly adding just a touch to the aromatic atmosphere of the room.

Maybe when archaeologists dig into the ancient ruins of our old Pasadena house many centuries from now, they will discover two very desiccated liver pieces at the bottom of two tall pillars and wonder how they arrived at that unusual location.

CHAPTER 5

FORGOTTEN CALICO and ODESSA CANYON

Easter vacation meant travel time. My father was a philosophy professor, my mother a homemaker, and we kids were still in school, so we were free to take a full one-week trip. I was 12, my brother Joe 14, and a short trip to the ghost town of Calico (near Barstow, California) seemed like a great idea. So off we went with our six year old 1929 Buick towing a 15-foot travel trailer on a springtime adventure. Little did we realize what an adventure it would turn out to be!

In the days before it was restored and made into a commercial venture, Calico was simply a desolate group of abandoned wooden buildings with no inhabitants except for an occasional jackrabbit or coyote to overcome the solitude. Rising above it were desiccated pastel colored hills which had once housed hundreds of working mines but now, with many deserted mine tunnels showing, looked like dried up Swiss cheese. Joe and I spent a couple of hours with our flashlights carefully poking around the abandoned mines but then returned to the car to look for other things of interest.

As we prepared to leave, a car drove up and a brief conversation with the driver told us that there was a very interesting drive through a place called Odessa Canyon just a few miles down the range of hills. It was mid afternoon and we had a couple of hours of daylight, so off we headed in that direction.

Odessa Canyon didn't look very interesting at first but we figured we might as well give it a try – the other driver had said it was a fascinating trip.

Just a mile or so up the canyon, the road split and we found ourselves on a one-way road going up the canyon and it was too late to turn around. Not to worry – the road would soon return to the junction and then we could begin to look for a place to put up for the night. Our rig was completely self-sufficient. But then the character of the canyon began to change from a wide-open valley to a narrow slot canyon and we found ourselves following a tortuous defile snaking along between precipitous vertical canyon walls with scarcely room for us to negotiate the turns.

Since a trailer doesn't exactly follow the path of its pulling vehicle, we found our home on wheels scraping the cliffs a number of times and we began to anxiously look ahead for the end of this labyrinth. It was a one-way street, so even if we had found a wide spot, we couldn't have just turned around and retraced our steps. Then as we rounded another corner, there, horrifyingly in front of us was a hill that looked like it went straight up in the air.

How could we possibly pull our trailer up the monstrous hill? At the bottom, the first wide spot we had seen gave us a chance to pull over and ponder our next move. While there, the first car we had seen since we left Calico passed us and pulled up the hill.

In retrospect, we should have just sat there and waited 'til twilight when no more cars would have been coming through, turned around and retraced our steps, going the wrong way on the one-way road. My father was an excellent philosophy teacher but in retrospect, bless his heart, I've got to fault his judgment at that point. "Everybody out" was his command as he prepared to literally will the car and trailer up the hill.

With the engine turning at maximum revs, he attacked the hill at top speed and full force, grinding sickeningly to a halt about half way up to the top. There the car and trailer sat, suspended in mid air while we all trembled in concern. Trying to back the rig down that narrow, precipitous mountain looked to be frighteningly difficult. We were in deep trouble! What to do?

When all seemed lost, brother Joe climbed the hill on foot and, thank God, there sitting at the top was the car which had just passed us with an old prospector sitting in it. He had recognized our problem and was waiting to see if we needed a hand. Whew! Did we ever!

The old fellow had a long, heavy rope, which he tied to his rear bumper and to our front bumper. The crown of the hill was so abrupt that the prospector's car was not visible from ours, but with Joe standing at the top of the hill giving hand signals and me standing alongside the trailer with a block in my hand, ready to stop our rig from rolling backward, we took part in the desperate attempt to haul our car and trailer up the hill.

Fortunately the hill was paved, which gave us good traction. The engines roared, the tires ground, the clutches screamed and burned as the hill was slowly and painfully conquered inch by inch. The stench of burning rubber filled the air as the two cars and trailer finally pulled to a stop at the top of the hill.



Family camping in the mid 1920s

It was getting late in the evening so we decided to spend the night up there, far from civilization and we asked the prospector to have supper with us. After all, he had just saved our lives! And a very interesting old gentleman he turned out to be as we broke bread sitting in our travel trailer. He was prospecting for gold but hadn't had a lot of luck. He seemed to really appreciate a home-cooked meal.

We killed a rattlesnake as it slithered under the trailer, so Joe and I decided to sleep inside. And after a good night's rest, we followed the tortuous road down the other side and made our way back to civilization, having escaped the canyon relatively unscathed.

I went back to Odessa Canyon several years later in the late 1940s. I was on a geology excursion with a bunch from Pasadena Junior College and five of us fellows were riding in a 1941 Dodge Fluid Drive. You know what? The car couldn't make the hill. Four of us had to get out and push.

About 30 years later, I again had the opportunity to go back and take another look. A business trip to Las Vegas for a trade show took me right by Calico, so I decided to drive up and look for that treacherous hill to relive the vivid memories of that moment long ago. But I was sorely disappointed. The road wasn't open any more and only a few motorcycle tracks were there in its place.

I guess you could take a cycle out there and ride through Odessa Canyon, but no automobile will have to face that frightening experience again. And maybe that's just as well!

CHAPTER 6

MY MOST UNFAVORITE TEACHER

She was a large woman, over six feet tall, a person who looked like she could handle herself in a dark alley. I never had her for a class and maybe if I had, I would have found her to be a charmer. But I hadn't and she wasn't and I kept running into her in unfortunate situations, a few of which I will recount here. Mrs. Motsinger was her name but most everybody referred to her as Mrs. Mopslinger, certainly a logical transmogrification.

My first encounter with Mrs. Motsinger was one fine day when I was feeling on top of the world. The school I attended had the neatest, slickest, polished wooden railings down the middle of its wide double stairways. At times when nobody was around, I would slide down with blinding speed, barely able to suppress a wild and wooly Tarzan call, the exhilaration almost too much for me to cope with. But on this fine day, just as I was halfway down the happy slide, Mrs. Mopslinger stepped through the door at the bottom of the stairs.

Fixing me with a baleful glare, the words venomously spewed from her mouth: "Charles, you go back to the top of those stairs and come down the way you're supposed to!" "Yes, Mrs. Motsinger," I dutifully replied. Now I really had no reason to be mad at her because it was against the rules to slide down the banisters and I knew it. But the next encounter...

It was lunchtime and I had taken my sack lunch to the cafeteria to eat with my friends. My custom was to draw a glass of water to have with my lunch, but today the student's water spigot didn't work. One of my teachers, Mr. Marshall, a pleasant and extremely mild mannered man was in the teacher's line and I asked him if I could use their dispenser. He smiled and nodded affirmatively, so I went back to get my glass. But by the time I returned, Mr. Marshall had moved on and guess what? The dreaded Mopslinger was approaching. I hesitated but realizing that I had been given the OK, moved up to the teachers' water outlet. "Charles, what are you doing here?" roared the Mopslinger. "But Mr. Marshall said..." "You go back where you belong and don't let me catch you sneaking in here again!"

I slunk away, my tail between my legs. I dared one glance back and Mr. Milktoast (I mean Mr. Marshall), catching my eye, shrugged his shoulders, shook his head and smiled sorrowfully. He had observed the entire sequence, but he was as afraid of the Mopslinger as I was. As I have pointed out, she was a very large woman, must have outweighed Mr. Marshall by 50 pounds, stood maybe seven feet tall and, without question, armed with nothing more than a rolling pin could have warded off a whole gang of muggers.

The third and last experience I will relate is really pretty funny in retrospect, but I didn't see the humor at the time. The Mopslinger was substituting for the day for Mr. Dixon, our really nice guy General Science teacher, but one of the students was having a problem.

His name was Pierre Cossette and a word about him is in order. I haven't seen the fellow for many years but, a number of years after this incident, he was the producer of the extremely successful Will Rogers follies back in the Big Apple. On this particular day, however, he hadn't yet earned his stripes and, worse than that, he was in the unhappy situation of having his pants' zipper stuck in the downward position. He came to class in this inglorious condition and immediately repaired to the cloakroom to remove the offending garment so as to more easily work on it. Pierre apparently wasn't a very good zipper mechanic because, as the end of the class drew near, he was still holed up in the cloakroom trying to solve the embarrassing problem.

I was, at that point, sitting in class minding my own business when with absolutely no warning, the fellow sitting next to me whispered, "We're going to swipe Pierre's pants and fling them out the window", an idea which immediately struck me as being highly amusing. I could just picture Pierre sitting there in his skivvies wondering how he was going to escape.

A few minutes later the bell rang and we all got to our feet and started to leave when, suddenly, the information raced throughout the remaining students that Pierre's pants had been waylaid. I immediately burst into hilarious and raucous laughter, a profound mistake, I quickly discovered as the Mopslinger stepped forward, screaming in stentorian tones: "*Charles Hattersley, what did you do with those pants?*" "I didn't do any thing with

them”, I retorted meekly. *“Well, you go out and find them right now!”*

I left the room and wandered around for a few minutes but finding no pants, returned to the classroom. Thankfully, somebody had already returned Pierre’s pants, whether up-zippered or down-zippered I never found out. The Mopslinger had disappeared without a trace. Heaving a sigh of relief, I went to my next class.

To have such a traumatic and outrageous occurrence take place in her classroom was apparently too much for the Mopslinger to tolerate. Why she had zeroed in on me, I’ll never know, but she had, and she proceeded to report me as the culprit to everybody in the school with any authority from the principal on down.

Mrs. Motsinger has, since that day, resided at the top of my hate list and to this day I still privately retaliate occasionally even though this infamous series of events took place many, many years ago. I have a six-foot tall inflated “punch-me-clown” with the words MOPSLINGER printed across the front. Whenever I feel put upon, whenever someone gives me a real hard time, I give it a few healthy whacks across the chops!! Goodness! That makes me feel better!!!

CHAPTER 7

THE HUNT FOR HIDDEN MINERALS

It was 1942 and I was a geology major at Pasadena City College. The geology department was marvelous, with two top-notch teachers who fanned our interest in the subject, leading to a fascination that would last through my entire life.

The highlight of the year was to be the weeklong spring vacation excursion, this year to Death Valley. We read up on the geology of that fascinating place and in particular the minerals found there, our reading zeroing in on a one-locality mineral (one found only in that location in the entire world) called Meyerhofferite. We were all "rock hounds" so we salivated when we thought of the treasures we hoped to find. Equipped with tents, bedrolls, Coleman stoves and provisions, we started out on our trek.

The mineralogy reference book told us that Meyerhofferite came in translucent, colorless to white tabular crystals, which might be as big as an inch square and a quarter inch in thickness. We had heard that they were found in some of the abandoned borax mine shafts, so we all came equipped with flashlights and various types of lanterns. Pete, one of our more seriously inclined members, even had a miner's lamp which fitted on his head, burned carbide crystals with a small flame protruding from the front and a reflector behind it to magnify the light.

Every time we found an abandoned mine shaft, we checked it out but the end of the day's search was approaching and we still had found nothing. Just as we were ready to pack it in, one of the fellows called from high up on the hillside, "I found it". So up the hill we all scrambled to see what was there.

It was a secure looking horizontal mine tunnel dug into the side of the hill, just tall enough so we could crawl in without banging our heads. And a few yards inside the entrance, we began to see white crystals protruding from the roof of the tunnel. I was ready with my geology pick. Pete with the carbide lamp was next to me so we worked together, he supplying the light, while I did the digging and he preparing to catch the sample so as to keep it from dropping.

A few blows with my pick brought down a nice looking specimen of the crystal, and we both leaned forward quickly to examine our booty.

Suddenly, somebody was swatting me on the head – Pete's carbide lamp had lit my hair on fire and my friend, Joe, kneeling next to me, had beat out the flame.



Undaunted, we re-examined the prize we had just disengaged and saw that it contained fine quality Meyerhofferite crystals big as life. So we proceeded with our excavation to provide samples for each of the eight or ten of us who were in the tunnel. Shortly thereafter, we crawled from the tunnel and drove back to our campground, feeling like we had just struck gold.

The week's geology excursion turned out to be a resounding success, highlighted by the glorious specimens we had found. I added the Meyerhofferite crystals to my budding mineral collection, showing them off to friends and visitors.

The Second World War was already in full swing and knowing that I would soon be drafted, I enlisted in the air corps. I left a few months later and didn't get home for more than a couple of days at a time for close to three and a half years. And when I did return home for good, one of the first things I did was look at my prized mineral collection.

The beautiful piece of Malachite was still there as were the lovely Amethyst and Tourmaline specimens. The other samples stood out with the same beauty that I remembered from years past. But where was the Meyerhofferite? It was gone! But in the corner of one of the display compartments lay some white powder that looked much like flour. What would flour be doing there? Then the explanation dawned on me.

The Meyerhofferite crystals had developed in bone-dry Death Valley as they could form only where the relative humidity is close to zero. Meyerhofferite is a borax mineral in an anhydrous state (that is, with no water in its chemical makeup), which simply couldn't stand the higher humidity of the climate in Pasadena, my home town at the time. The crystals had simply taken on moisture, disintegrated and collapsed into a white powder. To keep a sample in its crystalline state in a more humid climate, one would have to maintain it in a vacuum.

After having been so much in love with the subject of geology in my younger days, upon returning from the war, I decided that I didn't like the kind of work it involved and changed to a business and marketing major. To me, however, geology still remains a fascinating subject, one that my wife and I dabble in and enjoy every summer when we take our vacation trips into the western mountains.

I went back to Death Valley with Ruth many years later and decided to look for the mineshaft with the Meyerhofferite crystals. We spent a couple of hours searching without success.

CHAPTER 8

BE PREPARED!

We were home from school for summer vacation and it was hot, a perfect day for a cool dip! All of us fellows rushed to the dressing room to see who could get into his swimming trunks first. The girls, not quite so eager, stood by the pool to cheer us on. I was really speedy that day, literally jumping out of my pants and shirt and into my trunks in record time. A short sprint took me to the edge of the pool and onto the wall from which it was our custom to dive. I was going to be first and win accolades from all the cute chicks standing there!

With a mighty effort and blinding speed I dove, hitting the water with a knifelike thrust that propelled me nearly across the pool. But as my body impacted the surface, terror suddenly struck. I felt something hit the top of my feet and intuition told me in a flash that it could be only one thing, my swimming trunks! I had neglected to tie the drawstring!

Frantically I curled my toes upward to keep the trunks from coming completely off leaving me exposed to the world, *au naturel*. Still submerged, I jackknifed, desperately grasping the garment hanging loosely around my feet, struggling to pull it up so as to cover my bare *derriere*. Finally sufficiently adjusted, I surfaced to be greeted by an appreciative and lusty round of applause from the viewing ladies who seemed enchanted by the incredible feat, which I had just performed.

“Bravo! Bravo! Do it again, do it again”, the audience cried. What an embareassing (sic) situation!



The Author, Charles Marshall “Chuck” Hattersley

CHAPTER 9

JEEP JAMMIN' IN GERMANY

It was 1946 and I was a young kid doing “my thing” in Germany, “my thing” being the job of battalion mail clerk for the 607th field artillery of the 71st infantry division. The European war was over and we were looking forward with grim anticipation to hearing when we would be transferred to the Pacific front for the impending attack on Japan. But for now, we could just sit around in occupation and take it easy, and I was the lucky guy - I had my own jeep to drive the 30 miles to Augsburg every day to pick up the mail and bring it back to the small town of Rain am Lech where I was stationed.

Most days I could accomplish my duties in about four hours and then would have the rest of the day to myself. Because of the monumental importance of my job, I didn't have to do any KP or guard duty at night. Thus I had a lot of time for reading and, even more important, I started teaching myself how to play the piano using the old upright in our clubhouse.

The autobahns (super highways of Germany) had all been ruined by Allied bombs, so the only roads available were narrow backcountry lanes, which often made driving quite an adventure. The German people were using these same roads and, since their cars and trucks were mostly immobilized or the owners were unable to get any gasoline, the roads were filled with horse or oxen driven vehicles, which invariably drove right down the center of the road. Thus there were numerous hazards

that had to be avoided in my daily drives and I vividly recall several hair rising experiences where I missed a slow-moving obstacle by the hair of my chinny chin chin.

One fine fall day, as I was cruising along a rural lane on my daily drive to Augsburg at about 45 miles per hour (a speedy pace for that narrow, winding road), I came over the top of a slight rise and there, spreading across the full width of the road ahead of me was a large flock of geese being driven by a young girl. Those geese were big animals and running into them would have been a complete disaster to my prized jeep, which would have put a quick halt to my driving adventures.

When the young lady saw me coming, she panicked and screamed at the big birds to get off the road but, of course, they just stood there and stared at me like you would expect dumb birds to do. I jammed on the brakes and screeched to a halt, barely avoiding splattering the flock all over the road while the panic stricken girl struggled to get the stupid birds out of the way.

That was quite a scary experience but nothing like the one I had a few weeks later. Again I was motoring at a merry clip along a narrow winding backcountry road. Again I came over the top of a small rise and there in front of me taking up the center of the road was a "honey wagon" drawn by two stout oxen.

I must explain that a "honey wagon" (that's what the GI's called them) was a wagon carrying a large container loaded with excrement that the farmer was preparing to

use as fertilizer on his crops. Understandably, if you got anywhere near the thing, the stink was unbearable and a collision with it would have been a monstrous olfactory disaster.



The Jeep Jammer himself

Thank goodness, I was able to screech to a halt just before impact as the distraught farmer frantically tried to steer his oxen-driven cart to the side of the road. I gasp a sigh of relief when I think of the potential malodorous consequences of the collision that might have resulted.

I had numerous other near-incidents which I could relate but, instead, must tell you of one wonderful bonus that I was able to enjoy – a chance to see a bit of the U.S. being celebrated way over there in Germany.

The happy news had come through that Japan had surrendered, so we knew that we wouldn't have to go to the Pacific front, and the U.S. Army European baseball championship was being contested. Many major league baseball players had been drafted into the army and now, since the war was over, each army division had organized a baseball team to compete in an all-Europe American baseball league. The 71st division, the one to which I was attached, had a great team with a number of Major League stars and, as a result, they had established themselves as one of the two best teams in Europe. The championship game was to be held in Nuremberg, which was 50 or 60 miles from where I was stationed. I heard about this game a couple of weeks in advance and started scheming how to get there.

On the day of the game, I dispatched my mail duties very quickly and took off in my handy dandy jeep for Nuremberg as soon as possible. I got there just as the game was starting and it was a sight for sore eyes – a full sized baseball field stuck in the corner of the giant stadium where Hitler had given his dynamic orations to overflow mobs of several hundred thousand people. I remembered, as a teenager well before the war, seeing Hitler in the movietone news shows at the theatres (TV was yet to come) shouting out his hate-filled message with the crowd screaming "Sig Heil" and raising their

arms in the Nazi salute. Now, the baseball field took up no more than one ninth of the stadium floor.

I sat on the giant stone slabs that were used for seats and watched the game progress, realizing that I was in a very historic place. The bright red, white and black Nazi flags with their flashing swastikas, the raving throng and the flagrant displays of militant chauvinism were gone and, in their place, we were watching a raucous display of American sportsmanship. What a contrast!

Unfortunately I had to leave before the game ended to get back before dark so they wouldn't catch me sneaking in, and I never found out who won the game. But who cares? Thank goodness the war had ended and we could soon return to a normal existence. The jeep had been an asset in making life bearable for the last several months of my stay in Germany, but nothing matched getting home after three years of army life.

CHAPTER 10

CROSS COUNTRY ADVENTURE

To a couple of 21 year olds, a cross-country trip sounded like it would be a great experience. That's what army buddy Bob and I thought, especially since we were going to get paid to take it. The year was 1947; we had just returned from serving our country for over three years, the last couple in Germany at the close of World War II.

We were offered the option of taking discharge at Fort McArthur in San Pedro, where we had been inducted, or at New York City, where we had landed from Europe, with travel pay granted to San Pedro. We were both eager to get home but we could postpone that pleasure, couldn't we? "Let's take our discharge at New York City, use the travel money to do The City and then hitch hike across the country."

We were all set to leave when Bob fell ill and I was left to go it on my own, carrying a heavy barracks bag jammed with all my equipment including the portable typewriter I had "liberated" in Germany. It would be a long way, but I had thumbed many a ride in California before my army experience so I figured I could handle it.

A week in New York City was the first thing to enjoy, with free tickets to all the shows that I wanted to see and a very nice USO to use as a home base. But how do you get started hitching a ride out of a congested area like New York City with nothing but expressways and turnpikes in all directions?

Bright one morning I hopped the commuter train from New York to Philadelphia and, once in Philly, took a cab to the outskirts of town and stuck out my thumb. People were enthusiastically picking up veterans in uniforms in those days, so it was only a few minutes before I was on my first ride with the first target: Chicago.

I kept a log listing each ride through the entire trip, and there were a lot of them: 47 in total. The log has long since disappeared, but one ride stands out in my memory: on a pleasant sunny day in Iowa, I was picked up by four pretty young girls in a convertible. I would have been happy to ride with them all the way to California. But shucks, they took me only 20 miles.

As I got further west, I had to wait a little longer, but somebody would always show up and I never waited long. But when I got to Denver, I could see that the drive to Salt Lake City would be painstaking, and I wondered if I could make it in one day. This was long before the days of Interstates, and I would be going over U.S. Highway 40, which wound its way over lofty 11,700 foot Berthoud Pass through the Rockies.

An early morning cab to the outskirts quickly got me started, and the first ride dropped me part way across Colorado in a nondescript, dumpy looking town where a mining engineer picked me up. He was driving 90 miles to his work at an oil field because that dumpy town was the only place to live around there. As I talked with him on that long drive, I began to question the type of work that I had chosen; I had planned to be a geologist. I

figured I would probably either have to teach at a college or work out in the field living in an unpleasant place like him. That ride and conversation was an important factor in my changing my goals to a different type of work.

The next ride took me across the Utah border to the small town of Roosevelt. It was less than 100 miles to Salt Lake City, but nobody would pick me up. In desperation, I wandered over to the Greyhound station. Luck was with me – a bus was due and I climbed aboard just as the sun was going down.

The days of my catching an instantaneous ride every time I raised my thumb had ended, and I now faced the longest sparsely settled stretch of the whole trip – the 700 miles from Salt Lake City to Pasadena, my home. I was out on the highway early that morning, hopeful of getting a ride that wouldn't drop me in the middle of nowhere. I needn't have worried. Believe it or not, the second car that came by picked me up and took me the remaining 700 miles. It was a married couple, driving across the country and driving much too fast, a white-knuckle ride all the way. But we made it safely and they dropped me in Pasadena, about three miles from my house, at 9 o'clock in the evening, and the first car that passed, my 47th ride, picked me up and dropped me right in front of my home.

I walked in on my surprised parents, unannounced but very welcomed. I was finally home to stay for a while, for the first time in three years!

CHAPTER 11

LIFE'S MOST EMBARRASSING MOMENT

It was the night of the big dance. I brought along as my date a lovely girl who I had been surveying from afar for some time but had never ventured to ask out. Four carloads of us left the Berkeley campus of the University of California where I was attending school and headed to Mills College in Oakland.

As we stepped out of our cars and gathered in a circle in the parking lot, I realized that I was the only person who knew everybody in the group and it would be my responsibility to perform introductions.

Since some were only casual acquaintances, I commenced to discharge my responsibility with considerable trepidation, first cautiously introducing those I knew less well. My apprehensions diminished as I progressed without committing any major errors. My confidence soared as the numbers remaining to be named dwindled and were my closer friends.

I heaved a sigh of relief as I started the final introduction, my attractive date: "And last but not least, this is.....??" Holy smokes! My mind was a complete blank! I couldn't remember her name to save my life!

That humiliating experience took place a long time ago and, although I couldn't remember her name that night, never got up the courage to ask her out again, and

haven't seen her for many, many years, her name is indelibly imprinted on my mind to this day.

I wonder where Cerita Johnson is now and if she ever forgave me for that embarrassing memory lapse?



*A few years later, with Ruth and a gaggle of friends in Illinois.
Lots of names to remember...*

CHAPTER 12

MY CHICAGO WELCOME

It was a cold February night in Chicago. Low snow banks lined the streets and people walking the sidewalks hunched over in their heavy coats to ward off the biting wind, their breath condensing into billowing clouds. It was a night for sitting by the fireplace enjoying the warmth of the hearthside, but for me it was a time of exciting adventure.

I had been in the windy city just a month, driving my brand new car in from Detroit that very day, my old one having been sold in California just before I transferred from Los Angeles to Chicago. Thus I was enjoying an exhilarating experience as I drove around Chicago for the first time.

The downtown Loop explored, I ventured across the Chicago River to take a look at the "Near North Side," a crowded area filled with restaurants, bars, nightclubs and moderately upscale apartments. I felt footloose and fancy free, turning up first one street and then another, luxuriating in the freedom available to me for the first time in over a month. Suddenly I noticed something strange. The cars parked on both sides of the street were facing toward my rear and the realization struck that I was going the wrong way on a one-way street. A red light flashed in my rear view mirror... I was being stopped by the police.

"What are you doing driving the wrong way on a one-way street?" came the query. "I didn't see any sign," I protested. "Let's see your drivers license" was his response.

I pulled it out, a California one, and handed it to the officer. "That's no good here," he stated belligerently. I knew my license had to be good, but there was no arguing with this angry uniformed man on a dark street in a strange and unfamiliar city. "You're going to have to post a \$25 bond," he barked.

A quick check of my wallet revealed that I had just twelve dollars to my name so I told him I didn't have \$25. I offered to write him a check or to charge the \$25 to my credit card but he scoffed at the suggestion. "I'd be happy to take your check but the judge wouldn't accept it. I guess we'll just have to take you in to the station and you'll stay there until you can post bail."

The prospect of spending the weekend in jail was not a pleasing thought. It was Friday evening, my bank would not be open the next two days, and I didn't know a soul in town who could come and bail me out. (You must realize that this was 1955 and banks weren't open on Saturday.)

"It's cold out here. Come sit in our police wagon while we talk this over." With considerable trepidation I followed the cop's order, locking my car and trudging to his black-and-white, settling into the back seat while my assailant and his companion filled the front. Our

conversation dragged on and on as we talked about what seemed like nothing for an endless time. I looked at my shiny brand new car sitting on the lonely street just ahead and shuddered at the thought of leaving it there unprotected overnight in this not so wonderful section of the city. "What are these guys driving at? I don't understand what's going on. This is the weirdest, scariest thing I've ever had to deal with. Somebody get me out of this place." The whole episode was beginning to seem unreal!

The policemen surely must have thought I was the dumbest, most naive person in the world as I sat there trying to pacify them while shivering in fearful anticipation of what was going to happen next. Finally came the revelation: "Well, I guess we'll just make it a warning but if you want to do something for us you can."

The statement struck like a bombshell. I had heard rumors that some Chicago policemen would take bribes, but I was used to California where I had always been treated courteously and in a businesslike way the few times I had gotten a ticket. "Oh, I see, I see," I stammered. "I have just twelve dollars, a ten dollar bill and two ones. What do you want?" I waited.

"Oh, just give us the ones."

It was very dark in their police car but I swear I could literally hear them blush with embarrassment. Or maybe they were just irritated at getting such a tiny haul. I

didn't stop to ask but, with a gasp of relief, handed over the cash and high-tailed it to my car before they had a chance to change their minds.

A few weeks later I drove by the intersection where I had made the wrong turn to see how I had missed the "one-way" sign. Wacker Drive runs right next to the Chicago River and a right turn off it takes one northward onto a bridge over the river. The bridge had two lanes with a concrete divider in the center and there on a post in the middle of the street was a lone, battered, barely legible sign saying "One Way". If the city had set out with intent to mislead, it couldn't have done a better job.

Thus in one enlightening and nerve-racking event, I learned the ways of Chicago cops and received my Chicago welcome.



Chuck at work some years later back in Los Angeles

CHAPTER 13

OUR CHICAGO NEIGHBORS (Boyz 'N The Hood)

Most everyone has experienced a weird neighbor. I'll bet, if you gave it a shot, you could tell a story about an amusing or obnoxious or aggravating one. But I'll wager you can't match the story I'm about to tell you of our neighbors in a Chicago suburb called Riverside.

The town of Riverside, Illinois was laid out by Frederick Law Olmstead, the same man who designed Central Park in New York City and whose son laid out Palos Verdes Estates, California and much of the Palos Verdes Peninsula. Olmstead senior did his work in the 1890s and didn't put a single straight street in the plan for Riverside, making the winding lanes compatible with the Des Plaines River, which snakes through the town. Then he installed gas streetlights, which are still there and in use to this day. Nobody likes to drive through the town at night because they usually get lost. Into our first house (one of the more modest ones) in this lovely town my wife and I moved a year or so after our marriage.

Most of our neighbors were friendly, but those living two houses down the street from us were seldom visible. People seemed reluctant to talk about them until somebody finally confided to us that our nearly next-door neighbor was "Milwaukee Phil" Aldarissio, a reputed gangster and enforcer-gunman, quite a shock to us.

The first tangible evidence of our neighbor's "occupation" came one sunny spring day when Ruth, my wife, was wheeling our first-born son in a baby carriage down the sidewalk.



Chuck & Ruth's first home, Riverside, Illinois

In front of Milwaukee Phil's house, a man was shouting at him "you ain't nuttin' widout a gun" while Phil, screaming obscenities, stood on his front porch in his

dressing gown. Then out of the front door stepped a menacing looking man with his hand in his pocket and, apparently, a gun in it. Ruth quickly turned and hurried back to our house. We didn't hear any shots, so we surmised that nobody got hurt. Thus we had our first reality check and introduction to the malevolent nature of Mr. Aldarissio.

From time to time, our illustrious neighbor would have a group of visitors who would arrive in big Cadillac limousines. Joey Glimco, head of the Chicago cab drivers union was one of these and his chauffeur-bodyguard would escort him to the front door. Other sinister looking men would arrive from time to time for their "business meetings". But the neighborhood stayed quiet and peaceful and we simply avoided any contact with Milwaukee Phil and his friends. Our kids were growing (we now had two) and the oldest would soon be ready to start school. Then we noted a change nearby.

A short block away from us on a lovely, narrow side street, construction crews suddenly descended upon a large beautiful house. All the bushes were being removed from the yard, all the windows were being changed, and much excavation was being done. And then a rumor started wafting through the neighborhood: Phil, his drunken wife Molly and their neurotic son Dominic were going to move there.

We found out later that the bushes had been removed to avoid possible ambush and the windows had been changed to bulletproof glass. What they were digging,

we couldn't possibly guess. (We later discovered that Phil had constructed a subterranean cellar to store his considerable arsenal.) So Milwaukee Phil moved a block away from us and, into his vacated house two doors down moved his menacing looking bodyguard along with his mother, his floozy wife, Sophie, his baby daughter and his son Jimmy who was exactly the same age as our oldest boy.

We found out about young son Jimmy when, without warning, we discovered him one afternoon playing with our boys, age 2 and 4 in our back yard. We considered forbidding our children from playing with him but decided that at such a tender age there wouldn't be too much of a problem. We would have them play in our fenced-in back yard where we could keep an eye on them. We soon found Jimmy to be a skinny, aggressive kid who would usually tell the truth – except when it was a bit uncomfortable.

We also soon came into contact with Sophie who was from the 'sout' side of Chicago and she and Jimmy called my wife Ruth, "Root". We practically never saw the bodyguard father. Milwaukee Phil was "Uncle Phil" to Jimmy.

Jimmy was becoming more of a problem as he got older. We were glad when he and our oldest son started school; since Jimmy went to the Catholic school and ours to the public school, they saw less of each other. We were now actively discouraging their playing together after school

or on weekends. But Jimmy was always hanging around because he had nobody else to play with.

One day Jimmy became particularly troublesome and I ordered him to go home, giving him a firm push on his backside. A few moments later, Ruth got a phone call from Jimmy's grandmother who told Ruth that Jimmy had said I hit him and "his father would be very upset by this". This comment was particularly unnerving, as Sophie had told Ruth that her husband had a violent temper and she was afraid he would kill someone if he hit them. Ruth quickly assured Jimmy's grandma that I had not hit the boy but had simply guided him home. Whew! Jimmy was getting to be a real pain!

We never saw Phil and his bodyguard together as all their activities seemed, for some strange reason, to take place at night. Occasionally we would see Phil drive up in the daytime in his new Oldsmobile – he apparently wanted the fastest car available and Oldsmobiles were renowned in those days for their acceleration and speed.

One day my car pool dropped me across the street from my house. As I emerged from the car, another car pulled up behind us honking repeatedly. I glanced back to see who the boorish driver was. If looks could kill, I surely would have dropped dead on the spot. It was kindly old Uncle Phil in his Oldsmobile, snarling at me for holding him up for ten seconds. Was it a surprise that, when Uncle Phil's car got stuck in the ice and snow across the street from our house, none of our normally friendly neighbors ventured to offer him a hand?

After several years, we moved a few blocks away and thankfully never saw that bunch of hoodlums again. And just a year later, I was transferred to Los Angeles. As we were driving out of town on our cross-country trip with our three children (yes, we had added a third), we told them for the first time about Jimmy's gangster father and Uncle Phil. Our kids were stunned.

A post mortem on the activities of our neighbors is in order.

Milwaukee Phil was sent to prison for extortion; he eventually died there. Before his demise, he reportedly arranged to have his mistress' husband killed right before her eyes. His wife died of alcoholism and his son of an overdose.

The menacing bodyguard (whose name I have omitted in the interest of personal safety) was picked up by suburban Chicago police sneaking around the back of a restaurant with a pipe in his hand rolled up in a newspaper. He had previously lost a leg in some kind of an "accident." He eventually divorced Sophie and moved to Miami, taking Jimmy with him. Newspaper reports talked of him being too violent in temperament for even his gangster buddies.

We can only hope Jimmy found a different line of work.

CHAPTER 14

OUR CHILD IS MISSING

In 1968, I was transferred from Chicago to the Los Angeles area and our family settled temporarily in a rented house in Palos Verdes Estates while we searched for a home to buy. Our three children, ages 10, 8 and 5 missed their Chicago friends and were restless. I, adjusting to my new job, was spending long hours at work. On this particular day, arriving home in the late afternoon after my 25-mile drive from downtown Los Angeles, I found the house in an uproar. Where was Dave?

“I'm calling to report a lost child. Our son wandered away an hour or so ago. We've looked all over the neighborhood but we can't find him. Would you please help us?”

I anxiously talked to the Palos Verdes Estates police department, having just arrived home to find a frantic wife and a missing child. Our eight year old son Dave had told Ruth that he wanted to look around the neighborhood to find somebody to play with and she had agreed, giving him the usual warnings about staying close to home, watching out for cars, not staying long, etc.

David had wandered around the immediate neighborhood but, finding nothing of interest, moved to another street, looked some more, lost his direction, walked some more and finally wound up nearly two

miles from our temporary home, sitting on the curb crying.

A kind lady who lived nearby came out and asked Dave what was wrong and he told her he was lost. She asked him where he lived and he said he didn't know. (Ruth and I had made the grievous error of not insisting that our children memorize our new address before being allowed to go out to play.) She asked our son his name and he told her, David Hattersley. The lady then proceeded to look up the name Hattersley in the phone book.

Hattersley is quite an uncommon name. When I was in the army, many years before, I had visited the phone exchange at Fort Benning, Georgia where they had directories from every major city in the U.S. I checked the phone books for New York City, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Dallas and the Los Angeles area and found only one Hattersley listed, my parents who lived in Pasadena. It was therefore very surprising that our son's rescuer found a Hattersley listed in Palos Verdes.

This kind woman called the Hattersley number listed and asked the lady who answered if she knew a David Hattersley. She didn't and the conversation was about to be terminated when she suddenly stopped. "Wait a moment – I just received a letter addressed to a Hattersley family that isn't for us. Let me get it." She proceeded to fetch the misdirected letter and advised the kind woman that it was addressed to a Mr. and Mrs.

Charles Hattersley with an address on Via Coronel in Palos Verdes Estates.

“Our boy's name is David Hattersley, he's got black hair and blue eyes, he's wearing blue jeans and a white T-shirt and he's sort of skinny.”

I was giving the police further information about our son, who we were, and the circumstances involved, when a happy call came from the front of the house. “He's back!” Ruth yelled in to me. I quickly reported this to the police. When I finally got off the phone, I rushed to the front door where Ruth was standing hugging Dave.

The Good Samaritan had delivered our son to the address on the misdirected letter. She drove off before I even had a chance to meet and thank her.

Such is the joy of having little children and moving to a new city. We immediately sat our three kids down and made them memorize our temporary address and resolved that, when we moved into our permanent location, we would have them memorize our address before they ever stepped outside the door.

That frightening experience, still vividly in our minds to this day, took place many years ago. Today, those same three kids have long ago graduated from Rolling Hills High School, as well as college, and are off on their own, happily living successful, productive lives.



The family, still intact, a few months after Dave's adventure

CHAPTER 15

HEAVENLY DAZE

It was a beautiful summer Sunday morning and our minister Charles Heuser had decided to hold the church service outside on the patio overlooking the ocean.

This was a common occurrence on nice, warm summer days. The view from the Neighborhood Church was spectacular, with the waves crashing on the shore and sailboats lazily drifting by. What a peaceful and heavenly scene!

The service started nicely with no noisy speedboats passing to interrupt the solemnity of the occasion. But in the middle of the sermon, a small airplane approached flying very low, and the noise of its engine began to interfere with the congregation's ability to hear the message being preached.

Charles paused, looking skyward and the eyes of everyone in the audience followed his gaze.

It was soon apparent the plane was towing a large banner, which quickly came into focus. Emblazoned in brilliant, giant, red letters was a sales pitch the manufacturer desired to make to the nearby beachgoers:

Cruex for Jock Itch

Absolute silence descended on the assembled congregation while the minister, appearing temporarily

dumbfounded and tongue-tied, stood in stunned silence, a rare occurrence for him. In but a few short seconds, however, he was able to resolutely regain his equanimity and continue his sermon as if nothing had happened.

But maybe that's the reason why we seldom hold summer church services outside on the patio any more.

CHAPTER 16

SEARCHING FOR A PHOTO OP

I had been trying to get a close up picture of a moose, that homely but majestic creature of the north woods, but had been unsuccessful so far. We were in Grand Teton National Park camping with our kids enjoying the sheer beauty of that wondrous place and hiking the sylvan trails. Today it would be Cascade Canyon with wife Ruth, son Dave age 15 and daughter Robin age 12. Mark, age 17, had elected to go fishing. Hopefully he would catch some fish and I would get a good moose shot today.

Our scenic trail followed a lively roaring stream that rushed over giant boulders, wildflowers lining the banks in abundance. The sky was brilliant blue with not a cloud in view, the sun doing its utmost to melt the snow banks that lay at higher altitudes. As the day progressed, the stream started turning milky, tainted by the ground-up rock flour in the water from the melting glaciers in the high mountains above. Everything was perfect, except we hadn't seen a moose and our plans called for us to start home the next day. Were we going to be disappointed?

It was time for lunch, our stomachs growling in eager anticipation. Dave was leading, headed toward the stream, and I following 15 feet or so behind, my salivary glands working overtime. Next to the stream would be a glorious lunch spot. But suddenly Dave wheeled about,

screamed "moose" and flashed past me going the other way at top speed.

There, maybe 20 feet in front of me stood the biggest, meanest looking moose I could possibly imagine and he appeared greatly displeased, pawing the ground in agitation. We had apparently disturbed his noon siesta and he wasn't about to put up with that. He didn't look a bit like Bullwinkle, that happy cartoon character, but more like Tyrannosaurus Rex, ferocious dinosaur of bygone times.



Fortunately my camera was at the ready and it took about two seconds to aim, focus and fire, and one more to turn and sprint the other way, setting a 50-yard dash record in the process.

Suffice to say, since I am alive and well and here to relate this experience, Mr. Moose elected not to attack and we quickly retreated to the trail to consume our lunch, our day and our trip now complete.



Some other wildlife that has found the lens of Chuck's camera

CHAPTER 17

GOLFING HAS ITS DANGERS

My wife and I have had the pleasure of playing golf at both the highest and the lowest golf courses in the United States. The highest is located at Leadville, Colorado, well over 10,000 feet in altitude while the lowest is at Death Valley, about 175 feet below sea level. This is without question an accomplishment well worth bragging about, one that few people can lay claim to. But there are dangers that may be encountered when indulging in such high and low level golfing.

It was late August a few years ago and we were playing nine holes at the Leadville course, walking as always and pulling hand carts with our clubs. I was walking a little ahead of Ruth down the right hand side of the fairway, having already hit a splendid shot, and waiting for her offering. Ruth took a mighty swing but, as usual, hit the ball slightly off the toe of the club, which sent it to the right and maybe 30 or 40 yards ahead of me. As I stood there observing, a great big squirrel scrambled down from the nearby tree, sprinted over to her ball, picked it up between his chin and front legs and started high-tailing it toward his special winter hiding place.

Quick as a bunny and with lightning speed, I took off after the thief, brandishing a club (a four iron, as I recall) and yelling at the top of my lungs. The culprit couldn't run very fast carrying the ball so, with my sprinter speed, I was gaining on him rapidly. When I got within about

10 yards of him, he dropped the ball and ran for his life up the next tree.

I shook my fist at the miscreant, called him a dirty rottafrex and sternly told Ruth to keep her ball on the fairway to avoid additional incidents of this sort. But just as I was carefully giving her this profound and helpful instruction, I glanced down the next fairway and saw a different squirrel run right out into the middle of the fairway and grab the ball of some other unsuspecting golfer.

I wonder if that golfer added penalty strokes to his score. I, with great generosity, allowed Ruth to not add any to hers.

We decided at that point not to hit the ball too far and to hurry to reach it before some other squirrel took a notion to “squirrel it away.” (The Leadville golf course must be where they got that expression.) Despite our trepidation, we finished the round without any other wildlife happenings, and were happy to escape Leadville with sufficient balls to play another day.

And so, in April a few years later, we were encamped at Death Valley viewing the wonders of that amazing place. It was late afternoon and quite warm, but cool enough that a round of golf sounded like a keen idea.

Everything went well for the first few holes. The Furnace Creek Golf Course is a very nice course with many lakes and ponds, a real surprise for one located in the middle

of such a brutally hot spot. But as I teed off on the 6th or 7th hole, I noticed a couple of dogs trotting onto the course ahead of us to take a drink from a pond.



The intrepid and far-ranging golfers at a low point

We thought nothing of it since we had just come from Indian Country where stray dogs are constantly running all over the place. It wasn't 'til we got much closer and the "dogs" started glancing furtively over their shoulders at us that we realized they were coyotes. What are wild coyotes doing on a golf course, we exclaimed? But at least they weren't wolves, so we had no fear of them gathering into a pack and attacking us. And at least they didn't "squirrel away" our golf balls.

When we got within about 25 yards of them, the coyotes turned and silently slunk off into the Death Valley

underbrush. Their actions led me to think that coyotes are nicer than squirrels because squirrels have the nasty habit of stealing candy bars from golf bags or, as I described above, golf balls from the fairway. This train of thought also caused me to conclude that squirrels are pretty dumb. If they had managed to make off with Ruth's ball and stash it away, they would have broken their incisors trying to take a bite out of it when they went for a snack next winter.

Wildlife experiences like these illustrate the fact that you never know what you're going to run into on a golf course – which reminds me of the flock of Canadian geese we encountered on the course in Olympia, Washington. We really had to watch our step!

CHAPTER 18

LONDON CONNECTION

As the head of the Hattersley household, I do not like to admit that there have ever been any problems in my family. The Hattersley name harkens back to jolly old England, where most of my relatives were upstanding merchants, many in the Sheffield area. But during a trip back to England about 20 years ago, a profound scandal with the Hattersley name attached to it came to my attention. Let me tell you about it.

Ruth and I were on a bus tour of England, having first spent several days in London and then visiting a number of interesting and historic places. After a thoroughly fascinating trip, we were on our way back to London when the bus stopped at a shop alongside the highway.

The tourists were encouraged to buy from an available assortment of English-made woolens and gifts to take back home, thereby supplying the Brits with fresh American dollars. Ruth went in to take a look, but I was singularly disinterested in buying goodies so I stayed in the bus to kill time while we were stopped.

We had been traveling for better than a week and I had not seen a newspaper in all that time so, when the bus driver pulled out a tabloid newspaper and started reading it, I strolled to the front of the vehicle to peer over his shoulder and see what was going on in the world. Boy! Was I surprised at what I saw!

There, across the front page was this blazing headline:



My mouth flew open in amazement and I just about dropped my teeth. Right Honorable Roy Hattersley, Labour Party Deputy Leader, who is most likely some distant relative of mine (Hattersley is not that common a name, even in England), was caught in a scandal. Pictured were his wife and his girlfriend, both of whom looked hopelessly unattractive, plus a nice shot of

princess Di. Roy, big wheel in the labor party, had got caught. Well, well!

After absorbing the shock of seeing my last name in headlines, I slunk back to my seat to lick my wounds, my family name in tatters. You can bet that as soon as our bus deposited us in London, I rushed out to buy one of those tabloid papers to take home as a souvenir.

How many of you can boast of having your name in headlines plastered all over the front page of a newspaper, outshining even Princess Di?

CHAPTER 19

ALMOST LOST HER HEAD

We had spent a couple of days at Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park in Colorado, exploring the rim of the awesome 2,000-foot deep gorge carved by the Gunnison River. The vertically walled canyon is so narrow that it almost seems like one could throw a rock across to the other rim. A geologist's delight, the canyon's landscape was formed by the slow, continuous and unyielding process of erosion as the surrounding land was slowly thrust upward and the river carved its narrow channel through the uplifted rock, striving to reach the Colorado River for its eventual trip to the Pacific Ocean.

Rainy weather forced Ruth and me to retreat to the nearby town of Montrose, a small farming community in western Colorado. With time on our hands and weather unfit for golf, we lucked out – the county fair was in town. Little did we anticipate the experience we would soon share.

The fair was small, but a load of fun with the pelting rain beating like a drum on the corrugated metal roof and the 4H kids doing their thing with their pets. The animal show over, we stopped at a few of the small booths, buying a pink sweat shirt for Ruth with a big cow printed on the front – she's nuts about cows! And around the next corner, we came to a crowd of little kids sitting on the floor being entertained by a prestidigitator, the local magician.

We joined the adults standing at the back enjoying the antics of the kids and their entertainer. But, suddenly addressing the adults, the magician asked, "Do we have any housewives in the audience?" Now Ruth is not a forward person but, then again, she isn't all that backward. So on an impulse, my intrepid wife raised her hand whereupon the magician asked her to step forward. Expecting him to ask her to pull a rabbit out of a hat or some such simple trick, she joined him on the stage.

The entertainer then began extolling the virtues of his wonderful lettuce cutter, which he proceeded to demonstrate. It had a large hole at the top and a smaller hole, just the size of a head of lettuce at the bottom. The device had a large guillotine blade that flashed through the top hole and then cleaved the lettuces head in half with the greatest of ease.

Somehow, I really couldn't tell how, he sweet-talked Ruth into getting down on her knees with her head through the big hole at the top, her arms secured by smaller holes at the sides. Then he casually placed a head of lettuce in the lower hole, all the time, Ruth recounted to me later, whispering to her that she had no need to worry – no harm would befall her. But there she was, trapped like a felon in stocks, at the mercy of her tormenter, the young magician.

Now the clever fellow started telling a tale about the last time he had performed the stunt and how the person's head had mistakenly been chopped off and rolled off the stage. To prevent this from happening again, he

explained, he placed a basket on the floor to catch it in the event such a problem developed. From Ruth's point of view, she could see the mouths of the little kids agape with wonder, their eyes round like saucers as they stared at her with morbid fascination.

I was standing at the rear in a slight state of shock. This wasn't what I had expected at all. I had seen the trick pulled many, many years before but I didn't understand how it worked and the thought came to my mind, "what if he blows it and his mechanism malfunctions?" I knew that the trick was perfectly safe, but...

Perhaps I should have stormed to the front and demanded that Ruth be released immediately, but everything was happening so rapidly that my brain didn't respond. And then, without warning, the magician dropped the blade, which chopped the head of lettuce cleanly in half without touching Ruth's tender neck. The trick completed, he released her from the diabolical device's death grip and she stood up, heaving a sigh of relief as the audience cheered.

The show over, we retreated, slightly shaken, to our fifth-wheel trailer where Ruth placed her new bovine-inspired sweatshirt, her souvenir from the recent experience, in a drawer.

Next morning when we arose, a highly pungent odor assailed our nostrils and it seemed to be coming from my wife's drawer. It soon became obvious that the barnyard smell of the county fair had permeated everything, the

new sweatshirt being no exception. Before we could start on the next leg of our journey Ruth had to run the offending garment through the local launderette to render it compatible with our olfactory senses.

So, that's the story of how Ruth almost lost her head but did lose her barnyard smell. The "cow" sweatshirt remains one of her favorites; she still wears it now and then. And every time she does, I sweat just a bit, then chuckle, recalling our adventurous rainy day in western Colorado.



The Magician's Assistant

CHAPTER 20

A TRIP TO SANTA BARBARA ISLAND

It was one of those glorious March days, the weather clear and cool, a day scrubbed clean by brisk ocean breezes, a day when you could see forever! We arrived at the dock in San Pedro before sunrise and, as we embarked, the day was dawning in sparkling radiance. We were on a good-sized boat, which would take us on an all day trip to Santa Barbara Island.

The seas were calm, the temperature balmy, and the ride enjoyable. We anchored near to shore and were transported by small dinghies right to the foot of the access ladder that we climbed to the dock. A short 100-foot vertical climb up a steep trail took us to an open area at the top of the cliff where we were greeted by the ranger who showed us through the small museum at his abode. Then we were free to do our own thing for the rest of the day.

Ruth and I chose to hike the trail up to the island summit, 700 to 800 feet in altitude, and as we neared the top we could see islands in every direction. We were standing on a yellow carpet of small flowers which covered the ground while around us a number of coreopsis giganteas poked their heads up four or five feet in the sunlight.

Anacapa, Santa Cruz, Santa Rosa and San Miguel Islands stood out in vivid detail as we looked up the coast. Catalina and San Clemente were equally clear looking down the coast. Even San Nicholas Island was plainly

visible as we gazed directly out to sea, while the mainland looked to be within arm's reach. The sky was a brilliant blue and the view one that will never be forgotten.

Santa Barbara is an interesting island. It is the plug of an ancient volcano that some geologists feel is the origin of the deposits of ash which once covered the Palos Verdes Peninsula. Over time, these ash deposits were compressed into a slippery layer of Bentonite, the lubricating strata beneath the infamous Portuguese Bend landslide.

Around the perimeter of the island are cliffs 100 to 150 feet in height, so access to the rocky beach is not possible except at the spot where the dock is located.

We sat at the top of one of the cliffs surrounded by wild flowers and watched the sea lions cavort below. The sun was warm, while a gentle sea breeze kept us cool enough to require a light jacket. It was absolutely delightful! But the time to board ship for the return trip was nearing, so we grudgingly left our magnificent view and made our way back to the landing.

The sun was preparing to set as we weighed anchor and headed toward the mainland with Santa Barbara Island directly behind us. A few low-lying clouds near the horizon, the ocean, the island and the sky all took on a brilliant orange glow as we stood at the boat's stern and watched the sun slowly sink into the ocean.

Then it was inside the cabin for us, as the cool evening air was beginning to chill our bones. Three or four hours later, we disembarked at San Pedro having spent a very long but wonderfully fruitful day.

We recommend the trip to Santa Barbara Island to anyone who enjoys natural beauty, especially if you can arrange to have a day with weather half as lovely as that which we experienced.



Leaving Santa Barbara Island

CHAPTER 21

SURFING ADVENTURE

(and this is no fluke)

*As told by our son, Dave who lives in
Huntington Beach, California.*

The day dawned bright and clear and the telephone surfing report called for three foot swells* coming from the open ocean, the tail end of a storm that had roiled the Pacific for the past several days. Work was calling but I turned a deaf ear since I could put in my eight to ten hour day whenever, and I felt like surfing right now!

Rising quickly, I tossed down a glass of orange juice, slid into my wet suit and threw my board into the back of the wagon. It was but a seven-minute drive to the hottest local surfing spot and I motored toward it with eager anticipation as I thought of the gnarly swells awaiting me.

The waves were super cool, just the right shape for spirited riding but big enough to provide a challenge. Five or six quick trips down the front side of a booming breaker followed by the strenuous paddle back out beyond the surf line left me panting and ready to take a break.

As I lay resting on my board with the burgeoning waves gently lifting and dropping me in an undulating pattern, a loud whooshing noise caught my ear and I quickly turned to locate its source. There, not 10 feet from me was a whale, young, but still a giant 25 feet in length!

The whale seemed preoccupied with things other than me, apparently feeding on the marine morsels displaced by the prevailing rip tide. But suddenly, he dove directly under me, leaving me lying within the becalmed area of his huge body. In a panic, I frantically paddled to escape, fearing he might come to the surface right under me.

My fears turned out to be groundless as he reappeared just beyond me, looked back as if to say, "What's your worry, fellow?" flipped his flukes to wave good-bye, and disappeared without so much as a fare thee well.

I've done a lot of surfing in the past 15 or 20 years. I've seen playful dolphins, inquisitive sea lions and occasional sharks (not great white man-eating types, thankfully!) But this whale "close encounter of the first kind" put the rest of my marine experiences to shame and provided me with a story I can recount with pride to both friend and foe.

I like to tell people that work is important and, as we all know, very, very necessary (I did put in my full day on the job that day), but surfing with whales is a heck of a lot more fun!

**Three foot swells measure six foot on the front side.*

CHAPTER 22

THINGS DON'T ALWAYS GO RIGHT

If you have been reading the stories in earlier chapters, you may recall my recounting several experiences that didn't turn out quite the way I wanted or expected. For example, there was that humiliating time when I couldn't remember my date's name as I tried to introduce her to a group of my friends we had just run into. Then there was the infamous day when I, not aware that my bathing suit drawstring wasn't tied securely, performed a spectacular dive into a swimming pool with a large group of lovely ladies watching only to nearly lose my suit in the bottom of the pool. Those two incidents were quite embarrassing but, believe it or not, nothing to compare with the experience I am about to recount.

I was a Golden Bear attending the University of California at Berkeley and, although studying pretty hard, was rather heavily into music and show biz. The biggest annual show on campus was coming and it was called the "Aextravaganza" (named after the Stanford Axe which was awarded each year to the winner of the "Big Game"). I had a singing group, a quintet, which did pop songs in a fairly sophisticated way using my arrangements. We practiced long and hard for this "biggest show of the year" as there was to be a large attendance, well over 7,000 students jamming Harmon Gym there to applaud, boo, cheer or whatever seemed appropriate. We felt confident that we had our numbers well in hand, but on the afternoon of the show something unexpected happened.

A fellow who was to sing a key song in the show fell sick shortly before show time and the director came to me on bended knee, asking if I would sing the song in the poor fellow's place. I told the director that I didn't know the words or the tune and that I really didn't want to sing it, but he implored me to tackle the job.

The song, a World War I number, "Goodbye Broadway, Hello France" was an integral part of the show and couldn't be omitted without destroying the story line. So I reluctantly agreed to perform it, setting out quickly to find and try to learn the tune and the words in the couple of hours I had left before the show.

Nobody had the music for me to study, but several people who were familiar with the song sang it to me and I furiously wrote down the words on a small piece of paper to use as a prop. As the hour of the show approached, I faced the situation with great trepidation. I simply hadn't been able to commit the song confidently to memory and had no chance to practice the number with the orchestra.

The overflow crowd soon gathered and the house was jammed with expectant viewers. In what seemed like but a few short minutes, the show began and I heard the band start into my lead-in intro, my cue to dash on stage, word prop in hand, kiss my girlfriend goodbye, rush up the gang plank and belt out the song. Just one problem! The lovely girl to whom I was saying farewell was wearing a fur jacket (they wore those things in the long ago days before PETA) and as I kissed her, the fur caught

the small piece of paper with the words on it from my hand causing it to flutter helplessly to the stage floor.

Time was of the essence! The music had started! I had no time to stop and pick up my precious prop so I rushed up the gang plank empty handed, grabbed the mike and blurted out the garbled first line of the song, "Goodbye Broadway, Goodbye France", and then stood there with glassy eyes staring at the madding throng in front of me, my mind a complete blank.

That's as far as I got and, as the band finished the accompaniment, I slunk off stage, my tail between my legs. Thank goodness the missing fellow's name was listed on the program instead of mine.

PS: My quintet performed *our* number very well.



Singing has long been a tradition in the Hattersley family

CHAPTER 23

OUR CHRISTMAS STORY

The Chicago winter of 1957 was a cold and stormy one. Ruth and I sat by the window and gazed from our tiny two-room apartment at the swirling snow outside, feeling fortunate that we were warm and cozy, protected from the biting cold and chilling wind. We had been busy making preparations for the upcoming move to our first house, so busy that we were scarcely aware that the Yuletide season was upon us.

Ruth and I had been married the previous May and this was to be our first Christmas together. And now it was Christmas Eve, but the sudden realization struck that something important was missing... a Christmas tree. And what is Christmas without a Christmas tree! So out into the chill of the night we went in search of the missing essential.

The only tree lot still open had a number of towering beauties, all much too grand and large for our little apartment, as well as being too expensive for our budget. The smaller trees were gone, with the exception of one forlorn, bent and misshapen specimen on sale for one dollar. We took it as a last resort.

In no time at all we had the little tree set up in our living room with our string of six lights and our few homemade ornaments adorning it, and it suddenly seemed to take on a new life of its own, standing just a little straighter, just a little taller. This was our Charlie Brown Christmas

Tree. As we darkened the room and turned the tree lights on, the soft glow gave our apartment a warmth that drove out the gloom and darkness of the cold winter night. All was safe and peaceful and right with the world.

Now, as we prepare for our 56th Christmas together, our tree is much larger and more splendidly decorated, but no tree will ever look as beautiful as did that first one so many years ago.



Ruthie and Chuck, 1957

CHAPTER 24

CALIFORNIA HERE WE COME

“Are we almost there?” came the question from our five year old daughter, not more than ten minutes after we had left our home.

I was being transferred from Chicago to Los Angeles. We had sold our house in Riverside, Illinois and were headed across the country loaded to the gunnels in our Volvo station wagon. We anticipated a two-week trip, and planned to visit a number of scenic spots along the way.

Thirty miles later it was the same question, “Are we almost there?” “No Robin. We have just started and it's going to be a very long time before we get to California,” came our harried answer. It was indeed going to be a long trip, we feared, with three kids in the back seat champing at the bit.

The second day out, Ruth and I knew that the Rocky Mountains would soon be coming into view. The children had never seen mountains before, having been born and brought up in the Chicago area, so we decided to play a little game: The first child to spot the mountains would get a 50 cent piece (that was before the days when two quarters were the only way to pay someone 50 cents). Soon Ruth and I saw the snow clad peaks looming ahead on the horizon but nary a peep was heard out of the kids – having never seen mountains, they didn't know what to look for. Finally when the

rocky escarpment was so close that you could literally reach out and touch it with your hand, they awoke to what was ahead and screamed with delight at the sight.

We spent four lovely days in Rocky Mountain National Park, staying at the YMCA camp there. We drove the 12,000-foot summit of the Trail Ridge Road, took a four-mile hike with Ruth and me and the two older kids (while leaving Robin with child care) and generally had a delightful time. Incidentally, that was the first hike in mountains that Ruth had ever taken, and was the prelude to many more in her future.

Then it was a day's drive to Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument and then another long, long drive over many 10,000 foot passes through beautiful Ouray and Durango, Colorado to the little town just outside of Mesa Verde National Park where we spent a day of exploration.

The next day, it was nearing time for lunch and we came upon a sign pointing to Goose Necks State Park, seven or eight miles away so we decided to take the short side trip and, hopefully, find a nice place to eat lunch. A shady spot it wasn't, but the park offered an overlook that was absolutely astounding: 1,000 feet below us lay the entrenched meanders of the San Juan River.

See chapter 26 for more about the Goosenecks.

CHAPTER 25

A LITTLE TIME OFF – RETIRED LIFE IS SO HARD!

Needing to escape the rigors of retirement, Ruth and I sojourned up the east side of the Sierras on fascinating Highway 395 to the Mammoth Lakes area. You may have been to Mammoth, perhaps a number of times, but have you seen the “big wheel”, hiked to Sky Meadow, and visited the ghost town of Bodie?

The “big wheel” is a key part of the historic stamping mill located just a quarter mile off Old Mammoth Road. Just think of the shrieking, grinding noise the mill must have made back in the 1890s when it was crushing rock to extract gold. Believe me, it is really a Big Wheel! It must weigh many tons. How did they ever get it up there?

I hiked to one of my favorite locations on a trail that leaves Coldwater Campground at about 9,000 feet and, after a 1,300-foot climb, arrives at one of the truly glorious spots in the Sierras, Sky Meadow. Late July through August is spring in the meadow, and thousands of brilliant wildflowers dot the landscape while a small brook splashes down the cliff from Lake Hammil, a small glacial pond, another 100 feet up the slope. Above it, a giant snow bank covers the talus slope below 12,000 foot Mammoth Crest.

Then for a change of pace, Ruth and I, along with our son Mark, his wife Barby and their three children took a day trip to the abandoned ghost town of Bodie. At one time

in 1879, the population of Bodie numbered 10,000 but now only five percent of the town remains in “arrested decay” as a State Historic Park.

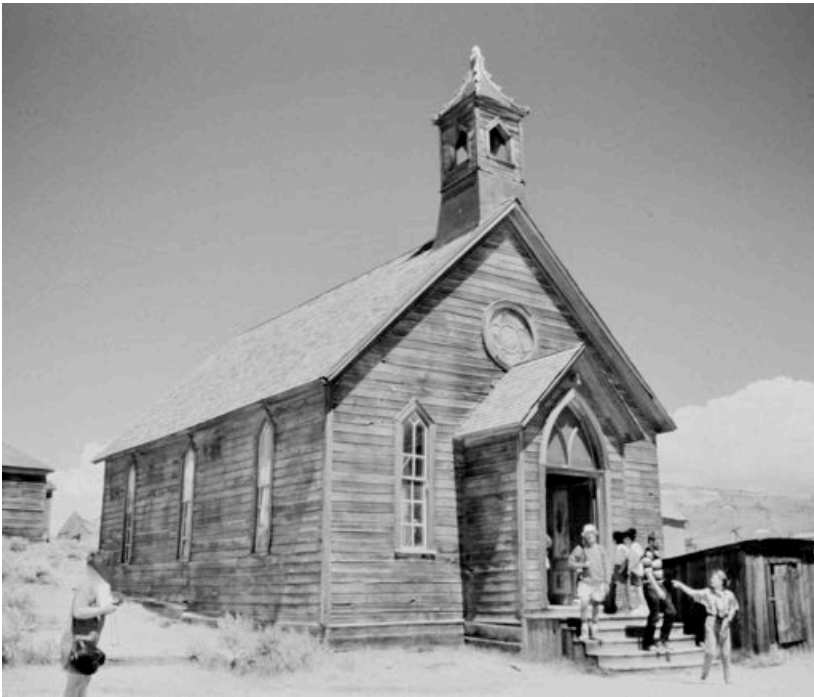


Flywheel from Mammoth's old twenty stamp mill

Located at 9,000 feet, Bodie was a bleak and desolate place when the snow, which sometimes accumulated to a depth of 20 feet, covered the ground. In its prime, Bodie was second to none for wickedness and bad men. Killings, street fights and robberies occurred with monotonous regularity. Although only a small portion of the town remains today, it is a fascinating place with

interesting old buildings and discarded “mining junk” lying everywhere.

A trip to Bodie dramatizes the hardship of a time 120 years ago when bold, aggressive and sometimes unscrupulous men fought for hidden golden treasure.



“Goodbye God, I’m going to Bodie”

CHAPTER 26

DEVIL'S TOWER AND GOOSE NECKS

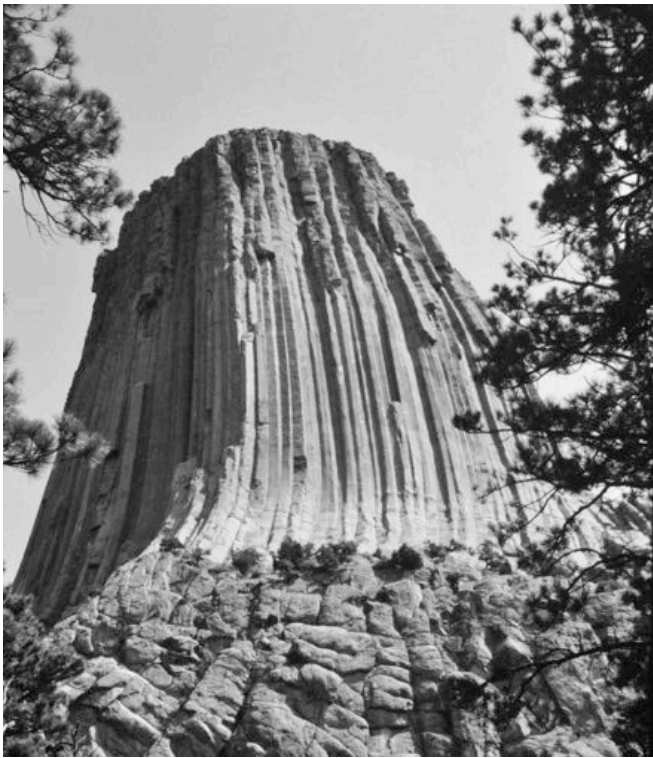
The United States is blessed with an abundance of absolutely stunning and geologically fascinating natural features in its landscape, many of which are included in the National Parks that dot the countryside in the western half of the nation. Two of the most spectacular and interesting sites that I would like to explore with you at this time, however, are not in national parks; one is a National Monument and the other a State Park.

There is normally little reason for a person to travel to northeastern Wyoming except maybe to cross the border into South Dakota to see the carved heads of famous presidents at Rushmore Memorial. But if you happen into that area, make a point of traveling a few miles north of Interstate 90 and about 40 miles west of the South Dakota border to see an unbelievable sight: A giant rock abruptly rising nearly 1,000 feet in the air.

Its sides are carved and shaped into nearly vertical columns somewhat like but much taller than those found in Devil's Postpile National Monument near Mammoth Lakes, California. Its glowering dark brownish-black color gives it the look of something straight out of Hades and provides its very appropriate name, Devil's Tower National Monument.

Closer inspection reveals that this mammoth monolith is a volcanic neck, the core of a once powerful volcano now frozen in time, the much softer rocks surrounding it

having been eroded away. The tower rises 867 feet from its base and 1,267 feet above the nearby river while the area at its top encompasses a full one and a half acres. Hollywood was so impressed with this magnificent natural edifice that they based the spooky movie “Close Encounters of the Third Kind” at Devil’s Tower. Go take a look at it – you’ll be awe struck!



Devil's Tower

Completely different but equally magnificent are the Goose Necks of the San Juan River in southern Utah. As described in Chapter 24, we were driving across the country, moving from Chicago to Palos Verdes when we

first encountered this natural wonder. It was lunchtime but there wasn't a tree in sight to park under to enjoy a cool snack. It was mid June and unpleasantly hot. So when we saw a sign pointing to Goose Necks State Park, we turned toward it, feeling assured that there we would find a picnic table and a few trees.

The road soon came to an end at a small parking lot with a fence at the edge of the overlook, not a particularly inviting sight. But there, a thousand feet below us, were spectacular deeply entrenched meanders of a river snaking its way through the sheer brown cliffs. A sign explained that the San Juan River had, many thousands of years ago, been a slow-moving meandering stream flowing near sea level through a meadow. But then the land had begun a slow uplift, the river working much harder to keep up with the steady rise with the result being a magnificent series of deeply entrenched meanders.



Goosenecks from the overview

CHAPTER 27

YO-YO DELIGHT

(The World surely has its Ups and Downs)

A recent article on the front page of the Los Angeles Times told of a gala yo-yo event that took place in Chico, California, where the National Yo-Yo Museum resides. As the Times characterizes it, "As Wimbledon is to tennis, so Chico is to yo-yo-ing".

Displayed at the museum is a 256-pound wooden monster, the world's largest yo-yo, which was built by San Francisco dentist and yo-yo enthusiast Dr. Tom Kuhn back in 1979. On its first outing, it was dropped from a 150-foot crane, unfortunately breaking loose from its thick nautical rope and plunging into San Francisco Bay.

The task of plucking the heavyweight devise from the ocean provided the incentive to move to higher tech methods; from this came the ball-bearing axle, the heart of the modern yo-yo. Employing the new technology, modern day yo-yo-ists are able to perform miracles that make "walk-the-dog" and other famous tricks "old-school" and thoroughly outdated. The super-duper Duncan Yo-Yo is a thing of the past after having been the Cadillac of the industry for countless years.

The present standard in the yo-yo industry is the "Revolution" manufactured by Yo-YoJam which comes complete with an "all-new solid-spin high grade aluminum axle system" and can be had for a mere \$48.

The Times article took me back to our last trip to Utah in 2007, viewing the petroglyph of my Uncle Duncan with his prototype yo-yo carved on the cliff at Dinosaur National Monument in northeastern Utah (see Chapter 34). Ever since ancient times, Duncan yo-yos have been the leader in quality, appearance and performance, only to become outmoded with the advent of the new ball-bearing technology.

It is truly a miracle of modern science that Yo-Yo technology has zoomed to such a lofty level and that the elegant but simple \$5 Duncan Yo-Yo, my ancient uncle's invention, has become a forgotten relic of times when life was simpler, much cheaper, and maybe even more fun.

CHAPTER 28

A TRIP ALONG THE SAN ANDREAS FAULT

The four-point-something shaker we experienced a few years ago here in Southern California started Ruth and me thinking about earthquakes while prompting some “googling” on the computer, which in turn piqued our interest in the biggest of all California faults, the San Andreas, a subject which is always of keen concern to most Californians.

To truly appreciate the significance of the San Andreas Fault, one must realize that it is the border between two massive tectonic plates, the Pacific Plate and the North American Plate, and that the Pacific Plate is sliding northwestward at the rate of about 1.3 inches per year.

One of the first things that turned up in our web surfing of the subject was a *Field Guide to the San Andreas Fault*, which outlined twelve easy day-trips to explore this fascinating but frightening geological feature of California. Study of the Field Guide intensified our interest in taking an exploratory trip along what appeared to be some of the more interesting segments of the fault, a trip that we proceeded to undertake in June of 2009.

The field guide listed global positioning coordinates frequently, as well as mileage from one location to the next so, to prepare for the trip, we acquired a GPS receiver. It proved to be very useful and, in fact,

indispensable, particularly in the Carrizo Plain in central California.

The San Andreas Fault starts at the Mexican border but we chose to begin our trip at San Bernardino where the fault rises quickly up through Cajon Pass, creating the divide between the San Bernardino and San Gabriel mountain ranges, and continues in a northwestern direction.

The San Andreas, being a fault with basically horizontal motion, is not affected by changes in elevation with the result that it travels up hill and down dale with the greatest of ease. The first day of our trip took us through Wrightwood in the San Gabriel Mountains, the highest point of our route at 6,874 feet in elevation. Along the way, evidence of the fault was visible in the form of fault gauge, bare scarps and jagged cliffs. The road we were following took many curves as it steadily climbed to the summit but a glance at the map showed that the general direction of the road was really very straight. It was simply following the path of the earthquake fault.

Wrightwood appeared to be a prosperous town with many nice houses, but the guidebook described it as "a sitting duck"; the fault runs right through the center of town. In fact the local swimming hole is a "sag pond" created by the fault. (A sag pond is a body of water that has collected in a depressed spot created by an earthquake fault.) The entire length of the San Andreas Fault can be traced by following the line of small sag

ponds, many of which have been modified to serve as watering troughs for cattle or fishing holes.

The last major movement of the San Andreas Fault in Southern California occurred in 1857 in the Fort Tejon Quake with an estimated magnitude of 7.9 on the Richter scale. Another episode of that strength would undoubtedly do catastrophic damage to the town of Wrightwood. We ate our lunch there the first day, however, confident that we would escape before the next quake occurred.

From Wrightwood, the fault descends the north side of the San Gabriel Mountains and, as we dropped below 3,000 feet in elevation, a sign indicated a side trip to Punchbowl Park. Well worth the visit if you are in the area is this Los Angeles County Park, which contains the heavily eroded remains of deposits in a shallow sea laid down about 60 million years ago. Three hiking trails are available to give a better view of the fascinating, bowl-shaped deposits.

After taking a short hike, we continued to Palmdale where the San Andreas Fault crosses Highway 14 just south of the city. Maybe you have noticed the spectacular road cut along that freeway, one of the best demonstrations of faulted sedimentary layers in all of California.

To get a good view of this display, you must get off the highway, park on a side street on the west side of the freeway, and walk about a quarter of a mile on a poorly

defined trail which takes you to the top of the road cut on the opposite side of the highway. From here, a great view of the heavily folded and faulted sediments is visible.



Ruth ponders the obvious question: Whose fault is it anyway?

The next day's trip continued in a straight path along the fault, passing a number of very large sag ponds including Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes. Take a look at a map and you will note that Highway N2, the road we were following, runs in almost a straight line in a northwesterly direction.

We passed through Leona Valley, a fertile and verdant looking area with many fruit trees planted along the road. We stopped at one orchard and picked a bunch of delicious cherries, chatting at length with its owner. The sunny, bucolic setting with many elegant ranch houses belied the fact that the valley paralleled the San Andreas Fault, the road running within a quarter mile of it, and

that unpredictable movement of the fault could at any time cause major damage.

In the middle of that day's trip, we encountered a rock formation of great interest and significance, the Neenach Volcanics Ryolite. This 23½ million years old feature lies on the Continental Plate side (northeast side) of the San Andreas Fault. About 195 miles to the north on the Pacific Plate side (southwest side) of the San Andreas Fault sits Pinnacles National Monument amidst a large deposit of the Pinnacles Volcanic Formation, rock identical to the Neenach Volcanics and obviously from the same source. Both deposits are remains of an ancient volcano that sat astride the San Andreas Fault and was split in half by the fault. Thus in 23½ million years, the Pacific Plate has moved an amazing 195 miles in relation to the Continental Plate.

We put up for the night in the small town of Frazier Park, which is located on Interstate 5 very near to where the freeway is crossed by the great fault.

Only a short distance from Frazier Park is Fort Tejon, for which is named the last great quake to occur on the southern San Andreas Fault. The 1857 Fort Tejon Quake, along with the 1906 San Francisco temblor, is the strongest California earthquake in recorded history with an estimated strength of 7.9. Since the Richter Scale is logarithmic, a 7.9 quake is almost 30 times as powerful as a 7.0 quake that, in turn, is 32 times as powerful as a 6.0 quake. A 6.0 temblor is 32 times as powerful as one that measures 5.0.

When we realize that the 1994 Northridge quake that created so much damage in the Los Angeles area measured only 6.7 on the Richter Scale, we can well imagine how terribly destructive a large quake on the San Andreas Fault would be.

Early the next morning, we took off for the most mountainous leg of our journey. Eleven miles out of Frazier Park, we came to the community of Pine Mountain. Just ahead, the fault starts a sharp northward bend and wet areas signaled the result of the releasing of tension in the fault. When a fault with horizontal movement bends, terrific strains are set up in the earth which, when released, create very high intensity quakes. Its distinct bend is the cause of the highly lethal nature of the San Andreas in Southern California; if the fault had just continued in a straight line, its danger would have been greatly diminished

A little further along, a side road took off to the top of Mount Pinos, at 8,831 feet the highest mountain in the Tehachapi range, and we elected to drive as far as the road would take us to admire the scenery and see if we could spot any condors. From the end of the road, we walked up the trail a ways but didn't make it to the top although we enjoyed our pleasant walk through the lovely Jeffrey pine forest.

Then it was northward down the hill to the oil fields where we put up for the night in the only motel in the small town of Maricopa. Maricopa is not a lovely town and neither were nearby Taft and McKittrick, both oil

towns. But the bed was fine and, after a good night's sleep, we were ready next morning for a trip through an area quite familiar to us but which always remains fascinating, the Carrizo Plain National Monument.

If you've never been to the Carrizo Plain, you could easily spend a couple of days there. All the roads are dirt but perfectly passable unless they are wet. We clambered up the Elkhorn Grade out of Maricopa early in the morning, climbing 1,000 feet or more on a rough but quite passable road, a bit of an exciting adventure in itself. Our road joined another following the Elkhorn Scarp, a 17-mile long pressure ridge paralleling the fault. Using the GPS to guide us, we drove down a very rough side road into an area of low hills called the Dragon's Back, a particularly well-defined section of the fault scarp. Looked at from the ground, it is simply an interesting series of bumpy hills but viewed from the air, the fascinating sight looks like its name implies.

Even more dramatic evidence of the fault movement is readily visible at Wallace Creek, where a creek bed coming down the side of a hill takes a sharp right hand bend, offset directly sideways a hundred to a hundred and fifty yards, obviously the result of fault movement. You can readily see and explore these features on the ground and the National Park service provides a small map and a marked walking trail to aid in your exploration. But unfortunately you can truly appreciate the full dramatic effect only from the air.

Carizzo Plain National Monument has a simple visitor's center and a nearby interesting large rock with many Indian petroglyphs that can be viewed after a short walk. Since we had previously explored the area, we drove through, stopping only at a few points on the fault, using the GPS coordinates to locate them. Then we cut out the north side of the park and continued northward.

Our next stop was at very picturesque and rural Parkfield, CA, population 25, where we spent the night at the Parkfield Inn. Just south of town a streambed follows the fault and there are signs on each side of the bridge stating "you are entering the Pacific Plate" or "you are entering the Continental Plate" depending on which way you are going. Emblazoned on the water tank at the Inn is the pronouncement, "Parkfield, California, Earthquake Capital of the World. Be here when it happens."



Parkfield is located on a very straight segment of the San Andreas Fault with the result that it gets a large number

of not too severe earthquakes, usually in the 6.0 range. Both further south and further north, where the fault bends, earthquakes occur only occasionally but usually with much greater intensity. This was the case with both the Fort Tejon and San Francisco quakes.

Next morning after a hearty breakfast, we were off again, heading north over the very impressive Parkfield Grade, a well graded dirt road climbing 2,000 feet to the summit. We've driven that interesting road four times, thoroughly enjoying its beauty each visit, which explains why we started out going north despite the fact that we were actually beginning our southbound homeward trip. The road is perfectly satisfactory for passenger cars unless it is wet.

Avoiding four lane highways, we then took a very rural road directly south to San Miguel where we stopped to visit Mission San Miguel. The mission was built in 1797 and had withstood natural disasters until 2004, when it was severely damaged by an earthquake. The main chapel was closed for repairs so we were able to view the back rooms only. From San Miguel, we headed for home, much of the way on secondary roads but broaching divided highways when that was the only route available.

If you would like to explore the parts of the fault of particular interest to you, I suggest you get a copy of *The Field Guide to the San Andreas Fault*, available at thulescientific.com

CHAPTER 29

A SCENIC TRIP UP HIGHWAY 1

The Palos Verdes coast is a thing of beauty, a string of lovely views that we can rightly be proud of, but its beauty pales in comparison to the scenic coast from Morrow Bay to the northern California border. We were planning a short spring break and we hadn't traveled that scenic stretch for a long time so we decided to give the southern half of it a whirl.

It's only about 125 miles from Morrow Bay to Carmel following California State Highway 1. It looks like it might be a two or three hour trip, and the normal impulse, therefore, would be to start from LA early in the morning and drive it all in one day, stopping now and then for a quick view. But one forgets that the Highway 1 is narrow, and takes many, many sharp curves while climbing and dropping countless times in wending its tortuous way along the steeply cliffed shores of the Pacific. We remember rushing along it in the past, hurrying past lovely views and interesting sights in order to reach the end before dark. This time we decided to do it right – drive to San Luis Obispo first and start out from there early the next morning to enjoy a full day of sheer beauty. Also, we waited to do the trip 'til the weatherman promised several days of clear weather.

After a few short miles from San Luis Obispo, we were in Morrow Bay with the giant volcanic neck named Morrow Rock looming skyward. Next came Cambria and then San Simeon with the side road to William

Randolph Hearst's famous mansion far up in the hills. When he built his castle, the highway didn't go through to the north and the only approach was from the south by road or by boat. Hearst apparently didn't want to be bothered (like Greta Garbo - "I vant to be alone") so his main access was by boat.

We had visited his fabulous home a number of times in the past, so we drove on by without stopping (See the movie *Citizen Kane* which tells the fascinating story of Hearst and his castle.)



William Randolph Hearst's Castle at San Simeon

Soon we came to a pull-off to view the favorite spot of the harbor seals, and there they were by the hundreds, looking like blobs of jelly lying on the sand waving a flipper or wiggling a tail, barking, burping, squealing and flipping sand at each other. Mostly they were motionless, simply basking in the sun. We understand that during mating season the peaceful scene in front of

us becomes a battlefield as the ponderous males attack each other with vengeance in order to win the hearts of the awaiting ladies. But today, everything was quiet, a scene of blissful non-action.



Hanging out with friends on the beach

From Cambria Pines to Carmel is a 100 mile stretch of winding, twisting two-lane road overlooking the sparkling blue Pacific, with no cities or towns and only a very few back-country side roads. The precipitous Santa Lucia Mountain Range, rising to over 3,500 feet in elevation, parallels the coast and provides ample reason why there are no roads into this area except Highway 1 running along the coast.

Stopping at practically every viewing spot, we took our time meandering up the highway, halting for lunch when hunger pangs told us it was time. Soon thereafter we came to one of several places where the original road takes a tortuous drop into a side canyon with the present

road passing majestically overhead on a splendid new bridge. We followed the old road down into Limekiln State Park, a beautiful setting with the breakers pounding on the sand, jagged rocks surrounding a pretty cove, and a large stream pouring down from the hills into the ocean. Upstream a few yards was a lovely campground shaded by some of the southernmost Sequoias. And a third of a mile further up the trail was a 100-foot waterfall near the historic limekilns from which the park derives its name.

After spending considerable time exploring, we hit the road again, stopping soon at Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park with its 50-foot waterfall dropping over the cliff directly onto the beach.



Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park

We had planned to walk out the trail to the viewpoint for the falls, but the trail was closed because of a cave in.

Momentarily disappointed, we discovered another even better overview of the falls and the cove into which it drops by walking a short distance up the main road from the entrance into the park.



Beautiful Coastal California

There our view was unobstructed, the setting was beautiful, the graceful fall stunning, and the deep blue cove exciting.

But after all our exploring and viewing, time was getting short, the sun was nearing the horizon and we were getting tired. We still had Big Sur and Andrew Molera State Parks plus Point Lobos State Preserve to see, but no time left to see them that day. So we high tailed it into Carmel, checked into a motel, and put up for the night.

Next morning bright and early we spent two or three hours exploring beautiful Point Lobos, observing the seals at play with their young in Whaler's Cove and the Sea Otters tending their pups at China Cove. We had to leave Big Sur and Andrew Molera for some other time.

It really takes more than one day to do that gorgeous stretch of California Highway 1. And its extension, up the coast north of San Francisco, will take another full day for us to explore some other year.



Exploration of a coastal forest path

CHAPTER 30

SO MUCH TO SEE IN THE NORTHWEST

Summer was over and it was time for our fall trip – you know, the one you take right after all the kids have gone back to school so the parks and the roads aren't too crowded. It was September 15 when we took off on a driving vacation to northern California, Oregon and Washington, our ultimate destination being Lake Chelan in north central Washington.

There were many beautiful sights to see between Palos Verdes and Lake Chelan, so we steered a scenic course, avoiding the Interstates and four lane highways almost completely. Our journey took us through Sonora Pass over the Sierras, through Lassen Volcanic National Park in northern California, past beautiful 14,000 foot Mount Shasta which was shrouded in clouds, and up to Crater Lake National Park where we planned to spend a day looking at the brilliant blue lake filling the remains of the ancient caldera formed by the prehistoric explosion of Mt. Mazama.

Unfortunately the rain gods joined us that day and the beautiful, deep blue water took on a dead gray look, far from what we had anticipated. I had hoped to take many photos with my new digital camera but gave up after several mediocre shots.

Leaving Crater Lake, we took a half-day trip to some of the waterfalls and cascades on the Umpqua River. We

drove a ways down the river's watershed, a beautiful half-day's side trip.



Crater Lake, on a clear day

After spending the morning viewing the falls, we headed north, planning on taking in another caldera just north of Crater Lake, at the Newberry Crater Volcanic National Monument, not as spectacular as Crater Lake but still a sight well worth seeing.

Nestled in the bottom of this caldera sit two lakes. A dirt road takes you to the top of the mountain surrounding the caldera from which the Three Sisters, three snow capped volcanic peaks, can be seen with great clarity on a good day. But that wasn't to be our fortune on this cloudy and cold day – the road to the top of the mountain was closed for repair. Our northern vacation was beginning to look suspect. Maybe we had departed too late in the year. Undaunted, we continued on our way to Lake Chelan.

A narrow 55-mile long body of water, sculpted out of the rock by ancient glaciers, Lake Chelan is the third deepest lake in the U.S., exceeded in depth only by Crater Lake and Lake Tahoe. It's northern end butts up against the south end of Northern Cascades National Park and roads extend from the south end of the lake only 30 miles up its length. Precipitous cliffs plunging into the clear blue waters line the last 25 miles of its northern reach. The few cars, plus all building materials, supplies and food required by the locals, have to be brought in by boat. And flowing into the north end of the lake is the Stehekin (pronounced Stah-hee-kin) river, fed by the snow-capped peaks of the adjacent Northern Cascades National Park.

We had made reservations for two nights at the Stehekin Valley Ranch located nine miles up the river and just two miles short of the boundary of the National Park. A three-hour boat trip landed us at the dock in Stehekin. There we spent two days walking the dirt roads and trails of the park, admiring the beautiful river, looking at Rainbow Falls, eating great home-cooked meals and sleeping.

We chatted with a number of long distance hikers who had just 90 miles left to get to the Canadian border. They had started three or four months earlier at the Mexican border and hiked all that way on the Pacific Crest trail. We also talked with several members of the Sierra Club who were there to hike. It's really amazing how isolated Stehekin is. It's only 90 miles as the crow flies from Seattle but requires over 180 miles of driving and boating to get there.

From Lake Chelan, it was a day's drive over to Olympia where we met with family and friends, and then we were ready to start our homeward trip.

We drove the beautiful Oregon coast in clouds and some rain but not enough to spoil our views. The ocean was beautiful, but one of the nicest and most interesting things we saw on the entire trip was completely unexpected and not ocean oriented.

About 10 miles south of Tillamook, Oregon (where we had toured the cheese factory) we saw a brown sign pointing inland to Munson Falls. "Let's go take a look at it", we said, so we turned off Highway 101 onto a very narrow side road, which soon became dirt, wending its way into the deep forest. After a mile or so we came to a dark but beautiful turn-around with giant moss-covered trees surrounding us and there was a trail sign, "1 Mile to the Falls." The trail followed a small stream and then, ahead, a very lovely and impressive free-falling waterfall of several hundred feet in height came into sight.

Not a soul was in view; not a sound of civilization intruded. We had the beauty of the place all to ourselves. Sometimes the nicest things are found in the strangest places.

The next day it was raining very hard so we decided against doing Highway 1 in northern California, opting instead for the easier driving Highway 101, the Redwood Highway.

By the time we reached San Francisco the weather had cleared, so we moved over to the coast to follow Highway 1. The day was brilliant and clear and we took many great photos. We had planned to stop at Julia Pfeiffer Burns and Limekiln State Parks but they were closed due to fire danger.



A verdant coastal forest streambed

The balance of the trip into Palos Verdes reminded us of our daily routine as we fought the city traffic. Mother Nature hadn't been too kind to us on the three-week trip, but I guess you can't expect much better when visiting the northwest in the fall.

CHAPTER 31

CHANGES TO BE MADE TO CITIES' NAMES

An announcement from the U.S. Bureau of Standards in Washington D.C. reveals that a number of changes in names and definitions may be required in the coming year. Many of the changes to be made are in response to lawsuits brought by the American Civil Liberties Union and other organizations, which are active in this country in preventing bias from entering our public discourse.

Since it has been assumed from recent Supreme Court rulings that little or no reference to Christianity will be tolerated in our public schools, feeling is growing that the names of geographical locations that reflect the influence of Christianity should be changed.

City names such as San Francisco, Santa Barbara, San Diego, etc. may have to be abridged to "Francisco," "Barbara," and "Diego" with comparable changes made to many other locations. What must be done with the name "Los Angeles" will have to be determined by trial and ruling by our courts as the name obviously refers to religious symbols (angels), which can no longer be tolerated.

No longer will days of celebration be called holidays since it is obvious that this word is derived from "holy-days" whose origin comes from Christianity. The term "Happy Holidays" may be strictly forbidden just as "Merry Christmas" became verboten several years ago. "Season's Greeting" will be the approved statement to

make when appropriate and instead of “holiday”, the new name will be “seasonday.”

Religious terminology having been cleaned up, governmental controlling agencies will be able to turn to secular matters where correction is also desperately needed.



Downtown Diego

CHAPTER 32

A TRIP UP THE ANGELES CREST HIGHWAY

It was February First, a time of the year when the winter weather in California is often cold and damp. But the sun was shining brightly, the air clear and dry, the trees were starting their flowering with only small patches of snow lying on the mostly barren mountains and the temperature at sea level in the low 70s. The mountains, lovely in the distance were inviting, so Ruth and I decided it was time to see what the world outside the Palos Verdes Peninsula could reveal.

After packing up the lunch basket and locking up the house, we took off on a little one-day adventure. We hadn't been up to the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains since before the disastrous 2009 "Station Fire" so we thought we'd take a look and see how the area has recovered.

Newspaper reports had said that the fire burned nearly the length of the San Gabriel range. I grew up in Pasadena, right at the foot of those mountains, had spent quite a bit of time in my youth exploring their canyons and trails long before the area was blighted by the fire, and I had a soft spot in my heart for them.

Before the Angeles Crest Highway was built in the 1930s, the only access to the Mount Wilson Observatory was by a one lane, controlled access, very steep and winding dirt toll road over which the 60" and 100" telescopes plus all of their necessary control equipment had been

laboriously transported to the top in the 1910s and 1920s. When the well graded and paved Angeles Crest Highway taking off from La Canada was finally built in the '30s, it became much easier for the scientists and workers to get to the top of 5,700-foot Mount Wilson to do their astronomical work. Many years later, a large number of TV towers were also built there to provide TV access to the Los Angeles basin.

As we expected, on the first part of our trip most of the trees and bushes had been burned, but as we neared Red Box where the side road to Mount Wilson took off, it became evident that strenuous efforts had been expended to keep the telescope and television equipment from being destroyed, at the same time preserving the lovely stand of evergreen trees surrounding the sophisticated equipment.

After taking a look at Mount Wilson and its magical fairyland of TV towers, spires and round top observatories, we continued our trip to the east along the Angeles Crest Highway. The road was rising, soon reaching and passing Cloudburst Summit and the Mount Waterman ski area at just over 7,000 feet in altitude. Only small patches of snow remained, despite the fact we were in what is usually the snowiest time of year. I gazed with vivid recollection at the ski hill and shuddered at the thought of skiing down that precipitous cliff with no run out area at the bottom, an escapade I had gallantly accomplished in my more adventurous years. Surely that is the worst ski run in Southern California, maybe in the world!

The air was quite nippy at that altitude so we stayed put in the car. The access roads to all the campgrounds were closed as only the hardiest of souls would wish to camp out in the below freezing temperatures which were typical at night. I had thought that we could go into the Buckhorn Flat Campground and hike a short distance down the trail to the little waterfall just below it, but we couldn't get to the trailhead. However it was great to see that the fire hadn't extended that Far East, and that the evergreen trees were standing tall and lush in all of their elegance.

It was time for a late lunch so we sat in the car, comfortably warmed by the sun, and downed our goodies while admiring the lovely stand of evergreens surrounding us. And after an hour or two of R & R, we began our descent down the Angeles Crest Highway to return to civilization, fighting our way through the downtown LA traffic and making it home in a couple of hours.

That evening as we sat sipping our evening glass of wine, we gazed out our living room window across the Los Angeles basin and admired the lovely view of Mount Wilson and the other mountains in the distance that we had just traversed. We were pleased to know that much of the best stands of timber had been preserved, escaping the treacherous reaches of that disastrous fire. The mountains with their wooded covering will be waiting for us when we want to take another excursion next year.

CHAPTER 33

SAN RAFEL SWELL and DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT

Running across central Utah is a giant northeast-southwest oriented anticline called the San Rafael Swell. Formed by pressure from beneath the earth's surface, it manifests itself in striking, colorful ridge-like rock formations, labyrinthine slot canyons and classic rock castles. Bordering the eastern side of the Swell, the San Rafael Reef has exposed jagged, upturned Navajo sandstone ridges with deep cut canyons ideal for hiking and exploring.

More than 70 million years old, the Swell shows how wind, water and changes from beneath the earth can shape a landscape giving a finished product of magnificent beauty and great interest. Dinosaurs roamed the area millions of years ago and their remains can be found at the Cleveland-Lloyd Quarry where thousands of bones have been excavated. Native Americans lived in the area many years ago and abundant petroglyphs and pictographs on canyon walls tell of their existence. In more modern times, settlers and miners roamed the region and evidence of their habitation remains. And through the area runs the San Rafael River which has cut a 1,000 foot deep miniature grand canyon.

Bisected by the San Rafael River and interstate highway 70, the Swell is readily accessible by car over mostly gravel, well maintained roads. Dominating the eastern side of the Swell is the spectacular San Rafael Reef where

erosion has exposed jagged, upturned Navajo sandstone and deep vertical-walled canyons. Distributed throughout the Swell are fine displays of petroglyphs and pictographs left by ancient Indian cultures providing the eager explorer of today interesting objectives to strive to reach.

Spending several nights in Price, Utah, we were perfectly positioned to explore the Swell and look at some of the fascinating sites available. The so-called Wedge Overlook was our first destination.



Beautiful Utah

A good quality gravel road led us to a striking overview of the San Rafael River flowing 1,000 feet below us. The rugged, precipitous canyon looked much like a miniature Grand Canyon but, in contrast to the crowded experience of exploring that magnificent site, we saw no other cars to disturb the solitude of our viewing. And on the return trip, three pronghorn antelope ran out in front of us, one

of them stopping right in the middle of the road about 50 feet ahead; he stared at us for an extended time as we also stopped and stared back at him.

From The Wedge, we continued on excellent gravel roads down to the river to see the pictographs at Buckhorn Wash. Painted over a 160-foot-wide rock canvas, Buckhorn Wash Pictograph Panel is thought to be 2,000-6,000 years old and painted by the Western Archaic Culture. We stopped at the panel, spread out our lunch and viewed the intricate art work from long ago; only twice during our two hour stay did a car pass by.

We had seen far from everything at the San Rafael Swell, but it was time to move on to our next objective, Dinosaur National Monument in Northeastern Utah. My book on Indian Rock Art told of several outstanding displays in the Monument, so Vernal, Utah, right outside the Monument, was our next destination.

We visited the Monument's temporary headquarters, which is in the process of being rebuilt, the existing headquarters having unfortunately been built on a deposit of bentonite. We who live in Palos Verdes, California know all about the unfortunate slippery characteristics of bentonite, as the headquarters building at the Monument suffered the same fate as did "The Donald's" 18th hole on his deluxe golf course in Rancho Palos Verdes, which slid in the ocean. We weren't particularly interested in watching the digging up of ancient bones, the type of activity emphasized at the Monument headquarters, since that aspect of

archaeology seems to us about as interesting as watching grass grow. Following their instructions, we headed to the next petroglyph panel, one of great interest to us.

A winding dirt and gravel road took us toward an area called Island Park on the Green River and, shortly before reaching the river, we came to the McKee Spring Petroglyphs. A crude trail took us up the hill to the base of the vertical cliffs. As we approached, we saw spreading out in front of us the finest petroglyphs we have ever seen.

The Fremont Indian Culture had produced precisely done, beautifully crafted rock art, which took our breath away. (See the next chapter, which sets forth the story of my Uncle Duncan.) We took a number of photos, admired the art at great length, and then drove the rest of the way to the river, setting up at a picnic table for lunch as the Green River flowed by just a few feet away.



A scenic vista along the San Rafael Swell

CHAPTER 34

A VISIT TO MY GREAT UNCLE DUNCAN

Some of you reading this may have heard of our trip a few years ago where we saw evidence that tends to corroborate the fact that a distant relative of mine, my great, great, great Uncle Duncan was a real honest-to-goodness person. There have always been skeptics, but physical evidence seems to verify the information that has been passed down by word-of-mouth for many generations. We came face-to-face with the confirmation last spring when Ruth and I took a driving trip to Utah to view the gorgeous scenery of that beautiful state and to explore, looking for Indian ruins and rock art.

On a day trip into Dinosaur National Monument in northeastern Utah looking for Indian Petroglyphs we came upon an art panel that pretty well confirmed my Uncle Duncan's long ago existence. We had to clamber up a nondescript trail from a lightly traveled dirt road to view the spectacular evidence, displayed below for your viewing, which confirmed stories passed down for several centuries by my ancient relatives.

There was a large and beautiful petroglyph pecked out of the bed rock by ancient hands showing the man I presume to be my great Uncle standing there holding a string with what appears to be a prototype yoyo on the other end. Folk tales from way, way back tell of Uncle Duncan and the fact that he indeed was the inventor of the yoyo. Those of you of the older generation will recall that Duncan was the big name in yoyos when they were

all the rage about 50 or 60 years ago. Yoyo contests were held all over the country and the winners invariably used Duncan yoyos.



Uncle Duncan and his invention

A thrilling chill flashed through my brain when I first viewed that spectacular evidence of the exploits of one of my ancient relatives. My Uncle Duncan must have been quite a guy. And believe it or not, his name has reached prominence in another area that I'm sure you've heard of. You're undoubtedly familiar with the short order restaurant chain that goes by the name of Dunkin Doughnuts. They spelled his name differently but that's my Uncle Duncan again.

The trip to Utah to see the petroglyphs is a true story but if you believe the rest of this tale, I have a bridge to nowhere located somewhere up in Alaska that I will sell you for a bargain price.

CHAPTER 35

EXPLORING UTAH

It seemed like the whole country was having freaky weather so I guess we shouldn't have rightly expected lovely, comfortable, clear conditions for our spring trip.

Sure enough, we ran into our share of the bad stuff as we were driving to Price, Utah in the central part of the state, planning to go further north on the next leg of our journey. The weatherman had called for rain which is to be expected in the mountain states in May, but we weren't prepared for what we saw as we drove north. Why was everything white up ahead, we asked ourselves, and we soon found out as an ominous black cloud appeared overhead and it started hailing and sleeting with an accumulation of slush quickly developing on the roadway.

We slowed down to about 20 miles per hour and then began to see cars that had slid off the road sitting in the ditches along side the road. We decided to stop and wait it out. In a while, the weather cleared a bit and we soon arrived in Price without incident. But, after doing a bit of exploring in the Price area driving famous petroglyph-laden Nine-Mile Canyon (often called "The World's Longest Art Gallery"), the weather showed no promise of clearing up. It looked even worse to the north where we had planned to go, so we gave up our northern plans, turned south, and headed to Green River, Utah.

The town of Green River is named after and sits next to the river of the same name, the largest tributary of the Colorado River. It was at flood stage as we arrived there. The mountains to the north had experienced heavy snowfall the last winter and the warm May weather was producing a very high runoff. We put up for several nights in a motel located right next to the river and, using it as a base, explored an area called the San Rafael Swell, a giant anticline running north and south in central Utah. Utah is a gorgeous state and we have spent considerable time in all five of its National Parks as well as several of its National Monuments and state parks, but the parks tend to be crowded and we wanted to avoid their congested city-like atmosphere.

Literature we had obtained from the Bureau of Land Management painted a fascinating picture of the San Rafael Swell with its towering red and yellow cliffs, spires, and arches, it's exciting slot canyons, its geologic wonders and its generally beautiful, desert-like scenery plus prolific Indian rock art scattered throughout the area. Its additional advantage would be few people to contend with since all the roads in the Swell area are dirt, many fine for passenger cars but some best handled by 4-wheel drive. Fortunately we had 4-wheel drive on our new Honda CRV.

Although we're not the wildly adventurous types that wander out into dangerous places where there's no one around to help if you get in trouble, we felt confident enough with our equipment and preparation to spend several days exploring the area, logging many miles on

uninhabited fair-to-good dirt roads with the resulting feeling that we would strongly recommend the San Rafael Swell area to anyone who likes to explore, who has a reasonably equipped vehicle, who likes to get away from civilization, who likes the magnificent red rock country of Utah and, particularly, one who is interested in Indian petroglyphs and pictographs.



Chuck and some old friends

We found and viewed spectacular Indian art at such exotic places as hauntingly beautiful Black Dragon Canyon, Head of Sinbad, Buckhorn Wash, Sego Canyon, Rochester Canyon, Temple Mountain and others, many in out-of-the-way locations that required significant exploring to find. At none of the rock art locations did we have to contend with people — we were nearly always alone and able to spend as much time as we wanted admiring the art and the majesty of the site.

The Native Americans, it seems, almost always chose very special places that gave a feeling of power to their art exhibits; they were considered places of worship in which beauty added to the solemnity. The Head of

Sinbad with its spectacularly contoured cliffs and Black Dragon Canyon with its starkly striped canyon walls particularly stood out in their splendor.

But Native American rock art wasn't our only objective. We toured and enjoyed beautiful Arches National Park, drove to "The Wedge " overlook in the San Rafael Swell where we stood on the edge of a vertically walled canyon with the San Rafael River flowing 1,000 feet below us, we gazed at the gigantic San Rafael Reef which rose out of the ground at a 45 degree angle creating a spectacular hogback ridge which defined the eastern edge of the Swell. We enjoyed viewing the weird shapes and odd knobs of Goblin Valley, and viewed the abandoned cave ruins of several ancient Anasazi dwellings.

Abandoning our plans to drive further north and into Dinosaur National Monument meant that we didn't get a chance to renew our acquaintance with the petroglyph reproduction of my Uncle Duncan, the alleged inventor of the yoyo, who I told you about in a previous story. But we did find one petroglyph that surely is a representation of my uncle's son, Junior Duncan.



Junior Duncan

Junior looks like he is all wrapped up in his yoyo; maybe he hadn't yet developed a facility at handling the device. Your guess is as good as mine.

Despite the bad weather, it was a great trip with one exception. We spent a night in Bluff, Utah and apparently arrived at the perfect time to be eaten up by no-see-ems, little flying bugs that are so small you can hardly see them but who have a great capacity to bite. My legs got so badly bitten up that we had to go to the hospital in Kanab, Utah and get a dose of antibiotics.

Ruth got bitten, too, but not as badly; the bugs must think that I'm sweeter.

This experience brought home the fact that there are some real advantages to staying home and enjoying the beauty of the Palos Verdes Peninsula!

CHAPTER 36

EXCITING INDIAN ROCK ART

Late spring is the time to explore the countryside in the four corners region (Utah, Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona) for Indian rock art. We spent a month there a few years ago and had a great time hunting for and finding a number of marvelous displays.

Much of this art was done by chipping, pecking or carving from rocks the dark desert varnish or patina caused by weathering and chemical changes, exposing the lighter color un-weathered rock underneath. This type of art is referred to as a petroglyph.

In contrast, art that has been painted on the rock using natural pigments is called a pictograph and is more vulnerable to weathering. Thus pictographs are usually found in protected spots whereas many petroglyphs are found in open and exposed areas which, through hundreds and maybe thousands of years of exposure to sun and weather, will repatinate and darken. We happened upon a location in eastern Utah, not too far off the beaten path, which had wonderful examples of both.

Not far from the Colorado border on Interstate 70 is the small town of Thompson, Utah. It sits a short distance off the Interstate and on a road that apparently was once the main route through that area. A long-abandoned motel and gas station enshrouded in weeds sit at the corner of the access road and the main drag while the few remaining homes look run down and, in some cases

abandoned. A roughly paved road goes directly north from the town and takes you three miles to a prominently marked BLM location.

Just opposite the parking lot is a large rock panel displaying historic Ute images with large red and white pictographs of anthropomorphs, horses, bison and decorated shields. The fact that horses are included indicates that this panel was done since the intrusion of the white man. And right around the corner sits a large, excellent quality petroglyph panel of Fremont culture art showing large anthropomorphs with very broad shoulders, trapezoidal bodies, square heads and elaborate necklaces.

This panel is considerably older, having been done some time between 400 and 1300 A.D. But the prize panel of the entire area is right round a further corner.

There, high on a protected rock face, is a marvelous display of Barrier Canyon style pictographs with anthropomorphs painted in red standing six to seven feet tall. They possess the ghostly appearance that typifies this style with large, staring eyes, antennae and tapered bodies without limbs. They are accompanied by shamanic spirit helpers in the forms of snakes, birds and other animals next to their heads and shoulders. Other than the Great Gallery in Horseshoe Canyon, Canyonlands National Park, this is one of the very best displays of ancient Barrier Canyon style pictographs.

This style of Indian Rock art has been determined to be very old, dating from sometime between 4000 B.C and 500 B.C.



Echoes of the past, or the future?

If you should chance to be driving across Utah on highway 70, it would be well worth your time to take the three-mile side trip to gaze at this marvelous display.

CHAPTER 37

HEAD OF SINBAD

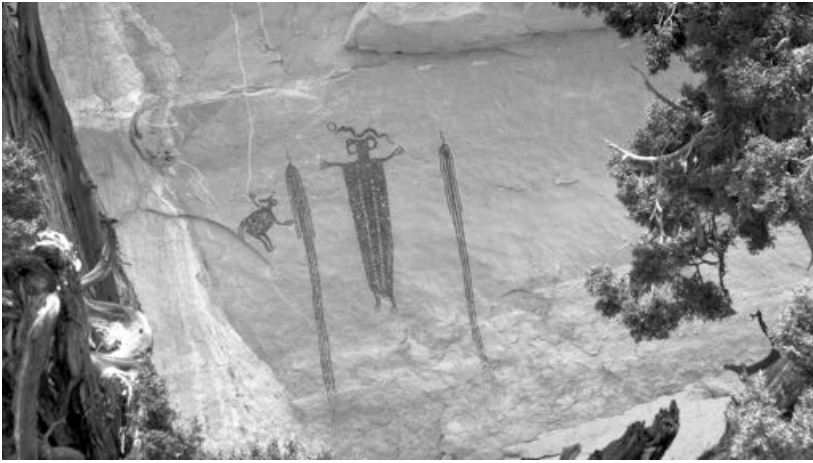
Dominating a large chunk of central Utah is a huge dome of land called the San Rafael Swell. It would take a person many days of constant driving and hiking to fully explore this scenic area completely but in the next few paragraphs I will take you on a visit to just a couple of the spots of prime interest.

Certainly one of the prettiest and most interesting spots in the Swell area is the Head of Sinbad and the lovely pictograph located there. About 35 miles west of Green River, Utah on Interstate 70 at exit 129 is a dirt road cutting to the south.

After taking a couple of wrong turns and having to retrace our steps several times, we finally found the road which took us back toward the Interstate with a nice tunnel going right under it since the object of our search was on the north side of the freeway. A few turns and a mile or so of winding dirt road took us to cliffs directly ahead at which point we stopped, and voila! There it was directly ahead.

The Head of Sinbad is a beautifully painted pictograph of a ghostly looking spirit accompanied by a small child or animal of some sort. The ghostly figure was framed by the branches of trees standing on either side while reddish cliffs, sculpted by the hand of mother nature rose several hundred feet over head.

This same pictograph was shown in the National Geographic magazine about 30 years ago as a classic example of ancient Native American artwork. Experts have told us that the pictographs in the area were done between 6000 and 2000 B.C., very long ago indeed, but beautifully preserved.



Head of Sinbad

This was an idyllic spot so we pulled out our lunch box and ate our fill while gazing at the magnificence in front of us. And when lunch was completed, we drove a short distance to admire nearby Dutchman Arch.

Many well-graded dirt roads lead to other interesting sites that are easily reached from the Head of Sinbad. But the second scenic location of specific interest is the Wedge Overlook of the San Rafael River. It is best approached from a different direction on another day, probably when you are stationed for the night at Price, Utah.

The Wedge Overlook provides a striking over-view of the "Little Grand Canyon" of the San Rafael River. It is reached by a well-graded dirt road out of Castle Dale, about 30 miles south of Price, Utah. From several viewpoints, you can follow the river a thousand feet or more below you as it twists its way through the precipitous canyon, eventually to join the Green River and ultimately the Colorado, for its merry race to the ocean.

And after enjoying the over-view, you can rejoin the dirt road dropping down to the river to admire the Buckhorn Wash pictograph stretching along a 160-foot wide rock panel, one of the finest displays of artwork of the Western Archaic Culture. Only one or two pictograph panels found in this country are on a par with or superior to this marvelous display.

I have but scratched the surface of this spectacular scenic area; I haven't mentioned the numerous natural arches, the tightly winding slot canyons, the manifold additional petroglyphs and pictographs, the balanced rocks and curious rock formations, the dinosaur remains, and the interesting recent evidence of modern civilized existence.

We've taken a number of trips to beautiful Utah, visited all five of its national parks several times (Bryce, Zion, Capitol Reef, Arches and Canyonlands) plus the national monuments (Natural Bridges, Rainbow Bridge, Grand Staircase-Escalante, Dinosaur). But we've had our most fun visiting this area, which hardly anyone knows about, located in the middle of the state. As a result, it is not

nearly as heavily visited and remains relatively uncrowded.

The National Parks and Monuments in Utah are wonderful and glorious, but they're jammed with the people who come from all over the world to see the scenic wonders not found any other place in the world. In contrast, traffic in the Swell area is non-existent. The area's roads, except for Interstate 70 that bisects it, are well-graded dirt and passable in all but very bad weather. If you don't mind getting your car dirty, the Swell is the place to see natural beauty without being jostled by the madding throng or locked in a traffic jam.



Amazing natural arches

Many days can be spent exploring all the locations of beauty and interest and, although we have spent time in that area twice, we plan to go back again soon to admire once more the magnificence of the San Rafael Swell.

CHAPTER 38

A HUNT FOR HIDDEN RUINS

We were camped next to the San Juan River in Bluff, Utah, right in the middle of Anasazi country, exploring the marvelous Utah landscape while at the same time viewing the many ancient Indian ruins. On previous days, we had already visited and enjoyed Natural Bridges National Monument and Monument Valley and looked at the incredible Goose Necks of the San Juan River after descending the acrophobic Moqui Dugway. But today we were looking for Anasazi ruins, ones that were hidden away from easy view, that weren't right out in the open with teeming multitudes gazing at them like it is at Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado.

We had spent considerable time exploring Butler Wash (an interesting canyon with an uninteresting name), which paralleled an exquisite classic geologic example of a hogback named Comb Ridge. With its lofty rock outcroppings and many caves, it was reputed to be loaded with ruins but we had been unsuccessful in our efforts, having searched for and visited a number of promising caves which turned out to be "dry holes". So this afternoon we were headed toward a location shown on our "Indian Country Map" as Fry Canyon Ruins.

The "Indian Country Map" is printed by the Auto Club and is a must if you are exploring that area of the country, as it is considerably more detailed than the Utah State map. This map can be picked up at any AAA office, but if you're not a member it'll cost you \$3.95.

The map showed a small resort named Fry Canyon a few miles up the "Bicentennial Highway" beyond Natural Bridges National Monument with the Fry Canyon Ruins a little further. We arrived at the resort only to find it deserted with nobody there to ask where the ruins were. The only answer was to start hunting, driving further up the highway until we saw Jacobs Chair, a unique rock formation marked on the map, which told us that we had gone too far.

The highway ran alongside a deep defile which the maps called White Canyon, but no side roads were shown and we were beginning to give up hope until, on the third pass, we spotted an unmarked, rutted dirt track going over toward White Canyon. We turned on to it as a last resort. The road, such as it was, was level for about 100 yards but then went over a very rocky area and I dropped the truck into 4-wheel drive to avoid any problems.

A few yards further, the track turned left paralleling White Canyon and went another 100 yards or so, coming to an abrupt end with no signs or marks of any kind. Were we at the end of nothing? There was no indication that there was anything to see over the edge of the abrupt rocky drop off ahead but out of the truck we climbed to take a look. Carefully we crept up to the edge and lo and behold! There it was on the other side of the canyon, a very large hidden cave with many obvious Indian ruins in it. We had found it! The Fry Canyon Ruins, located in White Canyon.

We felt a bit like Balboa must have felt when he crossed Central America and spied a new ocean lying before him, the great body of water he called the Pacific.

The canyon walls were precipitous. It would take ropes and climbing gear to get down to the bottom of the canyon and halfway up the other side to where the cave was located. We didn't have the expertise or equipment to handle it. But the true romance of looking at Anasazi ruins is viewing them from a distance and we certainly enjoyed a great view.



Home Sweet Home

Our look at these 800-year-old ruins was like finding a diamond in the rough, we told ourselves, as we stood there taking photographs and admiring our discovery. As usual, the ancient Americans had built their Anasazi buildings in a hard to find, out of the way location, but we had been successful in our search and have a nice photo and some great memories to show for it.

CHAPTER 39

GIANT STAIRCASE and ESCALANTE CANYONS

Maybe Kanab is the best starting point, or possibly Escalante would be better. But both are natural take off points for an adventurous invasion of the Giant Staircase - Escalante Canyons National Monument in Utah.

This National Monument encompasses a beautiful wild, unspoiled area ripe for exploration by car or on foot. Spectacular cliffs form the giant staircase at the west end of the park while at the east, separated from the staircase by the rugged Kaiparowits Plateau, are the exciting and inviting slick-rock canyons of Escalante. Come with me on a couple of day trips we took there.

Driving east from Kanab, Utah on interstate 89, we came to a dirt road marked Cottonwood Canyon. The road was rough but quite passable without 4-wheel drive, following the nearly dry Paria River as well as an interesting hog back called the Cockscomb, a sharp double ridge of tilted fins jutting into the air. A noteworthy characteristic of that area is the steeply sloping strata that form the multi-colored cliffs of the Giant Staircase paralleled by arid canyons.

Soon we came to a side road, which led us to spectacular Grosvenor Arch, high over our heads in the red cliffs. And a few miles further we arrived at Kodachrome Basin, a Utah State Park enclave of the national monument with fossilized geyser cores thrusting their monstrous phallic vestigial remains toward the heavens.

Here we ate our lunch and then took a mile walk to Shakespeare arch.

The ranger had suggested that we return to Kanab via a back road rather than traveling much greater distance on the paved highway or retracing our steps on Cottonwood Canyon Road. So, after lunch and the walk to the arch, we started on the homeward jaunt looking for a road with the unlikely name of Skutumpah, the suggested route. We then proceeded to spend a couple of hours lost in the maze of back roads of the area, finally directed to the correct one by a rancher working out in the fields. The correct road, he instructed us, was the one marked “unmaintained road”, the least likely looking of the side roads we had seen, a rough looking road we had disregarded assuming that it was the wrong one.

The “unmaintained road” was very rough as expected, climbing steeply over ridges and dropping precipitously into canyons. We were paralleling the White and Gray Cliffs of the Giant Staircase and getting a teeth-rattling ride out of it. We had not seen a single vehicle or person (other than the rancher) since leaving the main road and were beginning to feel alone and wondering if we were lost. The time we had spent lost on the back roads meant that we wouldn’t be able to take one of the hikes we had noticed on our map; it also had kept us out considerably later in the day than we had planned.

We had seen no confirmation that this was Skutumpah Road – we were simply relying on the rancher’s word. We had made mistakes in interpreting the map and our

minds were beginning to play tricks on us as we became more and more concerned with the direction we should be going. The name Skutumpah mutated to Scoot 'em pa and then to an outrageous pseudonym, "Scramdaddy". We began to picture in our minds spending the night out there sitting in our truck doing our best to stay warm and fighting off the wolves and mountain lions. And so Scramdaddy Road dragged endlessly on as our apprehensions increased.

But suddenly we saw a car ahead by the side of the road and we immediately recognized it as a ranger's wagon, a very welcome sight indeed. The ranger (she, it turned out to be) thankfully confirmed that we were on Skutumpah road and headed in the right direction. She was parked next to a short bridge over a truly amazing slot canyon that was maybe 10 feet wide at the top with absolutely vertical cliffs going down 50 or 60 feet. She showed us a photo taken from below of the scattered remains of a pickup truck that was crossing the bridge several years ago when the span suddenly collapsed.

We'll have to come back and explore this intriguing canyon or one of the others on Scutumpah Road next time we're in the area. But now we didn't have time for exploration. Our aim was to get back to our home base as fast as possible before the sun sank. Fortunately the road began to smooth out and soon we were coursing along at 40 miles per hour or more, making it back home just before sunset.

It had been a long day and we had done more driving and less hiking than we had intended. But the events of the day had whetted our interest in exploring more of the park. That time would come very soon.

Next day, we decided to move our base of operations from Kanab on the south side of the park to Escalante on the north. We took in beautiful Bryce Canyon on the way and finally pulled into the Broken Arrow RV Park in the small town of Escalante later in the day. After a good night's sleep in our fifth-wheel trailer, we were ready for another day of exploration.

Burr Trail, a road with a sinister sounding name, attracted us because it stretched from the small town of Bolder, Utah over into Capitol Reef National Park. Most of it was paved, but the last few miles down over the Reef were a steep, sharply switchbacked dirt road with an interesting sounding 4-wheel drive side road leading up Upper Muley Twist Canyon. It looked like a great day trip, one that would satisfy, at least for the time being, our wanderlust. Our lunch box carefully packed with goodies, we took off the next morning.

The 15 mile stretch of State Highway 12 from Escalante to Boulder, although relatively heavily traveled, is one of the truly beautiful roads in the United States as it winds through the white slick-rock country of the Escalante Canyons, dipping down to cross the Escalante River and Calf Creek and then rising to view points high above the canyons below. At one point the road follows a narrow

knife-like ridge with precipitous cliffs falling off as much as a thousand feet on both sides.

After that spectacular drive, we turned off onto Burr Trail at Boulder, and headed into lonely country with few cars passing to distract us from the beauty of the scenery.



Exploring grand vistas of great beauty

Thirty or so miles further, when we reached the border of Capitol Reef National Park, the pavement ended and the road wound its way down nearly 1,000 feet of altitude in a half mile of tight switchbacks which appeared almost frightening in their steepness but turned out to be perfectly passable for a high clearance vehicle. Again 4-wheel drive was not necessary as traction was good. We drove to the bottom of the steep incline and then turned round and drove back to the top just for the sheer exhilaration of the drive.

The road up Upper Muley Twist Canyon was a genuine 4-wheel drive road, very rough and requiring hard work to dodge all the rocks, but the scenery was beautiful as arches and distinctive rock carvings appeared in the rocky cliffs stretching many hundreds of feet above us. We parked at the end of the road and dived into our lunch box with vigor.

And after finishing lunch, we hiked a quarter of a mile or so, climbing a few hundred feet in altitude to the top of the ridge for a spectacular overview of Capitol Reef with a clear shot both up and down the 1,500 foot high Waterpocket Fold. But later, after driving out the three miles of 4-wheel drive bumps and grinds, we almost wished we had parked the truck at the entrance and walked up the road. We had been so busy avoiding rocks and scratches to our paint job that we had scarcely had a chance to appreciate the spectacular beauty of the place.

We never did get much hiking done in the Giant Staircase-Escalante Canyon National Monument because we spent most of the time we had available to us exploring country new to us. We drove the Devil's Backbone at close to 9,000 feet and peered down into Box Death Hollow Wilderness Area. We shook, rattled and rolled over 17 miles of gut-wrenching washboards to get to Devil's Garden and enjoyed the fantastic shapes – and then drove 17 more equally rough miles to get out. We hiked the trail to Petrified Wood State Park in Escalante. But we ran out of time before we made it down into any

of the magnificent canyons of the slick-rock Escalante area.

There are trails up or down a number of the beautiful canyons, and trails aren't required to explore many of them. A number of wonderful slot canyons (with names like "Spooky" and "Peek-A-Boo") are available for exploring, but you have to drive 26 miles over those gizzard rattling washboards to get to them and then negotiate the same distance to return. And we missed the interesting canyons along Scutumpah Road because we had wasted all our time getting lost on the confusing back roads.

We're just going to have to return to Giant Staircase-Escalante Canyons National Monument some time in the future and do a more complete job. I bet you'd like to go, too.

CHAPTER 40

ANGELS' LANDING

They called it Angels' Landing because only an angel or a bird with winged transport could possibly get to the top.

That's what the early settlers in Zion Canyon, Utah said as they conferred descriptive names to the many monoliths that line the canyon walls: the Great White Throne, The Altar of Sacrifice, The Watchman, Mount Moroni, Lady Mountain, The Three Patriarchs, and more. But man, with his ingenuity, has built trails to the top of some of these perpendicular rock slabs and the hike up Angels' Landing is surely one of the great hikes in the U.S. I'd like to tell you about this five-mile round trip with a 1,500 foot climb.

A sturdy footbridge crosses the Virgin River from the road up Zion canyon. The trail ascends gently at first but soon quite steeply up the precipitous west wall of Zion Canyon cutting its way through red colored Navajo sandstone which was laid down in a desert many million years ago. After rising a hot 800 feet, the path enters Refrigerator Canyon, a narrow slit cut by natural forces into the rocky walls through which cooling breezes blow continually. After the torrid climb, Refrigerator Canyon is a blessing and, since it is fairly level, it gives you a chance to rest up for the even steeper climb to come.

Walter's Wiggles, 21 switchbacks up a narrow cliff with each traverse being no more than 30 feet in length, demands your attention next, but your effort is rewarded

at the top; the view from Boy Scout Lookout is spectacular. Below you, 1,000 feet straight down is the Zion Canyon road alongside the meandering Virgin River, and the cars and people look like ants.



Walter's Wiggles, lower left, leading to Angels' Landing

This is the spot to pause and rest as you have completed the portion of the hike on a trail – the rest will be clambering over rocks and scaling ladders.

You have only a half mile and five hundred feet of altitude left to reach the summit. You will be following a narrow ridge, in places only three feet wide, which connects Angels' Landing to the canyon walls and if acrophobia is your problem, I don't recommend you try it. Cables and steel railings imbedding in the rock make the final ascent safe but spectacular. The cliffs drop off over 1,000 feet on both sides and the route looks impassible but is very negotiable with reasonable care.

The reward upon reaching the end is astounding: a clear shot both up and down Zion Canyon with the road and river 1,500 feet below you. And directly across the canyon from you looms the majestic 3,000 foot high Great White Throne.

This is a perfect place to eat your lunch and enjoy the wondrous geological and scenic creation called Zion Canyon.

CHAPTER 41

BAGEL HEAVEN (The World Goes Round and Round)

If you visit the nearby bagel shop to assuage your appetite, are you getting an honest to goodness bagel or have they pulled a switch, made a change, and given you an obwarzanek krakowski. They look pretty much the same and if you attempted to roll them side-by-side down the sidewalk, the results would be similar.

Evidence stretches way back to the year 1496 (four years after Columbus sailed the ocean blue) when Polish King John Albert made an effort to bring forth and emphasize the basic differences. Obwarzaneks are somewhat bigger than regular bagels, are woven from two strands of dough instead of one and have been produced for over 600 years by the people of Krakow, Poland. Daily production of this Polish delicacy reaches 150,000. If you visit a Polish bakery and ask for a bagel, they'll probably look at you perplexed and then offer you an obwarzanek krakowski, which you'll undoubtedly enjoy thoroughly. So please don't complain that "change" has been inflicted on you since an obwarzanek krakowski is simply a glorified bagel and really, only the name has been changed.

In our present political climate, we must be careful to distinguish between changes that do good things, changes that don't make any difference and the changes that do really bad things. This is your philosophy lesson for today.

CHAPTER 42

DANGEROUS DUSTING

One evening, while looking for some misplaced object that my wife had apparently hidden, I went into one of our upstairs bedrooms, flipping the wall switch that activates the table lamp. But the light didn't go on so I groped my way through the darkness and turned the lamp switch on and off several times with no success. The next day, I checked to see why the light hadn't gone on only to find that the lamp had been unplugged.

A few days later I had occasion to set the video timer so as to record a special program. I had heard that over 50% of the American public doesn't know how to program their video machine, but I started into the usual routine with a triumphant air of confidence, as I had never had trouble performing this simple procedure. But the setting didn't take, so I tried it again. It still didn't take, and I began to wonder if my mentality was regressing to join the 50% who couldn't. After a few more tries, I resolved to come back and make the effort again the next day, which I did with similar lack of success. So several days later, in desperation, I unhooked the VCR and took it down to the nearby Sony repair place.

Two days later the shop called and reported that the unit was working fine, but the fellow on the phone wondered if I had a cleaning lady. The toggle switch on the back of the machine which must be set for channel 3, they reported, had been re-set to channel 4.

I asked my wife if she had done anything with the VCR recently. Oh yes, she had dusted behind it just the other day. Ah ha! That's how the toggle switch had gotten flipped. Ruth had apparently indulged in Dangerous Dusting. And I'll bet that's why that lamp had been unplugged.

But then came the coup de grace. A few days later, I sat down at the computer only to have a sign flash on the monitor: "major keyboard error". Other than that, the video screen stared blankly back at me, not responding to my futile efforts. I thereupon proceeded to complain bitterly to my wife who then mentioned in passing that she had dusted the computer just the day before. I hurriedly turned the unit around to see if all the wires were connected properly and guess what! The wire from the keyboard to the computer was unplugged. More dangerous dusting had surely been taking place! More moans from yours truly!

Now I sit here typing this unhappy tale, having just completed the dusting, which my wife now refuses to do because of my annoying complaints. I guess a guy just has to put up with a certain amount of Dangerous Dusting.

CHAPTER 43

GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY OF THE PALOS VERDES PENINSULA

Take a drive around the Palos Verdes Peninsula rising above Los Angeles, California and observe the fossil-bearing sedimentary deposits that are readily apparent in the road cuts and sea cliffs, verification of the fact that this area was under water for countless eons. Add to these observations the realization that the ancient metamorphic bedrock exposed in George F Canyon above the Palos Verdes Reservoir can be found buried under thousands of feet of sediment in the flatlands north of "the Hill" and one begins to understand the complexity of the geologic history of Palos Verdes.

The Peninsula came to its present stage of development through a long and complicated evolution, which is only partially explained by the fragmented remaining record in the rocks. As best we can piece it together, here is the story in simplified form:

About 15 million years ago, the area that now includes the Peninsula was submerged under the ocean. It had emerged and subsided for prolonged periods a number of times previously. The base rock underlying the area had been laid down and then metamorphosed by massive tectonic forces 130 to 140 million years previously. As the area lay under the ocean it was surrounded by a rim of mountains that included the San Gabriels, the Santa Monicas, the Santa Anas and a range made up of what are now the Channel Islands.

Sediments from these ranges were being carried down into the basin by mountain streams and deposited over the base rock, slowly filling the basin.

As alluvium was being deposited, submarine volcanism occurred that had a profound effect on the Peninsula's present topography. Large irregular dikes of basalt, a hard igneous rock, intruded into the sediments. These highly resistant deposits form the numerous points that jut out from the Peninsula coastline into the ocean. The soft sediments between the resistant points have been eroded away to form the many bays and coves along the coast. At the same time, a layer of volcanic tuff (ash) was being deposited which was later compressed into a slippery clay called Bentonite. This is the greasy layer that has been the principle lubricant of the numerous landslides in Palos Verdes, particularly in the Portuguese Bend area.

Half a million years ago, Palos Verdes began its most recent emergence. There were two factors affecting the level of the land in relation to the ocean: first, the sea level was constantly changing because of the ice ages that the world was experiencing. When large areas of the ocean were frozen, as they were during the ice ages, the sea level was much lower in relation to the land. This phenomenon exposed the land bridge from Asia to North America across the Bering Straits that first allowed *Homo sapiens* to reach our continent. In addition, the Peninsula area was being faulted upward by the Palos Verdes Fault, which runs under the Vincent Thomas Bridge through Waleria and northwestward out into the ocean.

This up and down activity in relation to sea level produced the wave-cut terraces that are so apparent at the present time. There are at least 13 separate terraces that can be identified; one or more currently lying below sea level, while five of those above current sea level are readily recognized. The highest terrace is at the top of San Pedro Hill where the radar station is located. The lowest terrace above sea level is mostly obliterated except for the Pt. Fermin area of San Pedro and at Malaga Cove. Palos Verdes Drives South, West and North are on terrace number four, while most of upper Crest Road is on terrace number ten.

During at least one of the intervals when Palos Verdes was in an uplifted state, but at a time between ice ages when the ocean was at a high level, Palos Verdes became the ninth Channel Island. The ocean extended in against the foothills of the San Gabriel and Santa Monica Mountains leaving Palos Verdes separated by 15 to 20 miles from the mainland. As streams from these mountains carried sediments into the separating channel, the channel narrowed and finally disappeared.

As Palos Verdes was thrust upward by faulting, run-off water from rains cut deep canyons down the sides of the uplifted landscape. In one place the eroding waters exposed the 150 million year old base metamorphic rock, the Catalina Schist, upon which all the overlying ocean sediments had been deposited. An outcropping of this base rock may be seen in George F Canyon above the reservoir. Most of the exposed rock on "The Hill,"

however, is much newer, having been deposited as alluvium when the area was under water.

Landslides have been a major formative factor in the landscape of the Peninsula. Although geologists were aware of the Portuguese Bend slide some time ago and, in fact, geological maps made in the '30s plainly show the slide area, this information was disregarded when the Portuguese Bend Club was established and many homes as well as the clubhouse were built right in the middle of the slide. When earth movement, which had been temporarily stalled, began again in the mid '50s, there was nothing that could be done and a large part of the development slid into the ocean. The rough, ever-changing roadbed along Palos Verdes Drive South reminds us of this continuing movement.



Slip sliden' away along Palos Verdes Drive South

As you drive around the Peninsula today, much of the geologic evidence has been obscured by human civilization. But remaining in plain view are the wave-cut cliffs varying in height from 300 feet at Bluff Cove to 50 feet elsewhere surrounding most of the seaward sides of Palos Verdes and which serve to keep us aware of our geologic history. And in the San Pedro-Wilmington area, we see the remains of the tidal marsh in Harbor Lake and the low lying areas surrounding it that in past years were the mouth of the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers.

Today, we see lovely houses and buildings as well as beautiful trees and landscaping covering the terrain of the Peninsula; they combine with the natural beauty and unparalleled climate to make Palos Verdes one of the most desirable places in the world to live.

CHAPTER 44

PALOS VERDES GEOLOGY – A FIELD TRIP

An April 1998 docent meeting and field trip hosted by Point Vicente Interpretive Center was a fascinating affair, as Dr. Tom Henyey, professor of Geology at USC and Executive Director of the Southern California Earthquake Center gave us a semester's worth of geology in two hours, followed by a three hour field trip.

The study of geology has come a long ways in the past 80 or so years since Alfred Wegener first presented the concept of continental drift (plate tectonics), and Henyey brought to us the latest thinking on this subject. Wegener's theory was ridiculed for many years but, with the use of modern instrumentation and global positioning equipment, movement of the continents has been positively confirmed.

Volcanism usually occurs where one plate dives under another (a process called subduction) or where two plates are spreading apart. Thus we see the subduction-caused volcanoes of the Cascade Range in Northern California, Oregon and Washington resulting from the Juan de Fuca plate diving under the North American continent. But where plates are spreading apart as they are in the central Atlantic ridge, volcanic islands such as Iceland, Azores and the Cape Verde Islands are formed. Subduction and plate spreading are normally accompanied by earthquakes, although earthquakes also take place where these phenomenon do not exist. Thus, Southern California experienced subduction with

resulting volcanism until 20 million years ago but today we experience only earthquakes.

Los Angeles rides on the Pacific plate, which is drifting northwestward, separated from the rest of the United States and the North American Plate by the San Andreas Fault. Give us a few million years and L.A., drifting northwest, will pass San Francisco and become the predominant metropolis of Northern California.

This northwestward movement would be less of a problem if the San Andreas Fault went in a straight line but unfortunately it has two bends in Southern California. Thus the fault tends to hang up rather than moving smoothly, the result being infrequent violently severe quakes as the fault is prevented from moving frequently so as to release the built up stresses. In contrast, the San Andreas between Parkfield in the southern San Joaquin Valley northwest of Bakersfield and Hollister in the northern San Joaquin Valley just south of San Jose experiences frequent relatively mild temblors, both towns being located on a section of the San Andreas fault which is very straight. Parkfield, tiny town that it is, is filled with seismographs and proudly boasts that you should "be here when it happens". Take a scenic drive north of Parkfield over the Parkfield Grade on the very passable and scenic dirt road and maybe you can experience one of the magnitude 6 temblors of which they are so proud.

The Palos Verdes Fault, which runs under the Vincent Thomas Bridge, through Waleria and then

northwestward out into the ocean, has recently been brought into sharper focus as a result of underwater exploration. The fault is only about 60 miles in length but has the same hang-up as does the San Andreas; it takes a big bend, which keeps it from moving as frequently or smoothly as it would if it were straight. Thus, it has produced the buckling uplift that raised the Palos Verdes Peninsula's hills to their present-day 1,500-foot altitude.

Fortunately, this fault's movement is only about a tenth that of the San Andreas which, using our best guess, means that it should experience a 6.4 to 7.4 quake only once every 1,000 to 1,500 years. Historic records indicate that there has been no movement on this fault for the past 400 years; we have no way of knowing when the next slipping will occur.

After our lecture, Dr. Henyey lead us on a walk up into the old quarry behind Ladera Linda where he pointed out to us the various kinds of rocks which were evident. The quarry was originally established to dig up basalt for use in railroad building in the southern Los Angeles basin. Henyey explained that basalt is an extrusive igneous rock that poured forth from underground. From our vantage point, we could look up and see strata of sediments laid down at a later time overlapping the sill of igneous rock.

Moving to another location in the quarry revealed numerous outcroppings of dolomite, a calcium-magnesium carbonate mineral with shiny white crystals

exposed. At the same location, we could see the plane of a small inactive fault whose movement had occurred many eons ago.

A short drive took us to the beautiful overturned fold in the sedimentary strata at White Point. We then drove up to a spot overlooking George F Canyon where we could examine an outcropping of Catalina Schist, the underlying rock of the Palos Verdes Peninsula. This is the oldest rock in the area and underlies the sediments, sometimes as much as a mile deep, of the Los Angeles Basin.

The Peninsula has been faulted upward and the sediments eroded away exposing this ancient rock in that one small area. Dr. Henyey explained that Schist is developed as sediments are metamorphosed by heat and pressure at great depth under the surface of the land.

CHAPTER 45

FINDING FAULT WITH THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

California is known as a land of dangerous earthquake faults. The fearsome San Andreas runs almost the length of the state, intruding into the heavily populated Los Angeles and San Francisco areas and creating powerful and cataclysmic quakes periodically. Grouped around it are a myriad of smaller but lethal faults, also capable of doing catastrophic damage. But from Cape Mendocino in northern California up the coast through Oregon and Washington and well into northern British Columbia, earthquakes are uncommon and many people have considered it to be a non-seismic area, quake free and harmless.

The Pacific Northwest has until recently been inhabited only by native Americans which have no written history and therefore no documented record to catalog earthquakes. Since those with the tradition of keeping written records moved in a few hundred years ago, that area has been relatively quiet with the only earthquake-related damage being caused by tsunamis originating from "outside areas". Yet earthquake specialists have been skeptical of the apparently placid topography and have spent considerable effort looking into the matter, naming the area the "Canadian Subduction Zone" and turning up evidence that reveals a far different long ago history and gives us pause for concern.

The first significant topographic information that suggests a violent geologic history with potential for

future earthquake damage in the Pacific Northwest is the lofty range of volcanic mountains running parallel with the coast.

Starting with Mount Lassen and Mount Shasta in northern California, the procession of dominant volcanic peaks runs up the Oregon and Washington coast into British Columbia with Mt. St. Helens, Mt. Rainier, Mt. Baker and many others. This same type of topographic layout is found along the coast of South America with the towering Andes following the western coastline and the area has a history of violent subduction type earthquakes occurring along the coast of Chile during recorded history. In 1960 the most powerful earthquake ever recorded in the world (9.5 on the Richter Scale) occurred there. The tectonic time bombs that decimated Sumatra in 2004 and Japan in 2011 resulted from a similar geographical layout.

A subduction earthquake occurs when one tectonic plate dives under another. In the case of the Pacific Northwest, pressures are forcing the Pacific Plate under the landmass of the North American Plate, thus forcing the North American Plate upward over the lowered Pacific Plate. Friction between the plates causes heat creating the volcanic chain of mountains overhead. The fact that the Indian tribes living in the Pacific Northwest have little or no specific record of earth movement and resulting tsunamis simply makes us want to dig deeper.

Scientists from Oregon State University have done much exploration to unravel the mysteries of the Cascadian

Subduction zone. Searching the coastal areas has revealed a number of ghost forests of dead trees buried in the bays and estuaries along the Oregon and Washington coasts. Along the Copalis River was discovered a stand of highly durable red cedar trees which, although dead for hundreds of years, were in good enough shape to allow examination of their tree rings and a comparison with the tree rings of those still living. From this, it was possible to determine that all of the trees in the numerous coastal Ghost Forests had perished at the same time, around 1700. Then radiocarbon analysis was used on the tree ring data to verify that the time of death was indeed between 1680 and 1720. Why had they all perished at once?

The next clue to the puzzle was found in the examination of underwater landslides (called turbidites) in the Cascadian Subduction Zone. Core samples drawn from several thousand feet deep in a large number of locations revealed thirteen different distinctive rings of deposits in each of the slides. One of the rings discovered was an ash deposit that was identified as being from the tremendous explosion of Mt. Mazama, the mountain now holding Crater Lake. (Mazama's blast has been estimated to be 40 times as powerful as was Mt. St. Helen's) The age of Mazama's deposits, because of their volcanic nature, could be determined by radiocarbon dating and thus scientists were able to establish dates for all of the rings of the deposits.

It soon became apparent that comparable rings of deposits occurred in all of the different clearly defined

turbidite deposits taken many miles apart along various river-like canyons on the ocean bottom along the coast. And calculations indicated that the average amount of time between deposit rings was 550 years. But why would all these core deposits have the same number of turbidite rings even though they came from different river systems, different parts of the margin, different geology? Could they all be the result of series of giant earthquakes that had occurred about every 550 years?

This underwater record was pointing to a series of pre-historic earthquakes. It was time to talk with the local native people, to learn what their elders from past centuries recalled regarding ancient earthquakes. Sketchy stories passed on for centuries told of horrific ground shaking on a winter's night long ago followed by a killer wave that wiped out entire communities. No more details were remembered, the time was so far in the past. But another source of information was available.

The Japanese people have long been literate and have kept precise written records of historical events. Tree ring and radiocarbon data from Washington and Oregon had narrowed the time of the last giant quake and tsunami to a time span from 1690 to 1720. Kenji Satake, a Japanese native, had spent a couple of years at Cal Tech, where he had studied Cascadia's quake and tsunami potential. He returned to Japan and studied written records, searching for a report of a tsunami around that time and found documents describing a tsunami from an unknown origin in the year 1700.

No one in Japan had felt any earthquake at that time, so the giant wave must have come from far away. Checking out the weather records for that year, bad weather was ruled out as the cause of the large wave and the conclusion was reached that it must have come from across the Pacific.



Mount Hood's last (minor) eruption was in August of 1907

Earthquakes in South America in 1687 and 1730 created tsunamis that were recorded in Japan, but nothing showed up in 1700. Sasaki's calculations indicated that the wave from Cascadia must have come from a quake with a magnitude of 9 or larger and since the wave arrived in Japan around midnight and it would take about 10 hours to cover the distance from Cascadia, it must have occurred at about 5 p.m. local time in Cascadia. This time is consistent with Native American legends that an earthquake occurred on a winter night.

Thus we have confirmation of the last of the great Cascadia earthquakes.

Even though seismologists cannot predict when Cascadia's next major quake will occur, most experts feel that a megathrust quake will eventually occur, maybe tonight, maybe next week, maybe next year or maybe in 500 years. Sights on TV of the recent Japanese quake or the Indonesian quake of a few years ago have graphically etched in all our minds the disastrous results of a giant subduction quake and what it could do to our northwestern coast. Studies of the turbidite rings in undersea deposits have indicated that a large Cascadian earthquake has occurred about every 500 to 550 years and here we are today, with 200 to 300 years before the next mega quake is due.

When Ruth and I drove the beautiful Oregon coast five or ten years ago, I noticed that very durable signs are posted on the beaches advising beachgoers to head for the hills immediately if they feel a significant earthquake. It's obvious that people are planning for the coming disaster. It's difficult to predict just how damaging another mega quake might be, but everyone in the Pacific Northwest should be aware that the damage from a large subduction quake would almost certainly be truly catastrophic.

In California the major faults run right through areas of major population which means that the damage to buildings and roads and the loss of life will be very great in the next "big one." But in contrast to California, where

the faults are mostly above ground, in the Cascadian subduction zone, the faults are underwater with the probability that a big quake will produce a disastrous tsunami. And since the northern end of the San Andreas Fault at Cape Mendocino is right where the southern end of the Cascadian Subduction Zone starts, we have no way of knowing whether the breaching of one of those two faults will affect the other.



Beauty can be treacherous

We must all be prepared to live through the results of such massive shocks and to get by without the availability of supplies and medicines for a prolonged period of waiting.

Information for this chapter was gleaned from THE FIELD GUIDE TO THE SAN ANDREAS FAULT and from the fascinating book CASCADIA'S FAULT by Jerry Thompson.

CHAPTER 46

GLOBAL WARMING CONFIRMED

Satellite photos now confirm that polar ice caps are shrinking and the planet's temperature is increasing! More of the sun's heat is getting trapped by the carbon dioxide in the air! Of course, we're not talking about the earth but instead, Mars, where their polar ice caps are made of carbon dioxide and the average temperature is 81 degrees below zero. What a strange coincidence that Mars is warming at the same time as is the earth!

Maybe it's not so strange when we examine the ancient history of our planet. For much of the earth's existence, the temperature was 10 to 15 degrees Celsius higher than it is now. A thousand years ago, the Northern Hemisphere was in the middle of what is called the Medieval Warm Period. Temperatures were high enough that the Vikings could cultivate Greenland, which is now covered with ice. People grew grapes in England. But by 1500 the climate pendulum had swung the other way and the next few centuries were so cold that historians call them the Little Ice Age. Glaciers engulfed French villages and the canals of Holland were frozen, giving Hans Brinker a nice place to skate.

So the present apparent warming of the earth may be caused by industrial pollutants in our atmosphere trapping the sun's heat. Or it may be because of a greater amount of heat being recently given off by the sun. Or both. Let's not jump to conclusions, which may cause us to do foolish things!

CHAPTER 47

A HAPPY, HAPPY BIRTHDAY

It was my birthday, my 88th, and I awoke with enthusiasm in anticipation of a beautiful fall day. The official celebration had taken place a few days earlier when the kids had come over for a dinner party that had turned out to be replete with much frivolity and friendly badinage. Today, however, would be nothing special, just a pleasant time to lay back and mellow out or do whatever I wanted. Retired life can really be quite pleasant! But the first indication that things might go astray raised its ugly head as Ruth and I were sitting at the breakfast table.

The sprinklers were set to go on as we were eating breakfast but for some reason they didn't flow forth with their usual gusto, instead emitting a miniscule dribble. I'll have to look into that right after breakfast, I muttered under my breath, and continued spooning down sizable quantities of Corn Flakes (or was it Rice Krispies?). This shouldn't be too much of a problem to fix, I said to myself.

Ruth said goodbye and hurried to the garage to drive to a meeting she had scheduled, leaving me to pick up the dirty dishes, my usual chore. But two seconds later, a frantic call from the garage advised me that the garage door wouldn't open and requested my presence. The electric door opener was operating beautifully, the pulling mechanism sliding gaily back and forth on its rail, but its connection to the garage door had broken

loose and the door was sitting there stolidly refusing to move, paying no attention to my frantic punching of the actuating button. Now that is going to be a problem – I'll have to look into it after I fix the sprinkler. I had been wondering what I was going to do to keep busy today, my birthday, but my concerns in that regard had been thoroughly and completely taken care of.

Because the garage door wouldn't open, we couldn't get the cars out and Ruth had no transportation to get to her meeting. A phone call brought somebody to pick her up, so she departed while I started digging into the bushes in the side yard to find the broken pipe and determine whether I could repair the plumbing disaster. Suffice to say, the plumbing problem turned out to be relatively simple. Nothing had broken, the pipes had just pulled apart and I was able to re-glue them together fairly easily.

That was not the case, however, with the garage door opener. The outside temperature was in the 90s but had to be at least 120 degrees in the garage, perfect temperature for frying eggs but unbearable for working. I couldn't open the garage doors to cool the place down to a livable temperature and without opening them couldn't get the cars out to go to the hardware store to buy new bolts to re-fasten the broken door connection. Rather than suffering from heat stroke and terminal frustration, I wised up and postponed the job 'til the next day when hopefully I could make the necessary repairs in the cool of the morning.

Next morning it was much more comfortable, and I vigorously launched into the repair job, making some progress but soon realizing, in frustration, that the supply of bolts and nuts of the right size I had at home would be inadequate to solve the problem. The inability to get the cars out of the garage to go buy the necessary bolts and nuts finally convinced me that I needed outside help and needed it soon, or we would be stuck in our house forever with terminal heat stroke.

The answer came to us in a flash. Kill two birds with one stone: our boy, David, lives in Huntington Beach about two blocks from a Home depot store. We told him what size bolts and nuts to buy and asked him to come up for supper along with his daughter Michelle, our youngest granddaughter.

They came up, we fixed the doors, had a fine supper together with a friendly visit, and life was restored to normalcy. And that's how I spent my 88th birthday.

Have you ever had that much fun on *your* birthday?

CHAPTER 48

THE HAGGARTY MANSION (Now the Neighborhood Church of Palos Verdes Estates, California)

It was 1927 and retail tycoon J.J. Haggarty was feeling flush. Business was great and he could think of no better place to sink some money than in a new house on the largely uninhabited Palos Verdes Peninsula in California. But a plain old house just wouldn't do – an Italian villa with all the trappings to impress his friends and entertain weekend visitors sounded much better.

After two years of work, the Italian artisans and laborers completed their task and what a layout it was: 290 feet of a rambling 20 room extravaganza stretching out along the top of the cliffs above the ocean on a beautifully landscaped 900 foot long lot complete with Roman statues, formal gardens, swimming pool, boat harbor and pier, hidden grotto with waterfall and a six car garage plus gardener's cottage. The vaulted ceiling entrance hall to the house and the 28 by 63 foot drawing room were decorated with hand-painted Raphaelesque frescoes overhead and the beautifully tiled patio with an ancient olive tree in its center faced Santa Monica Bay, truly a spread fit for a king!

The entire layout had cost J.J. a cool $\frac{3}{4}$ of a million, a veritable treasure in 1929 dollars! And wouldn't his wife and all their friends be impressed! So he brought Mrs. Haggarty down to look at the new pad and guess what? She hated it! Her friends all lived miles away and the

new place was stuck way out in the sticks! (Palos Verdes translates to Green Sticks.) Given his wife's displeasure, J.J. Haggarty didn't live there long.

The next owner of significance was an equally zany fellow, Harvey C. Wheeler. A mid-western financier, Wheeler used the ex-Haggarty Mansion as a museum for his art, primarily nude art to be precise. When he died, his art (which was really high quality stuff) was sold for a bundle and the mansion sat there uninhabited for a number of years. Although it was the late 1940s, the Palos Verdes Peninsula was still sparsely populated and nobody wanted to pay the quarter million the sellers were asking for such an isolated property. This created the opportunity the next group of folks in this small but varied cast of characters needed to step to the fore.

Some neighbors in the area had formed a church and had been meeting at the Malaga Cover School just a block from the Haggarty Mansion. Looking for a permanent location, they eyed the Mansion sitting there deserted and lonely. When the asking price came down to \$150,000, the church raised \$50,000 for a down payment. The city hadn't yet agreed to allow a church to operate at that location, so buying the property was a monumental gamble! With great trepidation, Theron Jobson, chairman of the five-man Board of Trustees of the church cast the deciding vote to go ahead and make the offer to the conservators in Boston.

Taxes were a burden and the conservators of the estate were tired of trying to move the old white elephant. "You

can have the place free and clear for \$50,000" was the word given and the trustees nearly fainted upon hearing the unexpected news. It took two long years for the city of Palos Verdes Estates to grant the necessary approval, but finally, The Neighborhood Church of the United Church of Christ denomination came into being. It continues successfully to this day.

The Neighborhood Church, located at 415 Paseo del Mar in Palos Verdes Estates, with its new tastefully added social hall, stands today as one of the real beauty spots of the Palos Verdes Peninsula. And while J.J. Haggarty and Harvey Wheeler are long gone and largely forgotten, Theron Jobson (better known as Jobby) was there and an active member of The Neighborhood Church until his recent passing.



Haggarty Mansion, today's Neighborhood Church

CHAPTER 49

JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK (Following a taste of California Poppies)

There aren't many places in the United States where you can live within two hours of a national park but we in Southern California do, so we have kept returning to Joshua Tree to enjoy its scenic splendor.

One early spring, Ruth and I were ready to take a short get-away-from-home trip. It was wildflower season, and the first stop in our brief round trip would be the California Poppy Preserve just outside Lancaster, a marvelous place where, at the peak of the season, the hills are painted a brilliant orange by millions of Poppies with splashes of gold from patches of flowers called Goldfields. Our day spent at the Poppy Preserve was spectacular; if you've never been there at the height of the poppy season, you simply must do it!

After an evening at the local Best Western in Lancaster, it was off on a southeasterly course over the mountains, following the path of the San Andreas Fault toward our ultimate destination, Joshua Tree National Park.

My first visit to Joshua Tree had been when I was 15 years old. My parents, my two brothers and I squeezed into our car, which was pulling a small travel trailer to serve as our home away from home. It was Christmas vacation and we planned to have our celebration out there in the wilderness. The year was 1939 and the area was completely undeveloped, all the roads dirt. The

federal government had not yet designated Joshua Tree as even a National Monument, so we were really out in the wilds with no gas stations or stores anywhere in sight.

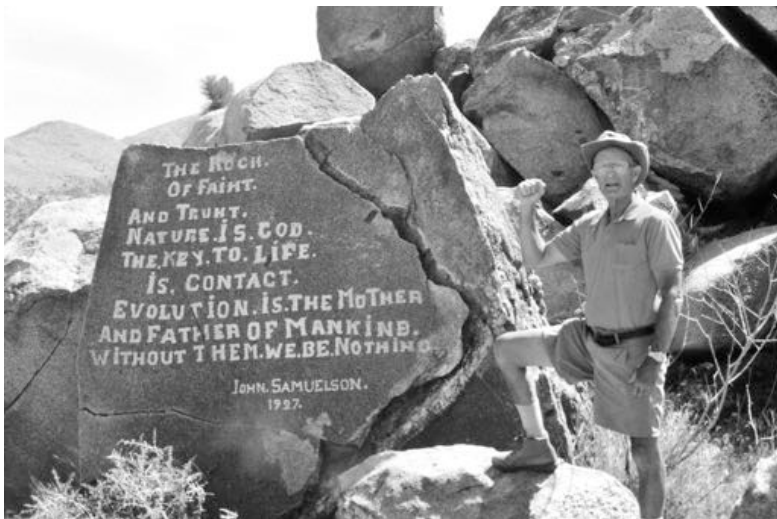
Gnarled and twisted Joshua Trees, cactus and creosote bushes surrounded us, with gigantic weirdly shaped rocky clusters lying on all sides. A nearby juniper bush served as our Christmas Tree, on which we hung our small presents to be distributed the next morning, Christmas day.

The air was clear and cold although the sun shone brightly providing us a degree of warmth. When night fell, my parents and oldest brother Paul slept inside the trailer while brother Joe and I slept in our sleeping bags on the ground outside. And when we awoke in the morning, our sleeping bags were covered with a sheet of ice - it was well below freezing out there at 4,200 feet elevation on that December night.

Our latest visit to Joshua Tree was just a few years ago. The federal government had long ago designated the area first a National Monument and, more recently, a National Park. Most of the roads were now nicely paved and a number of scenic trails had been cut, but the beauty of the scenery remained just as it had been 70 years before, only very slightly marred by the civilization which has invaded. The wildflowers, however, were sparse that year so here was an opportunity for Ruth and me to do a little re-exploring, to re-visit sights we had seen before but never get tired of admiring.

We decided to visit two of our favorite places not on a trail or on the map: the Wonderland of Rocks and Samuelson Rocks, both locations we had found in previous explorations. Our walk to Samuelson Rocks would be across the open desert, our direction set by a dark colored volcanic dyke on the hills behind our destination.

Long ago before park status was designated, there was considerable mining and cattle grazing in Joshua Tree. For a half-mile or so we picked our way through the underbrush, our eyes constantly on the large and prominent dyke to find the location where a lonely cattle rancher had once located his abode. Scattered around the area were a number of very large boulders on which rancher John Samuelson had painstakingly inscribed philosophical statements, outlining his outlook on life, on politics and on the ultimate nature of reality.



It seems Mr. Samuelson got his "th's" turned around

One boulder carries this inscription:

“Wake up you tax and bond slaves. A politician is a bird that gets in on the tax payer’s pockets, looks for a fat rake-of (sic) and his free keeps. He leads you by the noose (sic) with one hand. With the other he digs in your pocket. A friend of the bankers and big business. Why?”

Some things don’t seem to change. Samuelson apparently had ample time to think and to inscribe his thoughts in the rocks.

Samuelson Rocks fully explored, we retraced our steps across the desert floor to our awaiting car, soliloquizing about the life of this lonely poet-philosopher-cattleman. There we ate the lunch we had packed. It would be a drive of several miles to the Wonderland of Rocks and our afternoon adventure.

The Wonderland of Rocks is a very large area with lofty and fascinating rock formations reaching many hundreds of feet into the air. Access is limited to a few narrow corridors, one of which we had located many years ago. We wouldn’t have time to visit other points of interest located nearby: “Wall Street”, a large abandoned mining complex, or the gravesite of Wirth Bagley which was decorated by a headstone with the inscription: “Here’s where Wirth Bagley bit the dust at the hand of W.F. Keys, May 11, 1943”; or Barker Dam with its small lake behind it. We wouldn’t get to Willow Hole, a beautiful oasis surrounded by sky-high rocks or Rattlesnake Canyon,

one of the toughest hikes in the park. But we wanted to take another look at one of our favorite spots: a striking, prominent, natural display which we had years ago dubbed “Shark Rock”. It looks just like a sinister great white shark, ready to grab you and pull you under.



Land Shark!

The pathway to Wonderland of Rocks was rocky and tough for us to negotiate with our decreased mobility, but we made it and admired the striking display of what we call, “Shark Rock”. A few minutes admiring it and we were ready to return to our motel. We had enjoyed a great day of exploration.

CHAPTER 50

THE JURY IS OUT!

Probably once in your life (or maybe twice or three times) you will be called to jury duty. If you happen to live in the vicinity of Torrance, California, you will have the pleasure of sitting in the Hot Box, that windowless, unlovely dungeon in the basement of the Torrance courthouse known as the jury waiting room. While there, you and 150 other victims will be jammed in like sardines. And to add insult to injury, if you want to go to the john, you will have to get a key and take the elevator up to the first floor to get to the local facilities available for your use.

Well, I recently spent two glorious, fun filled weeks down there and I want to take this opportunity to tell you about it.

We were welcomed to the Courthouse by a nicely dressed man who turned out to be a stand-up comedian. The first thing he said, after welcoming us was "My name is Lerol – not Leroy. Please don't call me Leroy." He then launched into an excellent and very humorous description of what our job would entail.

I had anticipated a lot of waiting around, so I brought along with me a couple of thick novels. My expectations were fulfilled to the greatest possible degree during the first four days as I sat in the Hot Box, hour after hour, reading my books, chatting occasionally with other eager jurors-in-waiting, and twiddling my thumbs.

Then suddenly the loudspeaker blared forth with a message from Lerol (yes, that's Lerol, not Leroy): "OK, listen up" followed by a list of names and directions outlining which courtroom to go to.

By this time I was champing at the bit, so the instant I heard my name called, I hit the floor running on a beeline to the elevator. I quickly made it to the assigned floor and then stood in the hall outside the courtroom for half an hour or so waiting for admittance to the inner sanctum. When they finally let me in and I was picked to sit in the jury box, I was very pleased. The trial sounded interesting and I most certainly didn't want to go back to the Hot Box in the basement.

Next, we candidate-jurors were subjected to a barrage of questions from the judge and the attorneys to whom I gave complete, concise and articulate answers with the result that I was promptly dismissed by a peremptory challenge from the defense and re-consigned to the dungeon.

"Oh well", I said to myself. "I probably gave them too much information. Next time I'll tell them the truth but not in such detail and in so doing downgrade the status of my work so as not to overwhelm the attorneys."

It wasn't more than a couple of hours until I was back upstairs on another case and again seated in the jurors' box. This time I answered less articulately and more humbly and downgraded my occupation to the lowest truthful common denominator. My efforts were

apparently rewarded as I sat there while juror after juror was challenged by either the prosecution or the defense. "I'm in," I thought!

But then without warning, my bubble burst as the prosecutor dismissed juror number four (moi) and it was back to the Hot Box to do some more reading and thumb-twiddling. And there I sat, moldering, until the 10th and last day of my sentence, at which time I again got the call.

Now, I would have been ready, willing and eager to sit on either of the first two cases but I didn't want to get stuck on this one. My time was up and I was ready to get out of there. So I resolved to use the tough line in answering questions, which I proceeded to do. I included valuable and highly relevant information, such as the fact my great, great, great grandfather had supposedly been hanged for horse theft and my great, great, great, great aunt Suzy was allegedly reputed to have run a disreputable house in a disgusting part of town. Then I inflated (without lying, mind you) the level of responsibility that my occupation required, hoping to overwhelm the court. So guess what?

They kept me on the jury!

"Woe is me", said I, pulling my hair. "My careful planning and clever subterfuge have failed and I'm stuck here at a time when I've got a heck of a lot better things to do." But the fickle finger of fate, which had been pointing directly at me, suddenly came to my rescue. A

plea bargain settlement was reached at the last second before the trial was to start. I was off the hook.

Lerol is still back there in the unlovely Hot Box dungeon shouting out "OK, listen up" but for me, thank goodness, THE JURY IS OUT!

CHAPTER 51

HAPPY NEW YEAR

As noon approached and hunger pangs encroached, Ruth and I took a break from our shopping trip to grab a much-needed snack at McDonald's. A quick hamburger, a few French fries and a Coke sounded great. We ordered, picked up our food, and seated ourselves at a small table across the aisle from three Asian gentlemen who were discussing the events of the day. We were close enough to hear their conversation and soon realized that we couldn't understand a thing they were saying. Was it Chinese? Or Japanese? Or Korean, or what?

The three gentlemen were having a very animated discussion, seemed to be in a happy mood and, when two of them got up and left temporarily, the third man looked our way and smiled. We smiled back. He advised us in somewhat accented English that today was Chinese New Years Day, signaling the beginning of the "Year of the Rabbit." He then waxed eloquent about the joys of the day, launching into a rather convoluted explanation about the Chinese 12-year cycle in which each year is named after a prescribed animal.

I recalled recently reading an article in the Wall Street Journal recounting the experience of a number of Chinese folks who had acquired pet rabbits in anticipation of the forthcoming year. Not all of them were overjoyed with the experience.

One family's new pet had gotten out of its cage and eaten some of their furniture fabric. Other new owners, desiring to avoid loneliness on the part of their pet, had purchased two rabbits, only to discover a litter of six or eight newborn hairless creatures in the cage not long thereafter. Apparently, it is difficult to visually distinguish between a male and a female rabbit, a fact that had been unceremoniously thrust upon those kind-hearted owners.

The two gentlemen who had temporarily departed returned and the conversation, this time in English, broadened as all five of us were involved. We soon learned that Ruth was born in the "Year of the Monkey," while I was born in the "Year of the Pig."

We decided that Ruth's appellation was appropriate as she often monkeys around quite a bit. But I'm really not too happy about this "Pig" business as I'm not fat and don't squeal or go oink. But one can't adjust the year in which one is born, so I guess I'm stuck with it.

CHAPTER 52

SALVATION ARMY TO THE RESCUE

When I was a kid, I used to call it the Sal-i-va-tion Army. Guess I was always hungry when I was young. But recently, this fine organization came to our aid in a rather unusual way, and you'll salivate when you hear the bucks we saved as a result.

My wife, Ruth, has had double-image vision problems for several years. She had a couple of operations at the Jules Stein Institute at UCLA to correct things and they have made her situation quite livable although a trifle inconvenient. Suffice to say, without going into great detail, she requires four different sets of glasses: long range ones for driving, medium range ones for piano playing and computer work, dark glasses for golf and driving, and short range ones for reading.

After acquiring the four necessities, Ruth felt she still needed an extra pair of reading glasses, just in case she couldn't find her regular pair. After putting out about \$150 for each of four sets of frames she threw up her hands and said "Phooey! Why should I shell out \$150 for new frames for reading glasses since nobody will ever see them on me?"

So she took a spin down to the Salvation Army store and asked if they had any used glasses for sale. They offered her a container full, and she selected a frame that fit her face nicely and looked attractive, then took them to our optician. He installed new lenses with the updated

prescription, and Ruth has been using them happily for several years.

Recently we went back to UCLA to have Ruth's six months' eye checkup and the doctor mentioned how attractive the glasses were. Ruth casually mentioned what the good people at the Salvation Army had charged for the frames: \$1.00 less a 25% senior discount plus 6 cents tax for a total of 81 cents. The doctor flipped her lid! What a bargain!!

So, if you need a new set of frames, you just might want to check out the Salvation Army. You'll surely salivate over their prices!

CHAPTER 53

HISTORIC CALIFORNIA THE SAN PASQUAL BATTLEGROUND

If you have reason to take an excursion to Julian in the mountains east of San Diego for their happy annual apple pie festival and have a little extra time, an interesting side trip goes through a seldom-visited part of Southern California.

Turn east from the San Diego Freeway just south of Oceanside onto highway 78. Proceed through Escondido and about five miles to its east, just past the San Diego Wild Animal Park, you will find a sign announcing the San Pasqual Battlefield State Historic Park.

There are ample picnic tables and restroom facilities to accommodate a traveling party, making it a great place to stop for rest and a snack. We have been there a number of times, stopping for a picnic lunch when we're on our way to visit our son Mark and his family in San Diego, and we recommend it highly.

The park is officially open just two days a week but that presents no problem, as you can walk into the park area even if the gate is locked and the park is officially closed, parking your car on the highway out front. The restrooms and picnic tables are normally open even if the park is closed. And best of all, it's free.

So, you ask, what happened at this location to motivate the state of California to establish a park?

When James K. Polk became president of the U.S. in 1845, relations between the U.S. and Mexico were severely strained. Texas was still under Mexican rule but, despite this fact, the U.S. had officially made it the 28th state. The U.S. claimed that the Rio Grande River was the border between Texas and Mexico. Mexico said that the border was 150 miles further north.

In 1846, Colonel Stephen Kearny was ordered by president Polk to take Santa Fe, New Mexico for the U.S., which he did peacefully. He then lead his troops to California, where he met frontier scout Kit Carson.

At the time, Mexican troops were camped at San Pasqual village; they largely controlled Southern California. A number of battles subsequently occurred between the American and Mexican troops, with the bloodiest taking place on December 6, 1846 in the San Pasqual valley right next to the present park location.

More and more Americans were constantly moving into California to find gold and establish homesteads; over time, the newcomers simply outnumbered the Mexicans to a point where on January 10, 1847, the Mexican Militia surrendered to the Americans and, on January 13 of that year, Andres Pico, chief of the Mexican forces in California signed the Articles of Capitulation, thereby officially ending the war with Mexico in California.

Some year you ought to visit the park when they are commemorating the San Pasqual Valley battle. The battle reenactment takes place annually on the Sunday

closest to December 6, with a military encampment, music, entertainment, children's activities and craft demonstrations.

When visiting the park, peruse the interesting exhibits in the visitor's center to learn little known aspects of the conflict and California history. Admire the pastoral beauty of the San Pasqual Valley. And, while you are there, take a little extra time and step next door to the San Diego Archaeological Center, which is dedicated to the curation of historic artifacts from early man to the 1930s found in the San Diego area.

Then, of course, it's time to hop back in the car and finish the drive to Julian to sample some of that delicious apple pie!



Sunset from North Peak above Julian

CHAPTER 54

SEA LAUNCH

The Palos Verdes Peninsula lies right next to Los Angeles and Long Beach harbors yet, unless you have business there, chances are you'll never explore the harbor's labyrinthine surrounding area. I hadn't until a friend who works at Boeing suggested that we go down and look at "Sea Launch", the gigantic structure from which most of our country's communication satellites are launched.

Sea Launch's home port is Los Angeles, to which it returns after each launch to load up and prepare for the next trip. Getting there is a little tricky, but not all that difficult.

Heading from Palos Verdes, travel south over the Vincent Thomas Bridge, take a right turn at the second exit, Navy Way, take a left turn after one block on Reeves, and then right on Navy Mole Road and drive as far as they will allow you.

As you near the end of the road, a strange looking giant structure comes into view, extending several hundred feet in the air. It has the look of a permanent fixture anchored to the bottom with the name "Odyssey" painted prominently on its sides.

Odyssey's underside has 10 giant cylindrical supports, which make it look more like a marine oil rig (from which it actually was converted) than an ocean vessel

although, surprisingly, an ocean-going vessel it is. Right next to this odd looking, massive monstrosity is a very large conventional ship with the name "Sea Launch Commander" inscribed on its side.

Interestingly, both ships show the name "Monrovia" and are flying a flag that looks much like our American flag but with just one large star in its blue field. As we discovered after questioning the guard on duty, the ships are registered in Liberia, the capital of which is Monrovia, but owned by the United States.

Most of the U.S.'s communication satellites are intended to fly in geosynchronous orbit and therefore are launched from the Odyssey after it is taken out into the Pacific Ocean on an eleven-day trip to the equator. Directly over the equator is the most practical place to "park" a communication satellite, and the equator is therefore the most efficient place to launch it.

When we visited, we were told that the launching rocket and its satellite payload would be loaded and Odyssey and Sea Launch Commander would be on their way for the next launch within a day or two.

As we drove away, we took the time to look at the unbelievable number of trucks, railroad cars and containers jammed into that congested area, marveling that all this industrial activity takes place right on our doorstep. And as we drove up the graceful Vincent Thomas bridge on our return to our home, we got a glorious shot of the Palos Verdes Hill right in front of us,

shining forth in all its beauty. And a little further to our left, suspended over the horizon line of the brilliant blue ocean, lay Catalina Island with Orizaba and Black Jack mountains poking their heads skyward.

Excited by what we had seen, the following evening we took a second trip to view this extraordinary sight and, to our delight, there was Odyssey with a rocket mounted on its top, pointed straight up to the heavens. We were told that the rocket being used was a Russian ICBM and that the satellite mounted in its nose was a Dutch communication unit built by Boeing, which weighs about 12,000 pounds. Satellites such as this provide our TV transmission, our cell phone performance, and all the other marvelous communication wonders we enjoy today.

About 30 days hence, they would be loading up another rocket and satellite for a repeat trip. Such is the glory of modern technology.

CHAPTER 55

THE SPAGHETTI PILE

The phone in our bedroom wasn't working very well. It was old and battered, aching to be retired to the junk heap; I think Ruth got it when she was in college, and that's a long time ago. It was time to buy a new one to place in our family room down stairs, moving the one presently in that location up to our bedroom and junking the old one.

So off we went to check phone prices and features, coming home with a splendid Panasonic machine, which claimed to do everything from starting our coffee in the morning to tucking us into bed at night.

It was indeed an elegant looking device, one that promised to work like sliced bread, and I tackled the installation job with vim, vigor and significant vitality. I was a little appalled and definitely taken aback when I started reviewing the instructions and found that they were written in what seemed to be a foreign language. But after reading them over three or four times, the directions they were trying to impart started sinking into my muddled brain. Finally, I screwed up my courage and dared to open the box, assembling in a neat pile all the funny little parts that came falling out. I was ready to begin.

Our old phone in the family room where the new phone was to be installed is located on the same desk as our computer and printer and under the desk lies a

frightening pile of wires, a veritable spaghetti pile which I would have to attack in order to hook up the new device. Getting down on the floor, unfortunately, is no longer a procedure that I approach with reckless abandon, as father time has eroded my mobility, making my joints creak when I do strange things like getting down on the floor to hook up wires. Also, the area under the desk is quite cramped so Ruth, sweetheart that she is and being somewhat smaller than I am, volunteered to crawl down there and do the required connections, an offer that I gladly accepted.

Unfortunately, our communication apparently was lacking and, as a result, several wires became disconnected rendering both the computer and the phone non-operative. The computer modem that usually flashes a number of attractive green lights was displaying only one. Hmm... I guess I'm going to have to get down there and figure this thing out.

Painstakingly I lowered myself to the floor and crawled into the dark hole, pushing the frightening spaghetti pile over so I wouldn't crush it and possibly dislodge a few more connections. I soon managed to hook up the phone and get it functioning but what about those wires which had come loose – just where are they supposed to be attached?

I proceeded to plug the loose wires into the various receptacles one by one to see if I could rejuvenate the dozing computer – if one connection didn't work, I'd try another. But I just didn't seem to be making any

headway and was beginning to consider giving up, admitting my incompetence, and suffering the indignity of calling the Geek Squad or other repair people to fix the mess.

However, as I was thrashing about on the floor, I nudged the spaghetti pile a few times and suddenly another wire end appeared sticking out from under the pile. It had been buried, and looked like it needed to be plugged in somewhere.

The connector seemed the right size and shape to fit one of the receptacles on the back of the modem, so I prayerfully plugged it in and guess what – Hallelujah! The modem lit up like a Christmas tree, its green lights blinking in glorious harmony and, wonder of all wonders, the computer suddenly sprang into action, working like a charm.

So what did we learn from this trying experience?

First, written instructions aren't always prepared by English majors. The guy that wrote the Panasonic instructions was probably too experienced in electrical installations and not enough in the use of English – he assumed that every person who wanted to install a phone had done that kind of thing before, so he left out many basic instructions, presuming that everybody knew how to do simple things like that.

The second thing we learned was that if you are going to reinstall something that is already working, you should

draw up a diagram of every connection beforehand so you'll know just how to plug it back in!

But now after spending a complete afternoon of frustration, we finally had a nicely functioning phone and computer and we were happy as clams – but just a trifle sore from all that crawling around on the floor.

CHAPTER 56

A VISIT TO THE EASTERN SIERRAS

It was early August and summer was in full swing but other than a four-day trip to Joshua Tree National Park, we had barely budged from our happy home. It was time to get off our tails and go see other parts of the country before lassitude developed into a permanent condition! So on a warm and pleasant Sunday morning, our happy Honda CRV packed to the brim, we hit the road. By four o'clock in the afternoon we had checked into our room at the Best Western in Lone Pine, California in the center of Owens Valley, ready for exploration to begin.

Ruth had prepared goodies for a picnic supper, so up the road we headed to Whitney Portal, the start of the trail to Mt. Whitney, the highest peak in the lower 48. We didn't plan to hike but simply wanted to get away from the heat and the rush of city life and drink in the beauty of that wonderful spot.

A steep and narrow paved road leaves Lone Pine at 4,000 feet in elevation and reaches Whitney Portal, 4,000 feet higher, where a lovely alpine pond is surrounded by towering cliffs, gigantic pine trees and a crashing waterfall cascading down from the lakes above. Can you think of a more beautiful place to have supper!

By the way, if you ever saw the movie "The Long Trailer" starring Lucile Ball and Dezi Arnez, the precipitous mountain road on which they were

perilously and comically stuck with their trailer was this same Whitney Portal road.



Sierra Masterpiece

Owens Valley (really not a valley created by rivers and streams but a graben – a downfaulted block) is flanked by two upfaulted giant mountain ranges, the Sierras on the west and the White mountains on the east. The highest point in the Sierras and in the lower 48 states is Mt. Whitney at 14,497 feet while White Mountain Peak isn't far behind at 14,246 feet.

Most people are familiar with the Sierras, but the White Mountains, with few roads and no population, are relatively unknown. Their high country is far different from that in the Sierras where glaciers have sculpted jagged spires, carved U-shaped valleys and hanging tributaries, and gouged out basins, which now hold gem-like lakes. Instead, undulating hills dotted with millions

of flashes of wild flower brilliance cap the steep sided uplifts of the White Mountains and slowly rise toward the north, finally reaching their climax at White Mountain Peak.



White Mountains Bristlecone Pine cluster

Most of the moisture blowing in from the Pacific drops on the Sierras, well before it can reach the White Mountains, leaving them with significantly less snowfall.

Despite the fact that the White Mountains don't have the lakes, streams and snowfields of the Sierras and therefore aren't considered as lovely to look at, they are still striking and spectacular. They have one marvelous additional feature: the twisted and gnarled 4,000 year old Bristlecone Pine trees, the oldest living things on this earth, which grow in clusters throughout the White Mountains. Furthermore, the 7,000 foot rise from Bishop to the highest point you can drive gives you a phenomenal top-of-the-world view of Owens Valley and the snow fields and glaciers on the magnificent Sierras.

We had planned to stay another day at Lone Pine, but smoke started blowing in from a lightning-created forest fire occurring to the south along the Kern River. We decided to move on to Mammoth Lakes.

The past winter, the snowfall in the Sierras had been much greater than normal; as a result, the snow remaining late in July was quite significant. It reminded me of a time nearly 60 years ago, a year of similarly heavy snowfall, when I skied at Mammoth Mountain on July 1 with no shirt on – and acquired quite a sunburn! In those ancient days, the only lift facilities were rope tows, a far cry from today's multiple chair lifts.

This year, we enjoyed the spectacular view of the mountains highlighted by deep snow banks in clear and sunny weather. Sitting on rocks at the edge of Lake Mary that evening, we enjoyed a glass of wine, a more beautiful sight scarcely possible with the lake in the

foreground and Crystal Crag and Mammoth Crest featured in the background.



Crystal Crag above Lake Mary

By the next morning, smoke from what was now called the “Lyon Fire” was overcoming our view, so we chose an activity that didn’t require a view of the mountains, a short walk to the Mono Craters. These features are the result of quite recent explosions 500 to 600 years ago. One of the craters, maybe 150 feet deep, contains a sizable lake of green water. In the others, trees have filled in and no water remains.

We then took a short drive to the top of Lookout Mountain, a spot that normally rewards visitors with a spectacular view of the peaks in the Sierras. Today, with visibility diminished, we took the opportunity to collect specimens of the fine quality jet-black obsidian lying all over the ground near the top of the mountain. Obsidian, sometimes called Volcanic Glass, is a very hard granitic

material that was often used by Native Americans for arrowheads.

From Lookout Mountain a short trip took us to nearby Obsidian Dome, a gigantic volcanic structure of several hundred feet in altitude and several miles in length. The rock it contains is mostly mottled in appearance, not the clear, jet black, almost gem-like quality of the obsidian from Lookout Mountain.

We had originally planned on spending more time in the area, but the smoke was minimizing our pleasure. We decided it was time to hit the road for home.

If you get up to the Owens Valley someday, do take a couple of hours and drive to Whitney Portal. And seriously consider a daylong drive up in the White Mountains to look at the fascinating Bristlecone Pines and the spectacular view.



The ultimate Open Space

CHAPTER 57

TERROR ON THE HIGHWAY

It was early Sunday morning as we set out on our summer vacation trip, intent on getting out of town before the normally light Sunday traffic became more congested. It would be hot later in the day, but at that early hour the air was fresh and cool. I was driving our pickup truck pulling a fifth-wheel trailer at 55 to 60 miles per hour up the San Diego Freeway, our normal speed with such a heavily loaded rig, and we kept to the second lane from the right to allow the speeders to pass on the left and the entering traffic to merge from the right without interference from us.

Ruth, my constant companion, rode beside me. We had already made it past LAX and up over Sepulveda pass with no problems and, as we cruised north in the San Fernando Valley, we remarked what an easy get away it had been. Smooth sailing, we said... maybe *too* smooth!

Out of the corner of my eye, I observed a semi truck approaching from the right on one of the on-ramps, a curved ramp that appeared to have a decreasing radius as it joined the freeway lanes. The truck seemed to be approaching somewhat faster than normal as my eyes continued to scan the roadway ahead, but no problem seemed imminent – the truck had its merging lane as well as the lane to my right that would surely provide plenty of space. Or would it?

When I finally allowed my eyes to focus on the truck, I recognized in a flash that something was terribly wrong. The semi was going much too fast to make the curve, its trailer was beginning to tilt sickeningly toward us, and we were directly in its path!

Traveling at that speed and towing such a heavy load, the evasive actions available to me were pitifully limited, but I pulled the steering wheel to the left as hard as I dared. A split second later, the semi trailer had broken away from the truck and was skidding along the pavement on its side, the screeching of tortured metal assaulting our ears, the searing smell of burning steel and wood rushing through the air inlet assailing our nostrils while small pieces of the trailer flew in all directions and spread out over the freeway. We had managed to swerve into the third lane, but frightening insight told us that our trailer was going to be hit by the sliding vehicle.

There was no time to do anything but hold on to the steering wheel and ride out the impact, hoping that our vehicle wouldn't be thrown off the highway and that we would escape alive. The longest second in our lifetime passed, and the impact never came. We had, somehow, barely missed the sliding debris.

The silence was deafening! As we wiped our brows, my heart started pounding at a fearsome rate and I panted to regain my breath. Ruth, riding beside me, reported the same physical symptoms as we thanked our lucky stars for our escape from near tragedy.

Ruth and I have driven all over the country, through most of our nation's national parks, on interstates and back roads, good roads and bad roads, even 4-wheel drive roads, and we've never had anything approaching that horrific experience. We hope you never have one like it.



Lunching at Chez Hattersley

CHAPTER 58

WILDFLOWERS AND THE FASCINATING TEHACHAPI LOOP

It was time to take a little trip, to get away from home for a couple of days and explore the beautiful California landscape.

Late-winter-early-springtime in Southern California makes one think of wildflowers, so we headed to the spectacular Poppy Reserve near Lancaster on the first part of a two-day jaunt. Our nightclothes, toothbrushes and a change of clothing packed in carry bags and our lunches for two days keeping cool in a small ice chest, we hit the road at 9 o'clock on a Tuesday morning.

Inching our way through drive-time traffic up the San Diego and Antelope Valley Freeways, we took two and a half hours to reach Lancaster and another 15 minutes to reach the Poppy Reserve a few miles west of town. If you haven't been there, you should make an effort to visit – you can't imagine how brilliant the poppies are and how completely they blanket the ground!

We found a nice spot off the beaten path surrounded by flowers, set out our lunch box and a couple of folding chairs and devoured our sandwiches, gazing at a nearby butte which was completely covered with a golden mantle of Goldfields, a member of the Sunflower family. Then we walked the half-mile trail to the top of the nearby hill, admiring the gorgeous display of brilliant orange Poppies and blue-purple Lacy Phacelia and

Lupin. In the distance the snowy northern slopes of the San Gabriel Mountains stood out in bold relief with the top of Old Baldy a brilliant white.

By mid-afternoon, we had had our fill of poppies but weren't yet ready to put up for the night. We had noticed on the map something called Saddleback Butte State Park about 15 miles east of Lancaster. "Let's go see what it looks like," we said, so off we headed.

We could see the butte in the distance with two distinct peaks and a saddle-like depression between them. Soon we were there, and a lovely spot it was, with Joshua Trees growing in profusion, rocky crags rising above us, and the snow clad San Gabriels in the distance. A nice picnic area and campground presented themselves to us, and we spoke of returning with our trailer at some time in the future. But the sun was setting and it was time to return to our night's lodging at a motel in Palmdale.

Next morning, we arose bright and early and headed north to Mojave and then west to Tehachapi to look at the famous railroad loop, described on the marker plaque as one of the seven wonders of the railroad world.

When the railroad was being planned in the early 1900s, the civil engineers realized that the Tehachapi Mountains were going to be a real challenge, as a frontal assault up the canyon above Grapevine would be much too steep. So they decided on an eastward detour, following the gently sloped broad canyon below the town of Tehachapi. Even it was too steep to climb directly, but

the width of the canyon allowed the engineers to incorporate a giant loop in the ascent. The engineers were thus able to keep the gradient to no more than 2.4%, the maximum that trains could negotiate at that time.

Thousands of Chinese laborers were brought in, and the giant loop was carved out of the rock between 1910 and 1915. The Tehachapi Loop has been in use ever since that time, with 25 to 30 freight trains per day passing along its tracks.



The Loop in action

At the end of a short trail giving us a perfect overview, we watched and photographed four trains passing slowly through the tunnel and around the great loop, their steel wheels shrieking as they balked at negotiating the sharp curve. Today's trains are so long that the locomotive passes over the rear cars as they emerge from the tunnel under the looped track. What a sight!

We had just witnessed a classic example of a product of man's ingenuity, the fascinating Tehachapi Loop.

CHAPTER 59

A VISIT TO LAKE SUPERIOR

A few miles west of where the Keweenaw Peninsula pierces the underbelly of Lake Superior, the Chippewa Indians found a pleasant location for a village next to a sizable river. But the wife of the chief, as the story goes, had just lost her favorite cooking bowl and so the Indians, maybe with a touch of humor or maybe in honor of the head squaw, named the village Ontonagon (which, we're told, means "lost bowl" in Chippewaeese) right where the river spills into Lake Superior.

Leaving home in mid-August driving a pickup truck and pulling our fifth wheel trailer, we headed toward our ultimate destination, the U.P. – the Upper Peninsula of Michigan along the south coast of Lake Superior. We had planned a relaxed trip with frequent stops at scenic spots to enjoy the wonders of nature. Our route took us through mountainous Wyoming, the rolling farmland of South Dakota, southern Minnesota and Iowa, past the lakes of Wisconsin and, finally, to the Upper Peninsula.

As we neared the town of Ontonagon in the Upper Peninsula, I thought I heard a strange sound coming from our trailer and resolved to stop and take a look as soon as we reached town. A Forest Service Ranger Station appeared, and we pulled to a halt to inquire about the nearby Porcupine Mountains.

As Ruth and I opened the doors of the truck, a great explosion shook the air. I ran around the trailer to find a

blown tire and a wheel spouting enormous billows of smoke. One of the rangers with a fire extinguisher raced to our side, having heard the deafening bang. It was 3 o'clock Tuesday afternoon and there we were, over 2,000 miles from home stranded in a little town of less than 3,000 people with a destroyed wheel bearing, wheel hub, brake drum and brake mechanism.

A few frantic phone calls turned up Barry Cole of M64 Auto and Truck Repair who got right to work dismantling the ruined wheel assembly. The good folks at the Ranger Station suggested we pull the trailer up on their side lawn to get it out of the street while Barry took off to order the new parts.

Two days later, the parts arrived, but they were for a Bendix Brake system instead of the Kelsey Hayes system we had. Re-ordering the parts meant we were stuck for the weekend, but our spirits were high, as it now appeared certain that the repairs could be made. Furthermore, we were taking daily driving trips to view the beautiful sights of the U.P. while we enjoyed what the locals told us was their best weather of the summer. And, most of all, we were appreciating the kindness of the entire staff at the Ranger Station.

Forestry Technician Bob, the first person on the scene after our explosion, stopped by the trailer that first night in his scoutmaster uniform to see if we were all right. And vivacious Debbi in her cute ranger uniform checked in every day to be sure we were OK. We were able to replenish our water supply using 150 feet of hose, a

combination of theirs and ours. And when our batteries ran a little low, we plugged in to charge them up. We took our baths in Lake Superior where the surface water was in the mid 60s despite the fact that Lake Superior water at depth remains a constant 34 degrees.

We cooked most of our meals in the trailer but ate a few at Syl's where they give you more than you can eat for \$5.95. We even played several rounds of golf on Ontonagon's nine-hole links.

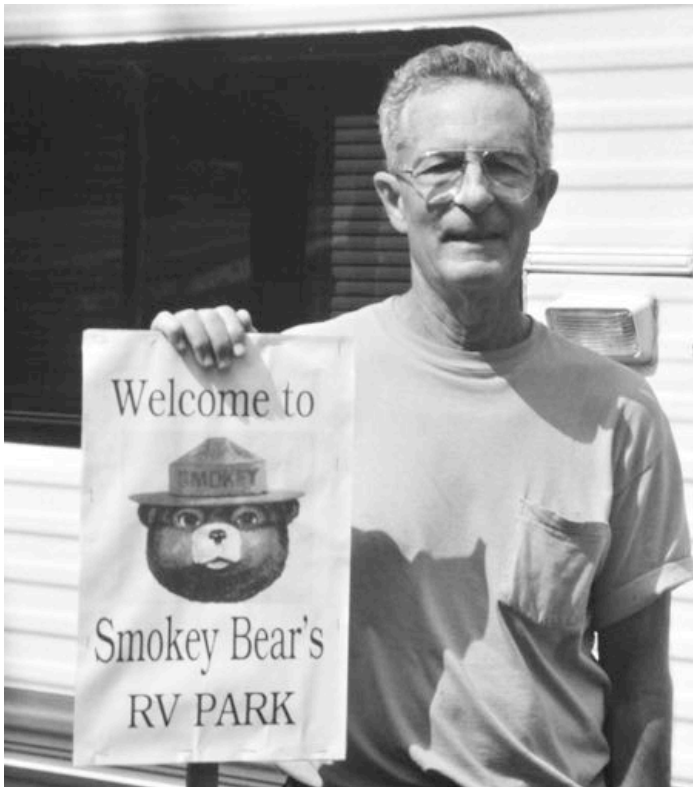
We had literally set up our camp right on the Ranger Station's lawn; when we returned from one of our daily excursions, we found a handsome printed sign posted in front of our trailer with a color picture of Smoky Bear and the inscription "Welcome to Smoky Bear's R.V. Park". The Ranger Station staff had placed it there in good humor.

By Wednesday morning, all the parts had finally arrived and the repairs were made. We packed up quickly, paid a fond adieu to the Forest Service people who had been so kind to us, thanked Barry for his work, and hit the road.

After spending a couple of days at Lake Superior's beautiful Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, we headed south as the weather was changing to cold and rainy. Four delightful days in Chicago visiting relatives and friends and three days in magnificent Arches and Canyonlands National Parks in Utah were the highlights of our return trip as we scurried home to conclude our

7,000-mile excursion, anxious to get back into the swing of things at home.

Our minds have returned often to the kind and friendly people we had gotten to know in the U.P. The Indian lady, so they tell us, lost her cooking bowl in Ontonagon, but we found friendship and a wonderful temporary home there.



Smokey stands side by side with Chuck in the U.P.

CHAPTER 60

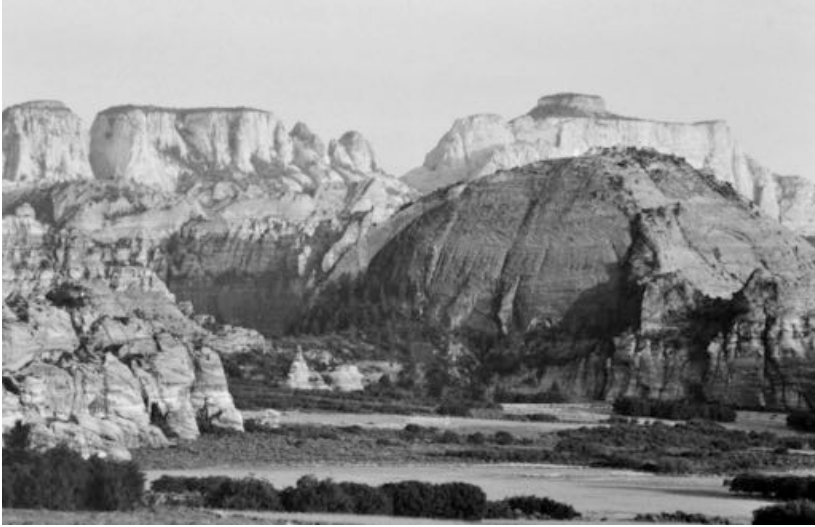
OVER THE TOP AT ZION NATIONAL PARK (or Discretion is the Better Part of Valor)

Fewer than one percent of the visitors to Zion National Park, Utah enter from the south via a narrow paved road out of the tiny town of Virgin, Utah, which, going north, quickly ascends the Kolob Terraces to Kolob Reservoir and Upper Kolob Plateau. This route is primarily used for access to hiking trails into Hop Valley, precipitous North Creek Canyon, Wildcat Canyon and the West Rim of Zion Canyon. Only a handful of visitors go all the way over the top of the plateau on the dirt road, which comes out 50 miles later near the town of Cedar City, Utah. This is the road that we stumbled on in mid-May a number of years ago with exciting, but frightening results.

We had seen the road on the Utah state map; it was listed as a “scenic backway, impassible when wet.” We were on a day's driving excursion to the north of Zion, a break from several days of hiking, when we saw a sign pointing to the Kolob Reservoir, 26 miles away to the south. “That's the road we saw on the map,” we said to each other. “Just for the fun of it, let's take a look.”

The first part of the road was paved, climbing steeply to nearly 9,000 feet before the pavement ended. There were low snow banks along its side, but since the road had been plowed and graded recently and it hadn't rained for several weeks, we pressed on. We were enjoying magnificent views of Cedar Breaks National Monument

and Brian Head Ski area in the distance and we had plenty of time, as the sun was still high in the sky.



A Zion vista

Our drive was interrupted by an unmarked fork in the road. One of the routes went downhill quite steeply and was muddy and deeply rutted while the other was level, dry and apparently recently used. Feeling confident that we were making the correct choice, we proceeded on the level, dry, frequently used road. In retrospect, this is where we made our mistake. The rutted, muddy road was the right way. We should have taken heed, turned around right then and there and forgotten about going all the way through that day.

By this time we had gone 18 to 20 of the 26 miles to the Kolob Reservoir. Knowing that we really didn't have that much further to go, we were reluctant to turn around and retrace our steps so we moved ahead

cautiously. Soon we came to another unmarked fork and again took the better of the two roads. Then it was another fork, then another and then another. Next we came to several no-trespassing signs and finally a closed gate.

We had been constantly moving in the correct general direction as indicated by our car compass, but it was obvious to us at this point that we were not on the main road. I was beginning to realize that we would have real difficulty retracing our steps. We could see Zion-like cliffs ahead of us, and we wondered if we would run into a dead-end at the edge of a cliff. The sun was getting lower in the sky, and I was beginning to get seriously worried. We hadn't brought extra jackets along. The idea of spending the night out there above 9,000 feet in the snow did not sound at all appealing.

The gate wasn't locked. Ruth opened it and we continued to move ahead. Then it was another closed gate and next a steep, rough hill, which we slowly crept down. But suddenly, after what seemed interminable driving, there it was, the main road from the south to the reservoir. The side roads had taken us a couple of miles past the reservoir, and the paved road looked mighty welcome! Heaving a collective sigh of relief, we continued our descent to the south and, 30 miles later, had returned to the campground and our comfortable trailer.

Two years later, we were again camping in Zion. The weather had turned bad, so we hopped in our truck to take a little drive and headed up the Kolob Terrace road

to look at the beautiful scenery. At the higher altitude, the rain had been coming down quite hard for an hour or so, and the red rocks and green leaves of the trees were beautiful, even fresher and more vivid than usual. Soon we had passed the Kolob Reservoir heading north on the gravel road. Ahead of us the graveling stopped and a well-graded roadbed rose toward the top of the plateau. "It looks ok", I said. "Let's follow it for a short distance – we shouldn't need 4-wheel drive". We had forgotten about the "impassible when wet" warning on the state map.

Halfway up the hill, the roadbed became muddy and I felt the truck losing traction. We were beginning to slide toward the side of the road, which was much slipperier than I had thought. I immediately slowed to a stop, quickly slipped the truck into 4-wheel drive and backed into a gentle turnaround, starting slowly down the hill, which I now realized was extremely muddy. The gooey roadbed was so slippery that we quickly gained speed and nearly slid off the road, but I just managed to save it. That experience scared some sense into me and we belatedly remembered the "impassable when wet" statement on the map.

There are hundreds of marvelous back roads in all of the western states, especially in Utah, and it's exciting to go exploring on them. But discretion is the better part of valor, a caution we had not heeded when we went "over the top" at Zion National Park.

CHAPTER 61

THE LONELIEST HIGHWAY IN THE USA

We had spent four days at Great Basin National Park in east-central Nevada, but now it was time to rejoin civilization. A glance at the map determined that the most direct route back to sunny California was U.S. Highway 50, which crossed Nevada from Ely in the east to Reno. So, early in the morning on a clear August day, we pulled out of our campsite in Great Basin towing our fifth-wheel trailer with our pickup truck and headed toward Ely.

Ely turned out to be a run down derelict that had obviously seen much better days. Ancient gambling parlors, long deserted movie theatres and grubby little shops lined the main street while gigantic mine tailings scarred the surrounding countryside. We loaded up with gasoline, checked oil, air and water and moved out onto the highway, glad to be away from the place. Signs along the highway proclaimed that this was "The Loneliest Highway in the U.S.A."

The road proceeded to take us over what seemed an endless number of 6,000 to 7,500 foot altitude passes, far different from how one normally thinks of Nevada, but the air was fresh and cool, the scenery beautiful and Ruth was enjoying the sights. In contrast, I was beginning to sweat, as the constant elevation changes were consuming an inordinate amount of fuel. The gas gauge began to signal an alarmingly low reading. Descending from the

mountains, we were in the middle of a desolate dry salt lake that stretched for miles in every direction.

Suddenly a building came into view in the distance and we slowed, eagerly looking for gas pumps. The name "Salt Palace" stood out across the front of the building, but no pumps were in evidence. Not a car was in sight, and the place looked highly inhospitable. Later, we found out that the Salt Palace was one of the infamous houses of ill repute that are legal in Nevada. It couldn't be more than a few miles further, so we pressed on. But a moment or two later the engine coughed and then quit as we coasted to a stop on the narrow shoulder. There was no place to pull off the highway.



On the road with the fifth-wheel rig

With trepidation, I left Ruth with the truck and trailer and stepped out onto the highway to beg a ride from one of the few cars driving the road. Maybe a minute later,

the first car to pass came to an abrupt halt, and a man driving with three young ladies coming back from a day's work at the U.S. Naval Air Station picked me up and transported me the eight or ten miles into Fallon. Half my problem is solved, I said to myself, as I borrowed a gas can and filled it with the treasured elixir. The gas station attendant told me that people were running out of gas on that stretch of road all the time and he didn't even make me pay a deposit on the gas can – he said he knew I'd return it.

But nobody, it seemed, was driving eastward on that desolate highway at that time of day. I stood there for what seemed hours while the sun approached the horizon. No eastward bound cars passed. Should I start walking the 10 miles back to the truck? I wonder how Ruth is faring? I hope she hasn't had any trouble! We're so far from civilization! This place is just a bit scary!

Finally luck raised its head – a rickety pickup truck pulling an even more dilapidated trailer screeched to a stop, and a grizzled old rancher offered me a ride. He was carrying a young calf and a couple of sheep back to his ranch. He had to pry the door of the truck open for me to get in and my feet rested on top of a pile of tools on the floorboard as we rode the few miles back to our rig.

He was a great old guy, and I was unable to adequately express my appreciation for his kindness. Our truck and trailer with Ruth inside were still there by the side of the road, and I heaved a sigh of relief.

The sun was sinking as I poured the priceless elixir into the truck and, once again, the first car to pass stopped and asked if we needed help. I thanked him but said I didn't think so. He said he would wait to see if the engine would start. It fired up immediately and we drove the 10 miles to the first gas station, waved good-bye to the helpful stranger who had followed us, returned the gas can and loaded up with gasoline.

From this rather frightening experience, I learned a couple of things: First, be much more careful in gasoline calculations! Second, people out there on the Loneliest Highway in the USA in the sin capital of America are a lot more friendly and helpful than they normally are back here in the big city!

CHAPTER 62

THE LOST COAST OF CALIFORNIA

One night recently while surfing television channels, we ran into a documentary on marijuana. They referred to Garberville, California as being the marijuana capitol of the western United States. Garberville is located on highway 101 about 150 miles north of San Francisco, deep in the heart of redwood country. The TV show told of the dangers involved in exploring the area between Garberville and the coast, an area referred to as the “Lost Coast” because the marijuana growers are quick to harshly repel invaders. Hearing those statements caused us to recall our exploration into that region a number of years ago...

California State Highway 1 cautiously weaves its tortuous way along the rugged California coast north of San Francisco, keeping precariously close to the ocean and connecting such tiny communities as Bodega Bay, Gualala, Point Arena, Albion, Mendocino, Fort Bragg, Westport and Rockport. Then when the terrain becomes too rugged, it turns inland and threads its way over the coastal mountains to join US 101, leaving the coast devoid of any major transportation routes for 90 miles and creating a region known as the “Lost Coast.”

We had stopped at a trailer park in Benbow on Highway 101 for a few days, comfortably ensconced in our fifth-wheel trailer with golfing on our minds, when a review of the California map revealed this large “unexplored” region close at hand. The name “Lost Coast” sounded so

mysterious, so romantic, so exciting, so alluring, we just had to spend an extra day and take a look.

Leaving our trailer in the R.V. Park, we headed west off 101 at Garberville onto the narrow, twisting backcountry roads of the region, visiting such hidden hamlets as Honeydew, Petrolia, Briceland and Shelter Cove and finding that most of the area didn't live up to its enticing title.



Honeydew was a dump with unkempt, sinister looking, bearded and tattooed tramps sitting in front of the general store and post office; Petrolia was a bit better but of little interest; Briceland looked like the cannabis capital of California ("Little Grass Shack" is the name of their local bar); Shelter Cove, with half the homes for sale, was, we found out later, a land developer's scam. A couple of hours of hard driving on tightly winding roads had taken us over 2,500 foot high mountains, along the

meandering Mattole River valley and down to sea level near Petrolia and at Shelter Cove. The drive hadn't yielded any points of great interest or spectacular scenery, so after a picnic lunch at Shelter Cove, we started back to our home away from home, singularly unimpressed with the "Lost Coast".

We had noticed on the map a nearby coastal area marked Sinkyone Wilderness State Park, but the maps showed no roads into it so we turned our minds to the homeward trek and the promise of a late afternoon nine holes of golf. But as we rounded a bend in the road, a brown highway sign which we hadn't seen on our drive into the area caught our eyes with the inscription, "Needle Rock, Sinkyone Wilderness State Park, 3½ miles, 4-Wheel drive required in wet weather." Next to the sign was a narrow one-lane dirt road angling through the deep forest and down the side of the mountain toward the ocean.

The *California Hiking Guide*, which I had reviewed in advance of our trip, talks about the "Lost Coast" trail in the Sinkyone Wilderness and gives it a rating of 10, tops in its rating system. The area is described as a "remote and rugged wilderness that once symbolized the Northern California coast." The *Hiking Guide* advised that this seldom-visited park is unknown to many, and not easy to find. The *Guide* described the terrain as "unforgiving," but let us know that we could experience here a real rarity: a coastal wilderness.

It took about two seconds for us to change our plans and decide that the Sinkyone Wilderness would be our

immediate destination – golf would just have to wait for another day.

Heading onto the road, our car altimeter read 1,200 feet, so we knew we had a lot of altitude to lose before we would reach the ocean. Slowly and grindingly we inched our way down the steep, rutted road, the trees overhead keeping out nearly all light, giving a frightening, claustrophobic look to the place. It wasn't long before we began questioning whether this adventurous side trip was a smart idea. The road was so narrow that it would be very difficult to pass a car coming the other way, and it was so steep in spots that, even though the ground was dry, 4-wheel drive looked necessary. There was no place to turn around and we couldn't see the sky or the ocean, so shut off were we from outside light by the thick mantle of tree branches.

After what seemed like endless driving, we suddenly burst out of the forest into the sunlight, almost blinded by its brightness. And there was a small cottage with a couple of people sitting on the front porch who turned out to be spending a month serving as volunteer park rangers.

Following the rangers' directions, we continued a few miles further to Bear Harbor, the end of the road, where four or five cars were parked, apparently those of backpackers who were out on the coastal trail. From there it was but a half-mile hike to the ocean and a dark sand beach in a secluded cove with precipitous cliffs surrounding us.

We were all alone with nature. The waves crashing on the shore and the screech of the shore birds were the only sounds that reached our ears as we gazed at the roiling water and the rocky foreboding beach. Highway 1 had obviously turned inland many miles to the south because cliffs rose directly out of the ocean to as much as 1,000 feet; building a coastal road through that area would have been prohibitively difficult.

But the day was nearing its end, and we dared not forget that we had to climb back up that frightening road to get out of the place. We hadn't really done justice to this pristine and beautiful location. We hadn't had time to hike down to Needle Rock and the unsullied tide pools reputed to be there. We had scarcely taken a moment to drink in the grandeur of this magnificent place, but time was against us as the sun fell lower in the western sky, and we had a long way to go.

Hightailing it back to the truck, we started the arduous drive out, dropping the truck into 4-wheel drive to assure good traction on the narrow, slippery excuse for a road. As luck would have it, we met two cars carrying backpackers coming in for the weekend, but both encounters were at fairly wide spots in the road that didn't necessitate any backing. And the trip out seemed much shorter since we knew where we were going. We made it back to our trailer in a couple of hours, tired but exhilarated by the afternoon's experience.

Our summer trip was four weeks long, and we saw some beautiful sights, had some exciting experiences, played

some great golf and had a wonderful time. But the thing we look back on most fondly was our half-day excursion into the Sinkyone Wilderness.



California Redwoods tower above Ruth and the car

CHAPTER 63

MY LOST WEEKEND

I was living in Chicago and on a business trip to Philadelphia. The week went well until Friday about noon, at which time it started snowing heavily; the snow continued falling all afternoon.

As the day progressed and the snow kept piling up, I began to realize that I simply wasn't going to get home that evening. The fellow I was traveling with met me back at our hotel; we decided to eat dinner right in the hotel, as traveling around town was impossible. So we ate dinner and then spent the evening stuck in the hotel, observing dejectedly the snow piling up and watching uninspiring television programs.

The next morning we met for breakfast and surveyed the increasingly grim situation. Hardly any cars were traveling on the streets, and a check with the airport confirmed what we already knew: the airport was closed with no flights out until possibly late in the afternoon. There were a few cabs running around the streets, so we packed up our suitcases, checked out of the hotel and hailed one passing by. Our plan was to check into a hotel right next to the airport so we could catch the first flight out late that afternoon or the next morning, Sunday morning that would be.

After a snowy cab ride, we moved into a small hotel within walking distance of the airport and then sat there all day, stuck, watching the snow continue to fall and

yawning through many uninteresting basketball games. A long day and a longer evening dragged by. There was no sound of airplanes coming from the nearby runways.

Sunday morning we were up at the crack of dawn and, leaving our luggage at the hotel, hoofed it over to the airport to see if we could find any flights going out to Chicago. But everybody told us the same thing – the airport was going to be closed probably for the entire day.

We were ready to tear our hair out, facing the prospect of going stir crazy sitting there in the hotel with nothing to do for another day. But our mood swung rapidly to the positive when we heard a report that the airport at Baltimore was open and a check at the dispatcher's desk told us that there were flights to Chicago from there. "Let's rent a car and drive to Baltimore! We'll grab a quick breakfast at the airport dining counter and kick around the logistics of our next move."

As we excitedly discussed our newly conceived trip while downing our fast food breakfast, a fellow sitting down the counter arose and came over to us with a question: "Did I hear you say that you are going to rent a car and drive to Baltimore? If so, could I ride with you and split the costs?" The more the merrier so now three of us sat discussing our new plans.

Not more than two minutes later, another fellow who had been sitting at the counter sauntered over and said: "could I ride along with you fellows to Baltimore?" So

now four of us sat discussing our brilliant suddenly populous move. We had just finished our breakfast, ready to run over to the rental car window when a fifth man who had been sitting at the nearby counter arose and approaching us said: "I'm driving to the Baltimore airport, I have a station wagon and you're all welcome to ride along."

So we five all drove together to Baltimore, overjoyed that we had found a solution to our dilemma. And you know what? The kind fellow who gave us the ride wouldn't take any money!

I finally got home at 4:30 p.m., Sunday afternoon, two full days later than I should have. As you might imagine, when Monday morning arrived, I really wasn't very enthusiastic about going to work.

CHAPTER 64

PINNACLES – A NEW NATIONAL PARK?

Living in California, it's easy to become complacent about the natural beauty surrounding us. California has eight National Parks, with a ninth awaiting Congressional approval, a variety of scenic grandeur available nowhere else in this country and, perhaps, in the world.

Looking northward to central California are two of the first National Parks created: Yosemite and Sequoia. Yosemite is blessed with a glorious panorama of glacier-carved peaks and cascading waterfalls and Sequoia is resplendent with the mightiest trees in the world, the Sequoia Gigantia, and the highest peak in the lower 48 states, Mount Whitney. Right next to the elder parks is Kings River Canyon National Park, with more of the beauty of the Sierras.

Leaving Central California and traveling south and east to a more arid clime, we find Death Valley and Joshua Tree National Parks displaying remarkable desert beauty and spectacular wildflowers in season. Traveling westward to the coast, we come to Channel Islands National Park and the beauty of the offshore Pacific islands. In the northernmost reaches of California, we find Redwood National Park with more magnificent Sequoia trees and the remote and isolated northern California coast. Just to the east, we come to Lassen Volcanic National Park with the only active volcano in the lower 48.

And now, a ninth National Park for California has recently cleared the U.S. House of Representatives and awaits Senate approval for graduation from National Monument to National Park status. Pinnacles National Monument is located about 250 miles north of Los Angeles between highways 101 and Interstate 5 and just east of the town of Soledad. Access to the park is via state highway 146, either from the west or the east, but there is no connection in the park between the two roads. To get from one side of the park to the other, one must travel over 50 miles outside its boundaries.



A view within Pinnacles

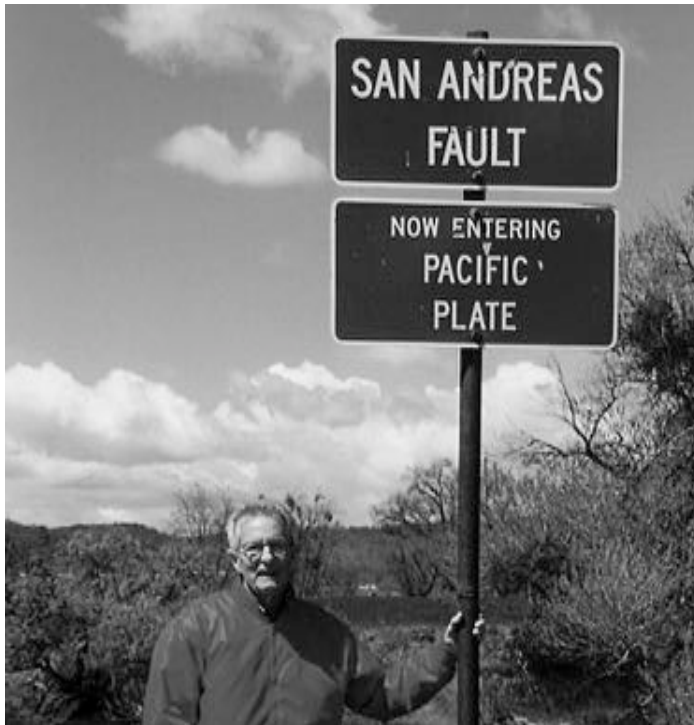
This 26,000 acre park (which includes 16,000 acres designated as wilderness) showcases towering rock formations formed over 23 million years ago by the eruption of the Neenach volcano, much of whose jagged volcanic outpourings are included in the park on the Pacific Plate side of the San Andreas Fault. About 195

miles to the south, near Lancaster on the Continental Plate side of the fault, lays the other half of the Neenach Volcanics Ryolite. The widely separated deposits are obviously from the same original source, a volcano which at one time sat squarely astride the fault, demonstrating the remarkable fact that the Pacific Plate has moved north 195 miles in relation to the Continental Plate in the last 23 million years.

The geologic study of the formation of the park's topography is a fascinating one in and of itself but the natural beauty of the area with its oak savannas, grasslands, dramatic volcanic spires ideal for rock climbing, volcanic caves and 30 miles of hiking trails makes it an area well worth being classified a National Park. There is no available lodging in the park, but there is a privately owned campground near the eastern entry.

After you've finished your Pinnacles visit, an interesting way to start your trip south toward Los Angeles is by driving 50 miles or so on state highways 25 and 198 until (10 miles before you get to Coalinga) you see a sign pointing to the south toward the Parkfield Grade and the town of Parkfield. The Grade is a lovely drive on a very good dirt road over the hills north of Parkfield (which has a registered population of 25) and the very nice Parkfield Inn where one can get a bite to eat and spend the night. Better phone ahead if you wish to spend the night at the Inn in this very rural town, which proclaims itself, "The Earthquake Capitol of the World." The Inn has good, but limited, accommodations and a nice restaurant.

After a good night's sleep, drive just south of town and turn westward onto a bridge with a sign that proclaims: "you are entering the Pacific Plate." After crossing the bridge, turn around and you'll see the sign going the other way stating, "You are entering the Continental Plate." The bridge has taken you over the San Andreas Fault, the dividing line between the two plates. Then it'll be time to head home after exploring this fascinating and exciting territory.



Chuck on the edge



The Desert Explorer

CHAPTER 65

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT AT CAPITOL REEF

Capitol Reef is one of the less frequented National Parks in Utah, being not as accessible or well known as Zion, Bryce, Arches or even Canyonlands. This circumstance, however, makes it no less exciting and dramatic, as the park embraces almost the entire 100-mile length of a gigantic 7,000-foot high wrinkle in the earth's crust, the Waterpocket Fold Monocline.

The Monocline's eroded remains, still over 2,000 feet high, have left a spectacular jumble of colorful cliffs, massive domes, soaring spires, stark monoliths, twisted canyons and graceful arches. We camped there for five days in a cool orchard, a leftover from the early Mormon settlers, with large, shade-giving fruit trees sheltering us from the hot midday sun. One of those days we decided to devote to a 125-mile partial circumnavigation of the Fold, much of it over backcountry and, some of it, over four-wheel drive dirt roads. So, bright and early one sparkling morning, we took off.

After 13 miles of smooth road, the pavement ended as we drove southward parallel to the Fold and its 2,000-foot cliffs. About 25 miles later, we paused to take pictures of the spectacular ridges and valleys and look at the fossils in the rocks alongside the road. The air was clear, the view magnificent, the day was turning out to be everything we had hoped for until we prepared to resume the trip only to find... the battery was dead. What could possibly be wrong?

Our 5-year guarantee battery had shown no previous indication of weakness and was only 2 years and 10 months old. The truck had never before failed to start. I fiddled with the battery cables, disconnected the burglar alarm and did what I could to coax some life out of the engine with no success. We had seen just one car in the 1½ hours we had been on the road. The nearest mechanic was 60 miles away. What if no more cars came by that day?

The thought of being stuck out there 50 miles from the nearest civilization was singularly unappealing. Our only option was to wait and hope for a passing car to give us a jump-start.

A long 30 minutes later, we finally saw dust in the distance as a car approached. It was a Jeep with a lone backpacker returning from a week in the backcountry. Although he had the air of one deprived of bathing facilities, we certainly couldn't afford to be fussy at this time of crisis. We begged a jump-start and, thankfully, got our engine going.

Waving thanks to our scented good Samaritan benefactor, we sent him on his way, whereupon we stowed the jumper cables, did a 180 with the truck and high-tailed it the 60 miles to M & D Motors in the tiny town of Bicknell, Utah where Dennis (the "D" in M & D) applied his charger to our battery. It quickly became apparent that our battery wouldn't accept a charge – our DieHard had died. The battery's demise had apparently been brought on by the rough roads we had been

driving. So a new one was installed and it was back to our campground; by this time the day was shot. Tomorrow, we hoped, would be a better day.

Bright and early the next morning we started again on the same route and a much happier experience it was. Every time we stopped to look at the scenery and turned off the engine, we held our breath but it always re-started without hesitation. We completed the spectacular round trip and were back to our trailer by 5 p.m. While the entire day had been glorious, two parts of it were particularly exciting and worth recounting.

After driving southward more than 30 miles parallel to the Waterpocket Fold, our route took a sharp right turn westward on a rocky dirt road called Burr Trail. At this spot in the Fold, the massive Navajo Sandstone that had formed the main slope of the cliffs elsewhere had been removed by erosion. Burr Trail climbed steeply up the underlying rocks in a series of rough, very steep, very tight switchbacks that rise nearly 1,000 feet in a half mile of road. A stop halfway up the face revealed below us a number of short sections of the road between switchbacks as we cautiously peered over the edge of the precipitous slope. Suffice to say, the road is not recommended for people with acrophobia.

A few miles further we came to a 4-wheel drive road up a canyon with the unlikely name of Upper Muley Twist. Three miles of laborious driving past fantastic shapes, colors and designs took us to the end of the road and a magnificent overlook of Strike Valley. From this

superlative viewpoint atop the Fold's crest, the eye is met by a geologic spectacle of the first order. Most of the rock strata in the view from the overlook have been tilted upward towards the west by the great crustal flexure that created the Waterpocket Fold 60 or 70 million years ago.

Then it was back to the main paved road, at which time we traversed the top of the Aquarius Plateau at 9,400 feet with magnificent views in every direction. From there we dropped back to the campground at 5,000 feet and the comfort of our trailer and the wonderful cool trees.

It had been quite a day, one we'll remember forever!

CHAPTER 66

ICE LAKES BASIN – HEAVEN ON EARTH

Ruth and I were on vacation in southwestern Colorado, at the small ex-mining-and-now-resort town called Durango, camped in our fifth-wheel trailer exploring the beauties of the Rockies. Prior to leaving home, I had searched *The Hiker's Guide to Colorado* and found several attractive day hikes with one appearing particularly enticing: a seven-mile round trip to Ice Lakes Basin. The hike would be a real workout since the trail started at 9,900 feet and ended at 12,250 feet, a rather daunting task for someone not acclimated to high altitude. But the destination sounded so intriguing that I figured I would give it a try.

It was a 50-mile drive to the trailhead, which was near Silverton, so, leaving the trailer in Durango, we started out early in the morning on a bright beautiful day. The road from Durango to Silverton is called the "Million Dollar Highway," and it must have cost many millions of dollars to build, as it tortuously wound its way up over two nearly 11,000 foot passes and finally made its way down toward Silverton, located at about 9,000 feet.

The trailhead was up a side canyon and hard to find, so it was nearly noon before we were ready to start the hike. Right away it was apparent that it was going to be a tough pull. Ruth took a look at the trail and said that I should go it alone as it was too steep for her. She would happily explore Silverton, a historic mining town and terminus of the famous Durango to Silverton Railroad.

So bidding her goodbye, I took off up the trail alone and hurrying, as I had only a limited amount of time.

The *Hiker's Guide* described the beginning of the route rather graphically, noting that the trail climbs steeply, switchbacking for four tenths of a mile to the base of Clear Creek Falls. More switchbacks would take me halfway to the top of the first hill, and I looked forward to a "spectacular view down the valley." So far so good. But then the trail continued on a very steep gradient, and I was soon gasping for breath as I pushed myself at maximum speed.

By that time I was approaching 11,000 feet and the thin air was slowing my progress. Thankfully, the high mountain summer air was refreshing and cool and wildflowers began to appear – August was springtime in the Rockies.

The trail wound its way through several stands of timber and passed another lovely waterfall, at which point I stopped for a short break. After another steep climb and more switchbacks, the trail broke into the open just below a cliff, above which lay Lower Ice Lake Basin.

Once I topped this cliff, the trail leveled out and entered the basin with small but beautiful Lower Ice Lake to my left. Wildflowers carpeted the meadow surrounding the lake and the thunderous roar of hidden waterfalls greeted my ears as I sat down at a sunny hillside spot to down my belated lunch. I had gone about two-thirds of

the way to the final destination and had climbed 1,500 to 1,800 feet.

Just picture the scene: Sitting there all alone, with the warm afternoon sun beating on my back, eating my lunch amidst a glorious bed of wildflowers, a beautiful mirror lake surrounded by numerous stunted trees at my feet, soaring snow-clad 13,000 foot mountains on three sides, the constant roar of unseen waterfalls reverberating in my ears, and a bright blue summer sky overhead. It was a scene of unrivaled peace and beauty, which my senses eagerly drank in. I had reached heaven!

But time was, unfortunately, fleeting. The steep climb at high altitude had taken longer than I had expected and we would have to drive all the way back to Durango before dark. There wouldn't be time to explore the roaring waterfalls and the upper lakes basin. A further exploration of this marvelous place would just have to wait. And so grudgingly I started back down the steep trail, leaving the waterfalls, the mirror lake, the brilliant wildflowers, Upper Ice Lake Basin and midsummer beauty behind, hopefully to return at a later date.

That beautiful hike through the Rockies was a once in a lifetime experience; I've never been back to try it again. With Father Time taking his toll, I'll surely never have another chance. But if you should get to Southwestern Colorado, are in pretty good physical shape, and feel in an exploring mood, and it is late July or August, I recommend you do what I tried to do but never quite got a chance to finish.



The mountains above Onion Valley, high in the Sierra Nevada

CHAPTER 67

SUMMER IN THE SIERRAS

May gray was long gone, June gloom had also departed, and with July's warm weather at hand, it was time to do a little serious vacationing. So off we headed on a weeklong round trip to re-visit some of our favorite spots in California, beginning with Yosemite.

Yosemite is surely one of the most beautiful spots in the world, and we were there in mid-July at the heart of vacation season, so the place was teeming with people of all ages, sizes, shapes and colors cavorting on the roads and trails. We elected not to fight for a spot in the park to stay, deciding to put up in a cozy bed-and-breakfast at Narrow-Gauge Railroad, just outside the park. From there, we visited Glacier Point on day number one, gazing from above at Nevada and Vernal Falls far below us and, on the next day, exploring the valley floor, and then driving the high road up and over Tioga Pass, finishing at Lee Vining on the east side of the mountains. Two days weren't nearly enough time to do justice to Yosemite, but it wasn't our first visit to that beautiful area, having spent considerable time there previously.

In past years, we have done our vacationing pulling a fifth-wheel trailer, which made it very comfy; we always had our own little sitting room, kitchen, toilet and bedroom right at hand. But the driving involved in pulling a heavy trailer is hard work and advancing age has brought us to the realization that moteling is the less physically demanding, if not the classiest, way to travel.

We took several short hikes on our trip, but confined ourselves mostly to sightseeing from the car, not attempting to undertake any long, strenuous treks.

Despite the heavy mid-summer population, Yosemite was its usual beautiful self. Southern California had experienced a very dry winter and spring, and Yosemite Falls were nearly dry. In contrast, Nevada, Vernal and Bridalveil Falls were all glorious, functioning with their typical gusto and beauty, while the meadows were a lovely, soft green. Half Dome towered in its vertical grandeur, and the cliff walls lining the valley soared far into the blue. But our greatest pleasure in Yosemite came on our second day.

The passage over the high country in Yosemite is surely one of the most beautiful drives in the United States. Along the way, mountains, rivers and lakes take turns displaying their glory. The very best view during this awe-inspiring drive was from an overlook with a name familiar to us living on the Palos Verdes Peninsula: Olmstead Point.

Frederick Law Olmstead is the landscape architect who laid out Central Park in New York City; his son of the same name laid out the city of Palos Verdes Estates. The elder Olmstead served briefly as one of the first Commissioners appointed to manage the grant of the Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Big Tree Grove from the United States Congress to the State of California in 1865.

From this magnificent viewpoint we admired the lovely backcountry of Yosemite in all its splendor, with Tenaya Lake glistening in the distance like a giant sapphire. Pleasant memories heightened our thoughts as we remembered hiking in past years to several of the Sierra Camps located on the park highlands. We recalled a day-hike from camp Sunrise to a place with a remarkable view over a distant lake with Half Dome looming in the distance. We recalled hiking from May Lake Sierra Camp and climbing Mount Hoffman (10,850 feet high) from where it seemed we could see forever.



Yosemite from Olmstead Point... simply stunning

We reached the high point of the road, Tioga Pass (9,945 feet in elevation) from where my wife, Ruth and daughter, Robin and I had hiked in past years up to several additional lakes at higher altitudes. On this day we did no hiking, only viewing.

Back in the car, we crossed the pass and then plunged down several thousand feet to the little town of Lee

Vining at the base of the great Sierra's eastern slope, where we would stay for the night and enjoy a sumptuous dinner at the unbelievable and indescribable Mobil gas station.

Lee Vining sits right next to strange and majestic Mono Lake, a vast inland sea in the midst of a volcanic wonderland. We walked down to its edge to examine the strange spires and knobs of the tufa towers, which are being constantly generated by fresh water springs containing calcium carbonate bubbling up through the lake water. We turned to one of the nearby dormant volcanoes, Panum Volcanic Dome, and hiked a quarter of a mile or so up its side to take a closer look, then retreated to the car to start on our trip south. It was time to head on.

Our next stop was a town I first visited with my parents in 1928 when I was but four years old, Mammoth Lakes. It looks a lot different now, loaded with people and buildings and every conceivable sign of civilization. But the area still maintains much of its original beauty; the many glaciated lakes gleam brightly under the clear Sierra skies, and Mammoth Mountain, Mammoth Crest and Crystal Crag tower overhead. Well-maintained roads lead all the way up to a number of the lakes and there's no need to hike miles to get to them.

We rode the gondola to the top of Mammoth Mountain (over 11,000 feet in altitude), then drove to Minaret Vista to get the classic long-distance view of the Minarets, after which we took the bus down to Red's Meadow and

hoofed it down to admire lovely Rainbow Falls, happy that the Forest Service had been able to take care of the



Rainbow Falls below Red's Meadow

monstrous damage that had been done by the recent 160 mph windstorm that had ravaged the area and taken down many trees.

As the day moved along, we repeated our usual late afternoon ritual, driving up to Lake Mary and bringing out the wine bottle so we could enjoy a touch of relaxation while gazing at Crystal Crag across the lake.

Next morning bright and early, following Highway 395 south, we soon came to the town of Big Pine from where we drove up a well-graded paved road to what was left of Glacier Lodge, which had burned down a number of years ago. Many travelers through this area aren't aware of the beautiful country readily available to them by simply driving a few miles up the side canyons into the Sierras. Looking upward from the end of the road, we could see Palisade Glacier, the southern-most glacier in the United States with the trailhead for the glacier and a number of alpine lakes taking off in front of us.

After admiring the surrounding mountains and the rushing stream, we retraced our steps to Highway 395 turning south to the small town of Independence for another side-trip, up the next canyon into the mountains. The road was spectacular as it wound its way tortuously up a narrow canyon, ending at a widened spot called Onion Valley. Three trails take off from that spot, each in a different direction, heading to alpine lakes far up the canyons. These were the trails we used to hike when we were more youthful. The scenery at the end of the road was magnificent; we eagerly drank it all in.

And after spending a little time resting, viewing and eating our lunch, we started the last leg of the day's trip, stopping at our favorite Best Western in Lone Pine. Six hours of driving the next day brought us home, a little tired but reinvigorated by our happy days in the high country.

It's a completely different and wonderful world up there in the Sierras; we Californians are lucky to have these lovely mountains available to us to explore and enjoy.



Mount Whitney presides majestically over the Owens Valley



Toketee Falls, southern Oregon

CHAPTER 68

CRATERS AND WATERFALLS IN LOVELY OREGON

We had just returned from a three-week trip to Indian country (the Four Corners region) when word came that my brother was quite sick. So after a couple of weeks at home, we took off up Interstate 5 on a driving trip to Olympia, Washington, stopping for a couple of days in Sacramento to visit my sister and attend the Sacramento Jazz Festival, which we thoroughly enjoyed. We took our golf clubs along with the thought that we might get in a couple of rounds on the way home, and we also hoped to see some nice scenery. We first visited Mt. St Helens in the clouds (but couldn't see a thing) just before getting to Olympia, and then decided to go well inland, west of the Cascades, on the homeward trip to avoid the inclement weather.

Bend, Oregon, just east of the Cascade Mountains, is no longer the small hamlet that it once was, but instead is a thriving metropolis with generally good weather and exciting landscape all around. Since the eastern side of the mountains gets far less rain than the western side, we anticipated a pleasant drive through interesting country, but our experiences so far on the trip should have warned us that this was simply a rainy year, period, and we were doomed to disappointment.

It rained and rained and then rained some more. But we were well prepared and, despite the heavy precipitation, we seized the opportunity to visit some very interesting

points of interest along the way, the first of which was Newberry National Volcanic Monument.

The Newberry crater is not a true volcanic crater. It is a caldera, a collapsed volcanic crater formed by an ancient volcano, eruptions from which occurred as recently as 1,300 years ago. The resulting enlarged crater is similar to Crater Lake, but with two lakes in its bottom. The lakes are at 6,300 feet in altitude; by the time we arrived, the rain, which we had been driving through at lower altitudes, had changed to snow and was beginning to accumulate on the trees. There we were in early June enjoying a lovely Christmas scene, the snowflakes falling on all sides. Unfortunately the road to the top of the crater (about 8,000 feet altitude) was closed, not to be opened 'til mid or late June, so we ate our prepared lunch sitting in our car and watching the snow flakes silently drift to the ground around us.

Many years ago, on a previous visit to this fascinating place in the month of August, we drove to the top and had a spectacular vista of the two lakes below and four of the lofty Cascade Mountains (South Sister, Middle Sister, North Sister and Mt. Jefferson) stretching out in the distance. If you should get to the Crater Lake/ Bend area, take a side trip a few miles to the north of Crater Lake and visit this spectacular National Monument.

After leaving Newbury Crater, we drove a few miles to the south to visit some of the many waterfalls on the North Umpqua River and its tributaries. The Cascade Range is made up of many volcanic layers from

numerous eruptions over the last 35 million years. These layers were uplifted after volcanic activity stopped and have varying resistance to erosion. Waterfalls develop when downcutting streams encounter a resistant layer with a softer layer beneath; the height of the waterfall depends on the thickness of the resistant layer.

The first fall we visited, Watson Falls, is the highest of the group, plunging 272 feet over the edge of a basalt lava flow. A steep half-mile hike took us to a supreme viewing point with the lofty cascade towering overhead. All around us the trees and rocks were covered with moss and ferns, and the green-ness of everything was overwhelming.

We paused to marvel at the freshness of the air, light rain falling on us, and then retraced our steps to the car to drive the short distance to the next waterfall.

Toketee Falls was next, and took the prize as the most beautiful of the area's falls.



A half-mile trail, including a large number of up and down stairs, took us to the observation platform located well above the falls.

In the Chinook language, the word “Toketee” means “pretty” or “graceful”, an apt name for this inspiring double waterfall. The upper fall drops 40 feet and the lower fall plunges 80 feet over a sheer wall of vertically oriented columnar basalt (similar in structure to Devil’s Postpile and Devil’s Tower) into a deep, dark blue pool.

We stood admiring the beautiful scene, a light but not unpleasant rain falling on our heads. Then, as if on cue, the clouds parted, and the sun came out lighting up the lovely scene and allowing us to take a number of photographs.

From there, it was a straight drive home south on Interstate 5. The rain followed us all the way down to just outside of Los Angeles; we soon began to appreciate the not-so-green hills of Southern California.

We realized that there is a very good reason why everything is so green in western Washington and Oregon – it rains all the time. So, while western Washington and Oregon are beautiful places to visit, Southern California is the best place to live.

CHAPTER 69

TRINITY RIVER COUNTRY and the TRINITY ALPS plus SONORA PASS

California State Highway 1 up the Northern California coast is a stretch of pure beauty on a clear day but a drag in the fog. It wasn't until we turned inland on the third day of our trip that we left the coast and gloom and came into brilliant sunshine and pleasant scenery.

Our intended area of investigation was a part of California not too many people visit, the Trinity River valley just west of Redding. Several 9,000-foot mountains reach skyward in what is called the Trinity Alps, and a number of rivers wind their way through the area. Having spent the night at Garberville on Highway 101 in Northern California, we headed inland into the great unknown, with Weaverville our first destination.

I can't begin to estimate or describe the number of twists and turns, uphill and downhill we negotiated in the next two days as we passed the Van Duzen River and then the Trinity River. The countryside was quite pretty, and our road was endlessly edged by thousands of evergreens of all varieties. We passed through the tiny towns of Dinsmore, Cobbs, Mad River, and Peanut, and in the early afternoon came to a slightly larger but nondescript town called Hayfork, its high school and football field appearing little used.

Forty miles later, we came to slightly larger Weaverville, formerly a gold mining town with a quaint old-fashioned look to it but now, despite its limited size, the main metropolis of Trinity county. There we put up for the night.

After a good night's sleep, we explored the Trinity River Dam and the lake behind it, drove up a mountain road following a stream into the mountains, watched hikers take off up the trails, looked around a bit and then decided to head eastward, realizing that the area was fairly interesting but far from spectacular. It being fall, the snow fields had long since abandoned the Trinity Alps, leaving them barren and not particularly attractive and thus we headed east to Interstate 5 and beyond, toward more familiar country.

The road out of the valley and over the mountains was a very pretty, narrow one-lane paved road following the Trinity River up to its headwaters and crossing the pass and the Pacific Crest Trail at over 7,000 feet. Just after passing the summit and starting down the other side, we caught our first magnificent view, a clear shot of majestic 14,162-foot Mt. Shasta just a few miles in front of us. Its greater altitude had kept snowfields near its top from melting despite the lateness of the season.

The weatherman was talking about rain in a couple of days, so we headed inland to go south following Highway 395 on the eastern side of the Sierras, our old favorite highway down through Reno, past Mammoth

Lakes and finally home. The rain hopefully wouldn't get that far inland.

The trip hadn't panned out up to our expectations as the weather hadn't cooperated, but this would be an opportunity to re-view our favorite pass over the Sierras, Sonora Pass.

Those of you familiar with the Sierras know that Tioga Pass into Yosemite is the highest of the cross-Sierra passes at nearly 10,000 feet altitude, but Sonora Pass just to its north is almost as high, at 9,626 feet, and much more spectacular. The route was first crossed in 1841 with a team of mules, horses and oxen. Our desire was simply to drive to the summit of the pass, view the great scenery and then return to 395. A warning sign advises that there is a 35% grade in spots, but the road is well paved and perfectly passable once it is opened in late spring or early summer.

A couple of miles up the Sonora Pass Road from where it leaves highway 395 is a wonderful viewing spot, ideal for a picnic lunch. About 100 feet to the left off the road you'll see a viewing platform that overlooks a splendid cataract called Leavitt Falls plunging down a rocky cliff to your right. The valley of the West Walker River lies directly below you, with snow clad mountains in the background framing the picture. After a stop at the platform and a quick lunch, the ascent to the top is thrilling and beautiful.

I remember taking this drive 20 years ago, shortly after ankle surgery, when I was not at all confident that I could do any hiking on my newly repaired extremity. Maybe a mile before the summit, we saw a waterfall plunging over the cliff. Ruth and I had thought it would be fun to hike the half-mile across the meadow to the bottom of the fall to take a close-up look, which we proceeded to do with my ankle performing beautifully.

This time, when we arrived at the viewing spot, the waterfall was visible in the distance but the weather was threatening, so we vowed to come back another day.



Ruthie gets high

After re-exploring the Sonora Pass road, we returned to 395, going south, passing Mammoth Lakes and winding up for the night at our old favorite stopping point, Lone Pine. When we awoke after a good night's sleep, the Sierras were eerily lit in a pink evanescent glow. Soon we were on the road again, marveling at the daintily diaphanous rainbow beautifying the summit of Olancha Peak.

The drive south through the Owens Valley was uneventful; although we experienced several episodes of heavy rain on the way, we made it home without incident. The trip of 1,800 miles had been far from our best because of the weather, but we had gotten away from home and stretched our legs a little. We'll do a similar trip next spring with better results, I trust.

Imagine our surprise when we got home to find a feature article on the front of the *LA Times* reporting that Marijuana cultivation and use seems to be the prime occupation of the inhabitants of Hayfork, that nondescript town with the little-used high school we had just driven through in the Trinity River Valley. The article stated that the local high school recently had to move its half-time activities from the local football stadium because of the vapors arising from local homes where people were smoking pot. Apparently the weather is perfect for pot production and the local laws are very lenient.

One never knows what one will run into when visiting strange, far off places with funny names like Hayfork.

CHAPTER 70

KICKS ON ROUTE 66

How many times have you heard people complain about the return trip from Las Vegas or the Colorado River to Los Angeles? It's a tedious grind, with nothing to do except sit there and sweat it out. But a couple of side jaunts can change the drive from a monumental bore to a downright interesting excursion.

Ruth and I had spent the night next to the Colorado River in an RV park at Needles, Arizona. We were not looking forward to the next day's drive, but a perusal of the map showed us that "Historic Route 66" took off from Interstate 40 about 30 miles outside of Needles and traveled parallel to it for 75 miles. That might make an interesting trip, we said to ourselves. The next morning we were on the road early, having decided to get our kicks on Route 66.

The well-paved two-lane road was mostly excellent with no trucks and little traffic, far different from the Interstate running parallel with us. The route took us through the tiny derelict towns of Essex and Chambls and finally to the metropolis of Amboy, which still had the remains of a motel, a bar and a gas station with '30s vintage gas pumps.

A couple of miles beyond Amboy was a dirt side-road to Amboy Crater, a very large cinder cone we had been observing for a number of miles. Seeing it took me back many, many years to before the days of Interstate

Highways, a time when Route 66 was the main highway. My folks had stopped at Amboy, and my brother and I had trudged the mile or so across the rugged lava field to the crater. We had climbed its sides with eager anticipation, expecting to see a dark black hole in the center. Instead, we'd been disappointed to find an uninteresting, flat sandy bottom.

Rejoining Interstate 40 at another derelict town named Ludlow, we proceeded toward Barstow passing the imposing Pisgah Crater and surrounding impressive lava fields, turning north on a side road at Daggett and traveling a few miles to Highway 15, the Interstate from Los Angeles to Las Vegas. On previous trips to Vegas, we had seen a sign saying "Early Man Site" just after passing the side road to Calico and had vowed to visit it some time in the future. Now was the time.

Two miles of rough driving up a rocky but well graded dirt road took us to the "Calico Early Man Site," which claims to be unique among American archaeological sites. There we took a walking tour through the extensive excavations. Dated by laboratory and field methods to approximately 200,000 years ago, the artifacts found there are claimed to be the earliest evidence of human occupation in the Western Hemisphere.

Since 1964, excavation in three master pits and numerous test trenches has uncovered over 11,400 significant quality artifacts (tools, technically significant flakes, blades and bladelets). In 1958, artifacts found there were taken to London and shown to Dr. Louis Leakey, the

famous archaeologist/paleontologist. He then came to the Calico site and became Project Director until his death in 1972.

The age of 200,000 years ascribed to the Calico artifacts has raised profound skepticism on the part of many archaeologists. The general consensus is that the culture, which created the fluted spearpoints (first discovered in Clovis, New Mexico and subsequently referred to as the Clovis Culture), is the earliest civilization in the Western Hemisphere. All radiocarbon datings of the Clovis site indicate it was thriving at a time about 11,000 years ago.

No claim is made that the Calico Site provides evidence of very early Indians or Paleo-Indians. Instead it is believed that the artifacts discovered imply the existence of an earlier species of man, probably late *Homo Erectus* or, perhaps, early *Homo Sapiens Neandertalensis*.

The building that houses the Visitor Center is a refurbished miner's shack from the nearby bentonite mine. In the beginning it served as a field headquarters and was known as "Camp Leakey." Guided tours leave the Center each afternoon Wednesday through Sunday. Or one can take a self-guided tour through the digging area. There is no charge.

Whether or not you will see any actual human artifacts is very questionable, but the side trip is certainly more interesting than being stuck on Interstate 15!

CHAPTER 71

WINDOW ON TOP OF THE WORLD

On a recent morning as I took my usual two-mile walk around the Palos Verdes Peninsula, I surveyed with pleasure the surrounding beauty. It had rained the previous day; the sky was crystal clear and the sun warm and bright, while the air was cool and crisp. It was a perfect day for admiring the mountain ranges that fringe the valley below – the Santa Monicas, the San Gabriels, the San Bernardinos and the San Jacintos.

People from other places talk about Los Angeles smog, and how it can cut visibility to but a few short miles. But I'll wager there are few if any days in New York or Chicago or anyplace in this country where you can see as far or view as much as I did on that glorious day.

There was Mount Wilson, 40 miles distant, with its long flat top, 5,700 feet in elevation, its television antennas shining in the sun (yes, I could pick them out with my naked eye). I wondered if they'd let me look through the 60-inch mountaintop telescope again, a thing that I had done in my youth.

To the right of Mount Wilson, a taller peak with its first dusting of snow stood out in prominence. It was Mount San Antonio (popularly called "Old Baldy"), 60 miles in the distance, looming above its neighbors at 10,000 feet in elevation. A little further to the right stood three 8,000-foot peaks, Telegraph, Ontario and Cucamonga.

Continuing my scan to the south, I noted the range became lower for quite a distance but then gradually rose to a far distant peak, its significant covering of snow demonstrating that it was higher than the others and the slight blurring of visibility telling me that it was further away. I brought out a ruler to measure on a map its distance from me, and careful calculations indicated that it was a full 95 miles away but still able to shine through the Southern California atmosphere with amazing clarity. San Gorgonio (often called "Gray Back"), at 11,500 feet in elevation, is the tallest peak in Southern California.

I could have stopped there but didn't, as a glance further to my right revealed the mountains of Orange County. Peering over their top was just the tip of the second highest mountain in Southern California, Mount San Jacinto standing 10,800 feet a full 90 miles away. It towers over Palm Springs, which sits at sea level. To its right were the two peaks that form the geographic feature called "Saddle Back."

It is often easy to become myopic and see only the things a short distance from us and right in front of our faces. When we do, we fail to appreciate the glorious beauty that surrounds us here in Southern California. But on that day during my morning walk I literally stocked up on beauty, enough to last me for days and weeks and even months.

Try it yourself someday soon and you'll find yourself experiencing a whole new outlook on life.



Fathers' Footsteps

*Together we climb, through sage and scattered pines,
our trail crossing a sun-bleached moraine
flanked by iron red and steel mountains.
On this crystal Sierra morning August ice gleams,
defiant, from frigid strongholds,
silently striving for September but, like your silver hair,
thinning with the passage of each day.*

*Our throats feel as dry as the alpine air
until we discover cold tears of glacial surrender
coursing through a crease in the rocky terrain:
A tumbling stream punctuated by dappled jewel ponds.
We drink until refreshed, then,
accompanied by the music of the ripples
and your grandchildren's laughter,
we meander further up the valley.*

*The kids scamper ahead, rushing,
with an occasional noisy stumble,
like the restless waters beside us.
They pause, breathing deeply,
until exuberance overcomes inertia,
and they gallop onward again.*

*We follow, talking of memories
and dreams
as our eyes take in all that surrounds us.
Words, drifting on the breeze, are subtly transformed,
occasionally unheard or misconstrued,
reminding me of years we spent traveling other paths,
more difficult paths,
that you and I viewed from different perspectives.*

*Then, with vision distorted by youth's arrogance,
I often rejected your gentle wisdom.
But even as I ran wild and free,
I could hear your steady, assured footsteps beside me.
And though I wouldn't admit it, in my heart I understood.
Your presence eased my way,
as I found my way.*

*Emerging from the trees into a mid-summer meadow
dressed in tousled green and gold grasses, we rest.
Our backs find soft comfort on spongy earth.
The sun drifts toward its daily rendezvous with the horizon,
its light dancing across the clearing
while the world turns and the winds blow.*

*We lie in silence
as ice relents to summer's fire and the waters flow.*

*We live,
even as eternity's monument, the great Sierra Nevada,
erodes into gray dust, soon to be washed
into the embrace of patient emerald lakes
where it will settle in stillness,
underpin a meadow's birth,
nourish fresh growth, and, someday,
when young voices are echoing across the canyon,
reveal new footsteps
taken stride for stride, together, by fathers and sons.*

Mark Charles Hattersley





The Hattersley Family, August 2007