



CIRCUMNAVIGATORS CLUB

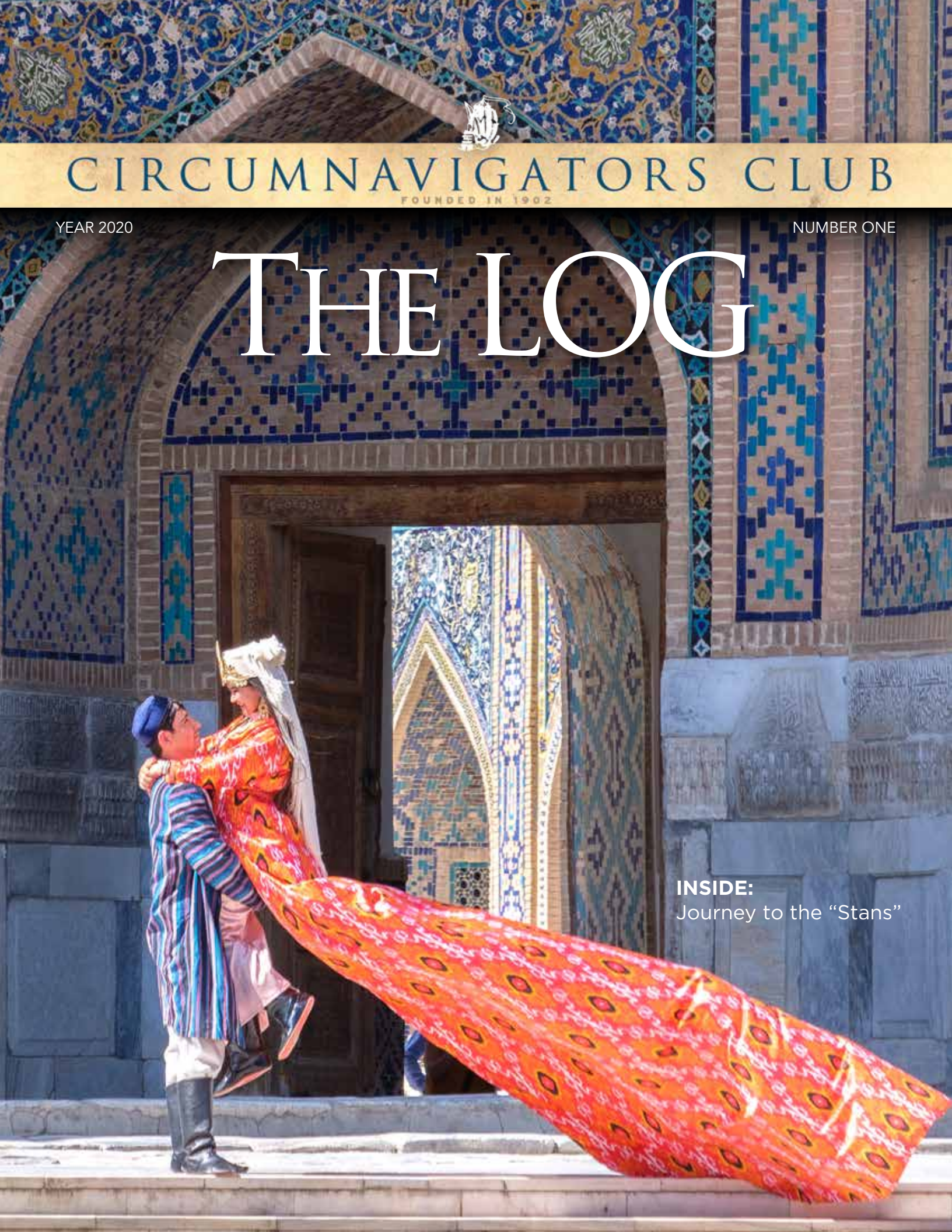
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INSIDE:
Journey to the “Stans”





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The LOG

THIS TIME AROUND

BY DAVID A. MINK - International President & Editorial Director

When I was a teenager, I asked my father, a world-class traveler, what was his favorite place in the world. He answered, "Hong Kong." I recall being surprised and perhaps a bit disappointed. Surely it had to be London or Paris or Rome.

A couple of decades later, I went to Hong Kong and thought, "Dad, you were right." —with its physical beauty, incredible activity and the wonderful combination of Asian exoticism and British colonial amenities.

The point is that Hong Kong is now in the midst of great trouble with chaos and riots. It joins a list of many favorite places, that for one reason or another, face problems for travelers. Besides Hong Kong, two of my favorites are Istanbul, (facing militaristic problems) and Venice (with its increasing problem of flooding).

However, as this issue of The LOG shows, Circumnavigators are not inclined to avoid difficult venues. Take these Circumnavigators—Judy Schrafft in Iraq, Stefan



Baghdad guardsman by Judith Schrafft



Stefan Krasowski in Syria



Krasowski in Syria, Gunther and Maria Winkler in remote former Soviet republics, Bradford and Susan Gary in Russia's Arctic Coast, Robert Chapman in Somalia, and the list goes on.

We are pleased our Club members continue to seek out the world's off-the-beaten-track spots and share their stories with us.

Enjoy their tales and photographs.



Luck to you,

David

David A. Mink



Rough road in Somalia by Robert Chapman

Thanks to

Gunther Winkler (Naples Chapter) for the stunning cover photo of a newly married couple. Gunther who was traveling to the former Soviet republics know as the "Stans" tells how he got the shot.

"Maria and I were visiting the famous 15th century Registan in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, when I spotted a couple in their traditional bride and groom dresses at the other end of the large square. I quickly changed to my telephoto lens and just caught the shot when the bride ran towards the groom who lifted her up. I then walked over to the couple, congratulated them on their wedding and they happily posed for me to take more pictures."

Gunther and Maria report on their trip, along with other great photos, in this issue of The LOG.

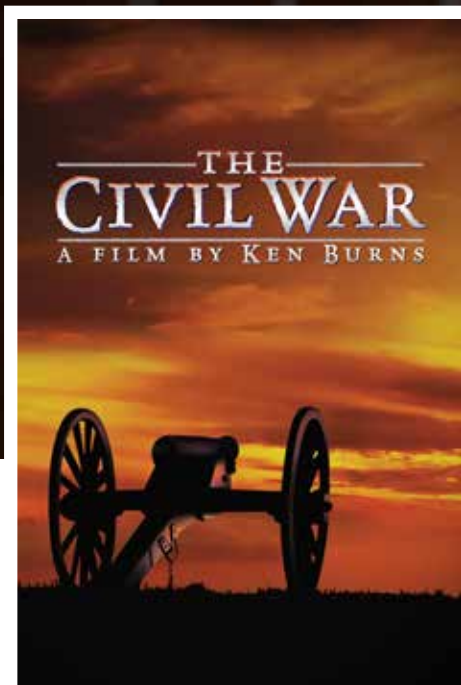


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KEN BURNS TO RECEIVE ORDER OF MAGELLAN

Legendary filmmaker will receive
the Club's highest honor



On behalf of the Board of Governors, the Magellan Committee is pleased to announce to our membership the exciting news that the 2020 Order of Magellan will be presented to preeminent American filmmaker Ken Burns. We are honored to add his name to the pantheon of legends who have graced our "Magellan" dais. This historic evening will take place at a black-tie dinner in New York City, Thursday, November 12, 2020. Circumnavigators and their guests will not want to miss this momentous event.

Burns has been making documentary films for over forty years. Since the Academy Award nominated *Brooklyn Bridge* in 1981, Ken has gone on to direct and produce some of the most acclaimed historical documentaries ever



BY HOWARD MATSON, CHAIR, Magellan Committee

made, including, among others, *The Statue of Liberty*; *The Civil War*; *Baseball*; *Lewis & Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery*; *Jazz*; *Mark Twain*; *The National Parks: America's Best Idea*; *Prohibition*; *Unforgivable Blackness: The Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson*; *The War*; *The Dust Bowl*; *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History*; *Jackie Robinson*; *The Vietnam War*; *Country Music*; and, most recently, *College Behind Bars*.

Of interest, among Burns's myriad films is 2003's *Horatio's Drive*. Burns and his co-producer Dayton Duncan tell the story of the first transcontinental automobile trip made by Horatio Nelson Jackson in 1903.

Burns's films have won sixteen Emmy Awards and two Oscar nominations, and in September of 2008, at the News & Documentary Emmy Awards, Ken was honored by the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Future film projects include *Ernest Hemingway*, *Muhammad Ali*, *The Holocaust and the United States*, *Benjamin Franklin*, *Lyndon B. Johnson and the Great Society*, *The American Buffalo*, *Leonardo da Vinci*, *The American Revolution*, *The History of Reconstruction*, and *Winston Churchill*, among others.

Born in 1953 in Brooklyn, New York, Burns lived with his family in France, Delaware and Michigan, where his father was a professor at the University of Michigan. His mother, diagnosed with cancer when Burns was three years old, tragically died when he was eleven. Her death profoundly influenced Ken's path toward "raising the dead" through film.

The Magellan Award Chair and committee encourage all of our members to make it their project during the next several months to watch some of Burns's thirty-seven films. The plethora of topics he has addressed should pique everyone's interests.

MUGS GALORE

BY KATIE KOONTZ - New York Metro



Circumnavigators Peter and Christine Mosse may have spent more time in Starbucks adding to their travel collection, than actually drinking coffee. The two globetrotters collect mugs from the iconic coffeeshop chain's "Global Icon" series.

"Starbucks has sold souvenir mugs in different styles over the years, but these are, in my view, the most artistically appealing," Peter says.

Sipping on Starbucks around the world, the Mosses have acquired 106 mugs representing countries and cities they have visited together. The colorful mugs in the Mosse collection come from places like Morocco, Vienna and India.

"The collection started by accident, as many collections do," Peter says. (You may remember Peter's collection of railroad paintings from a previous edition of Collector's Corner.)

Collector's Corner

The first mug came on a July 2010 trip to the Hamptons.

With some time to kill, Peter and Christine stopped by a local Starbucks, where they noticed a Hamptons mug that they liked and bought. Later that summer, they bought a Chicago mug at the city's O'Hare airport.

"After that, we started looking out for them wherever we traveled," Peter says.

At first, Peter and Christine only collected "city" mugs that they purchased together at Starbucks. But their rules have gotten less restrictive over time. Now, they include both "country" and "city" mugs if they come from places they had previously visited together.

"Finally, we discovered that there were active sellers of these mugs online, e.g. on eBay, and we threw the doors wide open, allowing us to buy mugs online provided, as always, that we had both been to the city or country in question," Peter says.

Now, their 106 mugs are lined up on three windowsills in their home and arranged in the order they were acquired.

"They are strictly for display, so we never use them," Peter says.

Christine says that she enjoys seeing the line of colorful mugs and remembering their travels together. For the Mosses, there is not one favorite item in their collection, but they find them all interesting. Luckily, no mugs have been damaged *en route* to the Mosse home.

The most recent addition to their collection is a "New Zealand" mug, but by the time this story goes into print, Peter says he hopes they will have added "Chile" as well.

"Be careful!" the Mosses warn other collectors. "Collections start innocuously enough, but they can then become very hard to stop." Especially when fueled by caffeine, we would imagine.

As for their Starbucks drink-of-choice?

"I never really got the hang of barista-speak," Peter says. "So, I generally settle for a cappuccino."



Suzanne Frye (New York Metro) visited Saint Helena Island, home of the world's oldest tortoise. She met Jonathan who is 187 years old. Suzanne says he seems happy despite being blind in one eye and a bit overweight at 444 pounds.



Regan Burkholder (Santa Fe, NM) and his wife Jennie spent a couple of weeks in Thailand, cruising on Bangkok's Chao Phraya River and the city's klongs (canals). In the mountains of Chiang Rai province, they visited the Doi Tung gardens, the most beautiful gardens they had ever seen.



Cynthia Bear (New York Metro) made a trip to Normandy, France, for the 75th Anniversary of D-Day. Cynthia enjoyed cold but clear weather during the events, including the moving ceremony at Omaha Beach with veterans

and dignitaries, St. Mere Eglise, with a parachute on its steeple, the flags at Utah Beach, and the local museums' exhibitions of pictures and equipment from the invasion.



Ann Swinford and husband **Mo El-Fouly (Michigan Chapter)** recently went to Egypt to visit family and on a tour of the important archeological sites. The photo above was taken in the tomb of Nefertari, the first and most beloved wife of Ramesses II. The tomb is circa 1250 BC. They reported, "We visited late in the day, around 4 pm, and had the tomb completely to ourselves. We had a picture taken with the Circumnavigators flag before we were told that it was against the rules. Apparently the authorities are concerned about nefarious groups using the Egyptian sites for self-promotion."

Howard and **Amy Matson (New York Metro)** spent two weeks around Thanksgiving with their daughter Leslie, enjoying the beauty and wonder of Belgium, Luxembourg



and Holland. In the shot above, they enjoyed the splendor of Amsterdam, facing the canal in front of the Museum Quarter.



Circumnavigator **Elizabeth Rider (formerly New York Metro)** recently led her parents, Circumnavigator Foundation President **Gregory Rider** and wife **Kathy**, off the beaten path in Hong Kong, where she lives with her husband David. In the shot below, they pause along the rugged MacLehose Trail in the New Territories to view the stunning Long Ke Wan (beach) on the Sai Kung peninsula. Elizabeth said, "Many travelers aren't aware that Hong Kong, in addition to its urban areas, is mostly composed of green space including hiking trails, beaches, parks, and nature conservancies."

Circumnavigators **Ken, Fred** and **David Mink** traveled to the fjords of Norway on a cruise that started in Denmark. The Mink brothers are shown here in Oslo. Also on the trip were their wives, including Circumnavigator **Dottie Mink**.



Geoff and **Marilyn McGrath (Pacific-Northwest Chapter)** recently completed their second circumnavigation. Their journey took them to Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Bangkok,



this past summer. They spent the first week in the charming Cotswolds countryside, and the second week along the dramatic coast of Cornwall. The photo below with the Circumnavigator's flag, is in front of a unique Cornish lighthouse- instead of a light, this lighthouse was for daytime and used smoke!

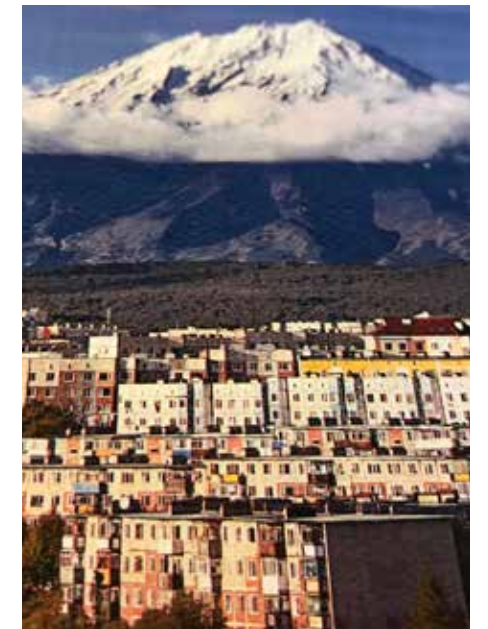
Carol Narup (Chicago Chapter) and her husband Pete Peterson took an ambitious cruise to Siberia which started in Alaska and ended in Japan. They spent a memorable time in Petropavlovsk, Russia, the second largest city in the world with no road access. They visited the city's market and churches, as well as three active volcanos (despite rainy, misty weather).



Hanoi and Singapore. Some of the highlights included Qasr Al Watan Presidential Palace and the Louvre in Abu Dhabi, the Bridge over the River Kwai in Thailand, and Halong Bay in Vietnam. One of their special experiences in Bangkok was the opportunity to visit a small community of artisans who hand make alms bowls for Buddhist monks.

Prior to their departure, Geoff and Marilyn decided to do something they had never done before: keep a signature book of the people connected with their trip - airline ground staff, airline cockpit and cabin crews, and hotel staff. They purchased an artist's sketch book for this purpose. Initially, they were a little uncomfortable about doing this. They were not sure whether people would feel imposed upon when asked to sign the book. As it turns out, they had nothing to worry about. The people they met were enthusiastic about adding their signatures and comments to the book. Some of the signers were quite artistic and creative. By the end of their journey, they collected 189 signatures.

John Weed (Desert Chapter) waves the flag in Padstow, England. He and his wife took a two-week hiking holiday in England



Cynthia Bassett (Shaker Heights, Ohio) visited Oman and Zanzibar. In Oman, she traveled more than 3000 miles throughout the country, which took her to such varied sites as an old mud mountainous village and nesting



site for 500-pound green turtles. In addition to numerous archeological sites, she visited the fascinating Frankincense Museum. In



Zanzibar, a part of Tanzania, Cynthia visited the Anglican Cathedral, formerly the site of the African slave trade. It is attached to Heritage Center commemorating the abolition of slavery. She says, "My visit to Zanzibar

with its ancient ruins, beaches, greenery and friendly natives was welcoming and special."

Peter and Christine Mosse (New York Metro) traveled to Easter Island where they visited Rano Raraku, the quarry where all of the iconic statues (moai) were carved. It's there that they experienced the island's enduring mystery and fascination. They found that the island was further from the mainland than they expected—2330 miles and a five-hour flight from Santiago. To help preserve the island's fragile environmental and ecosystem, the Chilean government restricts tourism. A visit requires permits and travel documentation, but the Mosses felt the experience was well worth the trouble.

Robert Chapman (Arlington, Texas) is working hard in a dangerous part of the world—Somalia. He is working under a U.S. State Department contract supporting Counter IED operations. IEDs are Improvised Explosive Devices often used to make roadside bombs. His operation is supporting the United Nations and African Union mission. Photo of Robert in Somalia working hard with the Ugandan Peoples Defense Force.



GETTING "AWAY" IN JORDAN

BY LISA BRIGHTON
Michigan Chapter

TRAVELING TO JORDAN IS A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME JOURNEY THAT LENDS ITSELF TO THE ENJOYMENT OF NOT ONLY SEEING MAGNIFICENT UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES SUCH AS PETRA, BUT ALSO, IT'S A TRAVEL DESTINATION FOR ADVENTURERS.

ALL OVER THE MAP

Wadi Rum, "Valley of the Moon", is located in the Arabian Desert in the southern part of Jordan, 45 miles north of the Red Sea. Thrill-seekers can scuba dive in the morning and then drive north to the wilderness and enjoy vast, open, desert landscapes while exploring on ATVs, camels or in Jeeps. A tour takes guests from peaceful desert camps which are nestled against massive sandstone and granite rocks, to soaring over sand dunes on the same terrain where "Lawrence of Arabia", "The Martian" and "Star Wars" were filmed.

There is no doubt to the feeling of being isolated and removed from the modern world, especially when hiking and exploring the historic petroglyphs etched into rocks dating back over 10,000 years. More than 20,000 markings illustrate stories of animals and man evolving in the Arabian Peninsula. When hiking into picturesque caverns you can envision the Nomadic tribes of people that inhabited the area and curiously wonder about what their lives were like in the arid and challenging environment.

For today's 'nomadic' traveler, the trials are at a minimum, while the sense of excitement is high. Really high. Sunrise balloon rides take passengers drifting over the landscape as the daylight lifts, greeting a new day.

But, for those who like to keep their feet on the ground, and warm sand between their toes, a day at the camp, curled up with a good book and cup of sage tea might be just what you need before traveling back to civilization.



Photos by Lisa Brighton



A TRIP THROUGH THE STANS



BY GUNTHER AND MARIA WINKLER
Naples Chapter

Samarkand glows at night

“Wake up, you have to see this,” Maria whispered into my ear as to not jolt me out of my deep sleep at 4 AM. She was right, when I looked out of our high-floor hotel room window the mountains behind the modern skyline of Almaty, **Kazakhstan**, were ablaze in red morning light. I quickly got my camera, captured the scene and this very moment I knew that we were on a trip that would yield some of the most amazing photographic opportunities.

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We decided to visit the “Stans” (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan) when we read a book about the fascinating and turbulent history of Central Asia, a history that is in many aspects very rich, but little known in the West. We expected to see the remnants of the Silk Road cities and of some of the greatest, ancient cultures in human history. We were not disappointed, but what we did not expect was the intertwining of ancient traditions and 21st century lifestyles.

We started our trip in Almaty. The modern, international airport makes it easy to fly in from the US and Europe. International brand five-star hotels cater to the discerning traveler. A UNESCO world heritage site is close by and displays petroglyphs from thousands of years ago. Pictured are, among other animals, horses. This is a reminder that the steppes of Kazakhstan are generally considered the place where horses were first domesticated. Horses are still part of everyday life in central Asia as we observed on our travels.

From Almaty we flew into Bishkek, the capital of **Kyrgyzstan**, and drove along lake Yssyk-Kul, located between white-capped mountain ranges, to the eastern town of Karakol. This settlement in the shadows of the Tien-Shan mountains, with peaks reaching 24,000 feet, is located not far from the Chinese border. Here we hiked mountain valleys where people still live in yurts, tame eagles for hunting and milk horses for nourishment. At times we felt like we had been transported back to Genghis Khan’s time, 800 years ago.

In the town of Karakol we experienced one of the largest animal markets in Kyrgyzstan, where cattle, sheep and horses are traded by the hundreds. The atmosphere is lively, and we witnessed the haggling, shaking hands to seal a deal, and celebrating a sale with local food and drinks. We were most impressed by the highly priced Fat-Tailed Sheep. It is a breed with a big hump of speck on its behind. This fat is mixed with meat and then grilled. It keeps the meat moist and gives it a distinct

flavor. My mouth was watering when this was explained to me but when I actually ate it, I realized that it is an acquired taste. Maybe a shot of Schnapps would have helped digesting it.

Leaving Kyrgyzstan, we descended from the mountainous region of the east to the steppes and deserts of **Uzbekistan**. Tashkent, the capital city, has been thoroughly modernized in most recent

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THE STANS

history. It is a convenient gateway to the exceptional, historic sites and cities in the country. A high-speed rail with Spanish-built bullet trains connects Tashkent with Samarkand and Bukhara, two of the highlights on a journey through the Stans.

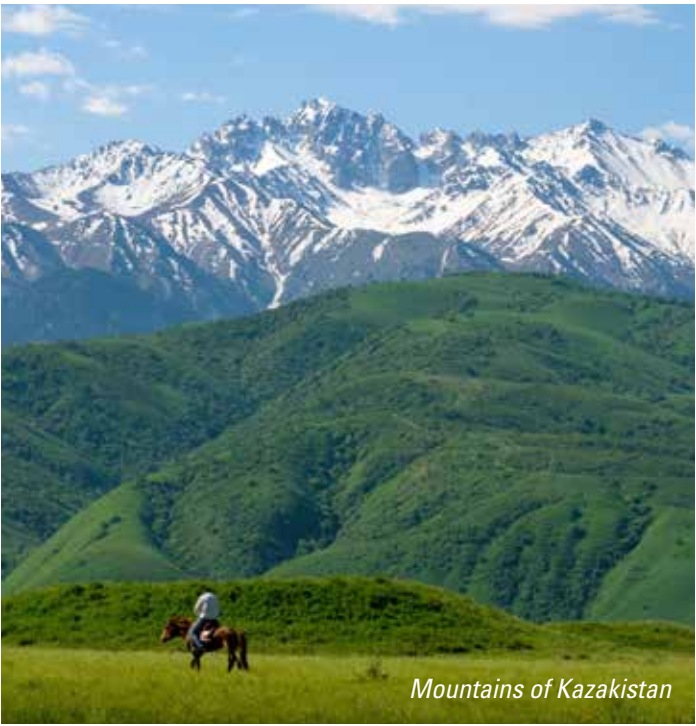
Like most of the region, the area that is now Uzbekistan has seen many invasions. The ancient Persians, Alexander the Great, the Arabs, Genghis Khan and the Russians are just a few to mention. However, the bloodiest conquest came from within. Timur, also called Tamerlane, was a usurper from the region of Samarkand who made it to the helm of one of the largest armies of the 14th century. He conquered lands, tribes and states from the Middle East all the way to Delhi, India. In the course of this conquest, between 15 and 20 million people perished, which amounted to approximately 5% of the world’s population during Timur’s time.

Timur was certainly one of the cruelest conquerors but he was also one of the most prolific builders of cities and monuments. Timur’s building boom in the late 14th century was a kind of Renaissance for the region. Cities like Samarkand, Bukhara and Khiva are great witnesses to the exceptional skills of architects, craftsmen and artists in Central Asia.

Khiva is a special gem. The mid-sized city was a merchant city on one of the many east-west trading routes that we call today the “Silk Roads.” The wealth of its citizens came from trading exotic wares such as silk and porcelain. Khiva, like many other cities at this time, was also a slave trading center. The city was not destroyed, and its defensive walls, palaces and mosques have been meticulously renovated in recent years. We were fortunate to stay in one of the newly opened hotels in the historic center within the city walls. When I went on an early morning photographic trip through the narrow streets, empty bazaars and a plaza where camels were the only other beings awake, it felt like being on the scene of an Aladdin movie.

We pressed on eastwards and crossed the Amu Darya River on our way to Nukus. This mighty river was once called the Oxus, and it is known from Alexander the Great’s daredevil crossing. This is also the river that once fed the Aral Sea, home to generations of people who lived on the shores of this sprawling body of water. The Soviets diverted the Amu Darya’s water into inefficient irrigation systems for the cotton fields. As a consequence, the Aral Sea dried out and only a small Salt Lake, laden with chemicals, is left today.

We ventured on to the last leg of our over three-week trip by crossing into **Turkmenistan** via the land route. At the border station near the UNESCO World Heritage site of Kunya Urgench, we got a first glimpse of the country that is ranked lower than North Korea in freedom of speech and civil liberties protection. The border agents were friendly but sifted for hours through every piece of clothing in our luggage, presumably to prevent smuggling of illegal drugs.



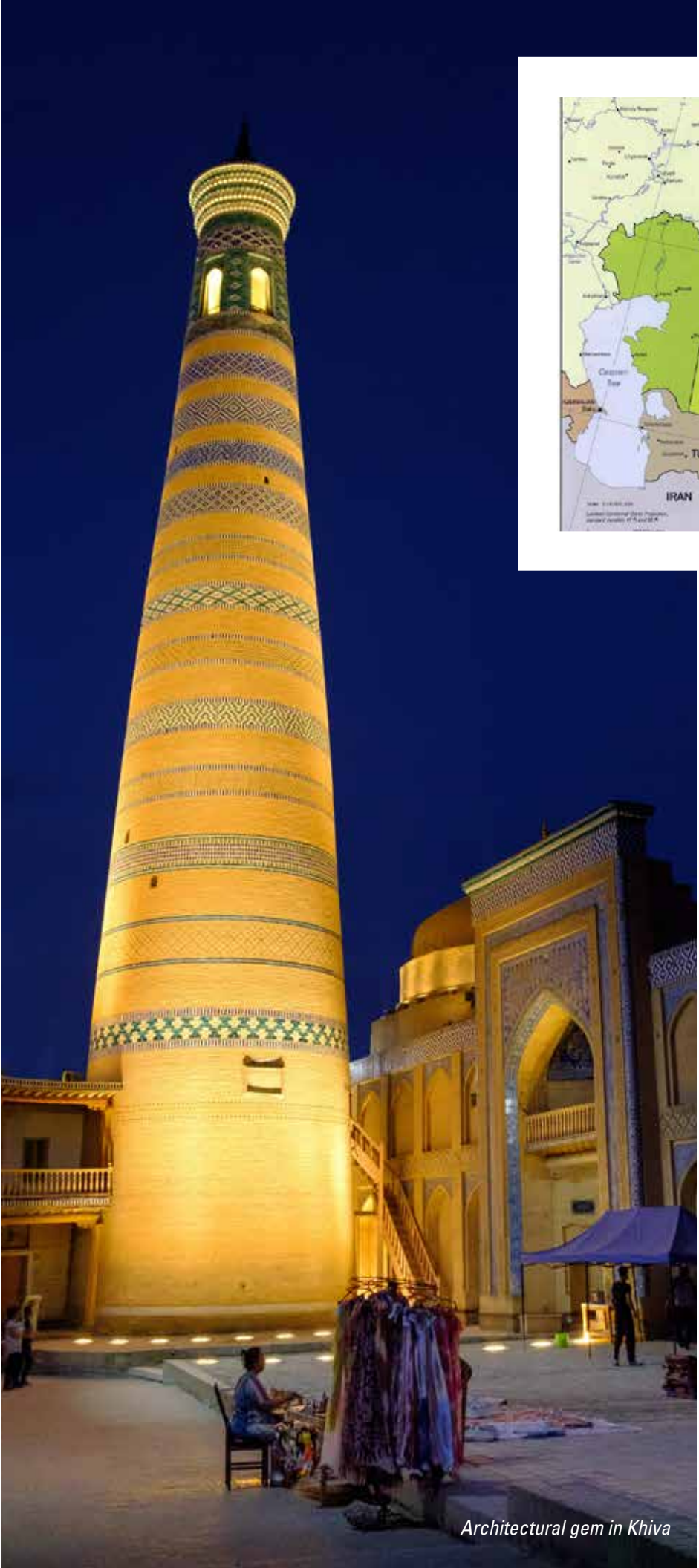
Mountains of Kazakhstan



Horse milking



Playtime at Jety-Oguz Gorge



Architectural gem in Khiva



Maria and Gunther in Khiva

Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan is a most modern city. The present-day autocratic ruler of the country decided to rebuild this city completely in white marble. Roads are wide and smooth as mirrors. Architects were instructed to design government buildings with a theme. The building that houses the Ministry of Health resembles a syringe, the modern Ashgabat airport is designed in the image of a falcon, the Ministry of Oil and Gas looks like a giant cigarette lighter.

As we look back on this trip that brought us from the western reaches of the Himalayas through deserts, magnificent cities and remnants of ancient cultures to the city of white marble, we know we will remember “the Stans” for a long time as one of our most interesting and diverse travel experiences.

HOW TO GET EVEN LESS UNRECOGNITION

BY ALBERT PODELL
New York Metro

YOU CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE

It has been my pleasure the past three years to bi-annually regale my fellow Circumnavigators with stories in *The LOG* of my exciting travel adventures, but this article is, sad to say, the disastrous tale of a trip that never was – and may never be.

In the previous issue, I informed you that, having been to every recognized country on earth – the 193 UN members plus Taiwan, Vatican City, and Kosovo -- I had taken on a new mission: to visit every one of the eleven *unrecognized* countries in the world. These are mostly hardscrabble entities that had either broken away from other countries or been taken from them by more powerful countries that, for various strategic or political reasons, did not fully annex them or incorporate them into their territory. The first seven unrecognized entities proceeded relatively smoothly, as I reported in the last issue of *The LOG*, with nothing more discomforting than a few suspicious looks at border crossings, gingerly traversing a couple of vaguely outlined minefields in Western Sahara and Northern Cyprus, some rock-throwers in Palestine, and wasting several hours in two polite police interrogations in Somaliland when they mistook me for a jihadi recruiter.

I was down to the Final Four, and hoped to report on them here for you. But, despite five months of intense planning and making arrangements to achieve that goal, it was not to be.

For a brief while, I thought there might actually be a Final Five, until the Spanish government arrested and imprisoned the leaders of the separatist movement in Catalonia and nullified the results of heir referendum to become independent. And, for a brief shining hour, there was even the possibility of a Surprise Sixth, before the oil-rich and heavily Kurdish area of northeaster Iraq was thwarted in their movement for independence by tanks sent from Baghdad; and again when the Kurdish forces who had driven ISIS out of Syria with the loss of 11,000 of their soldiers were overrun by Turkish forces after the U.S. -- how do I put this diplomatically? -- withdrew its military protection from them.

So, despite my belief that the aspirations of repressed national minorities deserve to be recognized, there were no new nations aborning, and I was back to the Final Four -- **South Ossetia**, **Artsakh**, the **Donetsk People's Republic**, and the **Luhansk People's Republic**.

All four were either adjacent to or very close to Russia, so I planned to use Moscow as the hub for my spokes and knock them all off in one complex but doable 25-day journey. But they knocked me off instead.

Let's start with the cast of characters:

South Ossetia is one of the world's smallest, poorest, most beautiful, and most disputed breakaway nations, regarded by the international community as "a frozen conflict" zone. It is also the most isolated and the most difficult to enter — or exit, which is an important consideration if you don't want to miss the Club's next holiday party. It is a tiny body of mountainous land, scooped out of the country of Georgia in 1991 by local separatists, and bitterly fought over in wars in 2004 and 2008, until Russian troops supported the local separatists with tanks and artillery, wrested it away from Georgia, and recognized it as an independent country (the same tactic they recently used to seize large chunks of eastern Ukraine).

Unless you're an intrepid mountain goat, the *only* way in or out of this country is by one long tunnel. You see, South Ossetia has no coastline. It is too mountainous to have airports, with 90% of its land above one thousand meters, rising to 13,000 feet. (It is so mountainous that it has 600 glaciers and only 53,000 people, which works out *to one glacier for every 88 inhabitants*.) It is surrounded on its western, southern, and eastern sides by the mountains of Georgia, which, after the war, has blocked every one of the few roads that led in or out. If you want to go there (and almost no one does -- and you can probably delete the "almost"), you need to enter from the remote Russian republic of North Ossetia, show your special pass you have struggled to obtain from the Foreign Ministry, hope the South Ossetian border guards will honor it (they often do not), and then drive through a 5-mile long tunnel. To exit, you need to reverse the procedure, but, since Russia treats South Ossetia as a separate country, you need a second visa to re-enter Russia. If you don't have it, you stay in South Ossetia forever; there is no way out, and the U.S. has no consulate there to help you!

Next on the list was **Artsakh**, doubtless more familiar to you as the dangerous enclave formerly called Nagorno-Karaback, a disputed bit of turf in the South Caucasus situated between Armenia and Azerbaijan and claimed by both. A fragile cease-fire prevailed from about 1994 until around 2010, when the locals returned to the firing line with a vengeance and managed to kill some 600 soldiers on both sides in the next six years, mostly from blind artillery barrages.

After they got tired of all the noise, smoke, and bloodshed, the Nagorno-Karabackians declared themselves, in early 2017, to be the independent Republic of Artsakh. So a visit was required.

The last two of the Final Four, the **Donetsk People's Republic** and the **Luhansk People's Republic**, are birds of a feather, each having been ripped from the Donbass region of eastern Ukraine in by "local nationalists," with a lot of help from more than 30,000 disguised Russian soldiers backed by Ruskie tanks and sophisticated weaponry, much of it part of what our Kremlin friends referred to as "a humanitarian convoy" to help the oppressed people in the region end their abuse at the hands of the elected Ukrainian government. If some of this sounds somewhat familiar, you may have even heard about it



recently from the media. Something that led to provoking an impeachment investigation, if I remember correctly...

Anyhow, my travel philosophy is to play the hand I'm dealt -- after making sure that my life-insurance premiums are all paid, and my Will is up to date.

In this case, and after months of modifications, my plan was to (1) fly into Moscow last May, (2) fly down to Vladikavkaz, the capital of North Ossetia, (3) hire a car and knowledgeable driver to take me three hours through the mountains, (4) get me across the border into South Ossetia through the tunnel, drive a couple hours more, to its capital of Khinvali (5), sleep over, then (6) return to Russia, (7) return to Moscow, (8) fly to Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, (9) take a half-day bus ride to the capital of Artsakh, look around, (10) return to Yeveran, (11) fly to Moscow, (12) fly to Rostov-on-the-Don, rendezvous in Rostov with a somewhat

shady "guide" who would (13) escort me on a ten-hour drive into the Donbass region for a four-day stay that cost slightly less than a new car, this segment very confidentially and privately arranged through a friend of a friend who ran a travel service of sorts out of the old Soviet sector of Berlin; (14) return to Rostov for my fourth re-entry into Russia just in time to catch the Wednesday flight to Moscow (15); and on home. Sounds simple, but it took four full months to work this all out.

And it fell apart in one week

First, my confidential agent in Berlin reported in March that there were "growing problems" on the border between Russia and the part of Donbass I planned to enter. Within a few days, the problems had escalated to arrests and detentions and shakedown at that border, with the result that my Berlin source could no longer guarantee my safety and cancelled the trip until the indefinite future. (And since

I was a friend of a friend of a friend, she refunded all but one thousand dollars of my pre-payment, which she kept for mysterious "expenses".)

On top of that, the Russian visa service in New York, which will not handle anything complicated online and where the average wait to speak to any employee is about five hours, refused to grant me the multiple-entry visa I needed to make this circuit involving four separate entities. In fact, after I told them that I planned to visit Vladikavkaz, they refused to grant me *any* visa and informed me that, under a recently-passed change in the regulations, that part of the Caucasus was now off-limits to foreign travelers. No further explanation given, and please do not hold up the line.

But stay tuned. Fellow Circumnavigators; I won't give up this easily.

THE MAKING OF A Circumnavigator

Six Weeks, Five Countries, Three Continents, Two Adventurers

BY MELANIE CABOT
Palm Beach Chapter

Time had come for Irwin Kudman to become a Circumnavigator.

As a dear and supportive partner, Irwin has accompanied me to many Circumnavigator programs hosted by the Palm Beach chapter. In the early days under the leadership of Captain Jack Veasy, many festive evenings were spent aboard his vessel White Star berthed at the Brazilian Docks. Ever the gracious host, Jack entertained his guests with copious champagne served by *sabrage* and *bonhomie*. When I became the Palm Beach Chapter VP, supporting the leadership of President Paulette Cooper Nobel, it was time for Irwin to become a member in his own right.

We set about planning a Circumnavigation which would qualify Irwin for membership.

Irwin Kudman has always been a world traveler. As the founder of two high tech companies specializing in infrared detectors, his business has taken him across the globe. His detectors are in high-speed trains in China and Austria, and they are in pollution monitoring devices in France. His sensors detect chemical gasses in South Korea, and they register the purity of pharmaceuticals in the US. Irwin received a private tour of the Kremlin during one visit to the Soviet Union and was invited to present scientific papers in England and Greece.

Yet for all his world travel, he never completed a Circumnavigation. With this new mission he was happy to begin planning our around-the-world trip!

“As a young boy,” he said, “I was afflicted by an illness that affects many of us... it is called wanderlust! I would go to our school library whenever the new issues of National Geographic magazine would arrive. I was awestruck by many of the articles, and I believe that was the cause of my illness. The impetus of my circumnavigation was to visit two of the wonders of the world: the temples of Siem Reap and the Taj Mahal.”

We cleared our schedules for the six weeks we would be traveling and mapped out ports of call that would be new to either one or both of us. Our itinerary would be Auckland, Rotorua and Wellington in New Zealand; Sydney, the Blue Mountains and Melbourne in Australia; Siem Reap and Angkor in Cambodia; Chiang Mai and Bangkok in Thailand; Delhi, Agra, Jaipur, Udaipur, and Mumbai in India. Visas would be required for Cambodia and India. And we were urged to receive inoculations for Hepatitis A, Malaria, Tetanus, Yellow Fever and Typhoid. Better to be safe than sick!



Paulette Cooper Nobel, president of Palm Beach Chapter, presents club certificate to Irwin

For as long as we’ve been traveling together, we only take carry-on luggage. As intrepid travelers we know how to pack efficiently yet elegantly, sartorially prepared for casual and formal occasions. Having been raised in a family of sailors and adventure seekers, I learned early on the benefits of packing light. On this trip we faced the additional challenge of packing for varying climates and expecting temperatures ranging from 60’s to 80’s.

Departure day arrived for our first leg to New Zealand. We flew from Palm Beach to Houston for the nearly 20-hour flight to Auckland onboard Air New Zealand and lost a day when we crossed the International Date Line. With so many amazing experiences, sites, and culinary delights, I’ll just mention the highlights from each country.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland was host to two America’s Cup challenges and is called the city of boats with more watercrafts per capita than any other city in the world. Rotorua has fascinating geothermal boiling mud pools and geysers, and the Te Puia center, which houses indigenous Maori culture and crafts. Our hotel, The Black Swan, was enchanting. Of course, we had to visit Hobbiton, the 1200-acre sheep farm where much of the filming for The Lord of The Rings and The Hobbit took place. This gorgeous farmland was transformed into The Shire from Middle Earth, and the Green Dragon Inn has been transformed into a quaint restaurant



where visitors can quench their thirst with mead. Wellington is delightful! This picturesque waterfront city has become New Zealand’s entertainment capital with a robust film industry (per our guide, many Hollywood folks have set up residences here), and has more bars and cafes per head than New York.

AUSTRALIA

Upon arriving in Sydney, we were driven two hours by private car to Lilianfels Resort at the edge of the Blue Mountains National Park. With more than two million acres of untouched mountainous forests, this is a protected UNESCO World Heritage Site because of its unique geological rock formations, waterfalls, and forests. Our Eco Tour included hiking eucalyptus scented mountain paths, and an early morning “breakfast with the kangaroos”, actually coffee and pastries in a luxury 4WD while observing these curious animals in their wilderness habitat. Home base for the five days we spent in Sydney was at the conveniently located

Langham Hotel. I had pre-booked a Sydney Harbor Bridge Climb, which was promoted as the ultimate Sydney experience. Sure, why not? I’ve never been so frightened in my life! (and I’ve skydived before!). A group of 14 people were hitched to a professional climber who led us on a narrow catwalk along the outer edge of the bridge to the top of the arc which rises 400 feet above the harbor. Yikes!

CAMBODIA

Siem Reap. The first thing we noticed is how gracious and gentle the people are. Every person we had contact with during our entire stay at the Raffles Grand Hotel d’Angkor gave a warm welcome with a smile, a slight bow, and hands pressed together pointing upwards in the Buddhist Mudra greeting. Our historic French Colonial style hotel, had four dining options offering French, Cambodian and Asian dishes. We were here to visit the intriguing and religiously significant 12th century temple complexes of Angkor Wat, Angkor Thom, and Ta Prohm. All are protected as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. We felt the sanctity of these majestic spaces, adorned with beautifully intricate bas-reliefs, narrating stories from Hindu mythology. Nature’s awesome power is on display fighting to reclaim the sites back to jungle as massive trees weave their exposed roots throughout, crushing and crumbling these ancient stones. Before leaving this economically challenged country, we stopped at Chantiers Ecoles, an artist vocational center, to purchase a few crafts as mementos and to support the local artisans.

THAILAND

Chang Mai is home to more than 300 ancient temples, but we only visited Wat Doi Suthep, perched on a mountaintop eight miles beyond the city with fantastic views of the verdant valley and city in the distance. This 13th century Theravada Buddhist temple is the most sacred in Chang Mai. Because we visited on a Saturday, we mingled with locals who came to pray, offer flowers and light candles to various holy shrines. A Buddhist monk was offering blessings and our guide asked if Irwin and I could receive a blessing. We knelt before him as he tied the Sacred White Thread, a Sai Sin, on our right wrists to provide protection and good health. We spent the rest of our visit luxuriating at our hotel, the Shangri-La, enjoying a respite from touring. Bangkok is an overwhelming city where the past and present collide. Ancient temples squat in the shadow of multi-story modern buildings, and everything is eclipsed by urban squalor, pollution and great masses of humanity crammed together. We enjoyed our visit to the important sites: the Royal Grand Palace, the Emerald Buddha, and the enormous Reclining Buddha. Our suite on the 20th floor of The Peninsula Hotel presented a panoramic view of the Chao Phraya River (“River of Kings”) with its congested, frenetic activity, and later a magnificent evening fireworks display. This trip introduced us to Bangkok Airways and Thai Airways and our experience flying both was a pleasure.

INDIA

Delhi was our port of entry for India and we had just enough time to check into the Leela Palace and meet our guide and driver for a quick afternoon city tour. Agra was our next destination and the site I was most excited to visit. We stayed at the exquisite Oberoi Amarvilas and our private balcony had a direct view of the Taj Mahal in the distance. I was mesmerized by the experience of finally seeing this fabled 17th century marble palace, one of the Wonders of The World,

a monument to love which took 17 years to build. Just magnificent! Also designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Jaipur, known as the “Pink City”, was our next stop. I have an interest in astronomy and we visited The Jantar Mantar, an astronomical observatory built in the early 18th century with large stone measurements devised to study the movements of the sun, moon, and planets. And they’re incredibly accurate! It’s another UNESCO World Heritage Site. This evening was New Year’s Eve, and our hotel, another magnificent Oberoi property, the Rajvilas, had promised an extravaganza. And indeed, it was! The evening started with a Royal Rajasthani ceremonial welcome by elephants dressed in their finery, accompanied by traditional folk music and dance performances. Dinner was a sumptuous feast of Indian and international favorites. A wonderful bit of serendipity was running into Palm Beach friends who were also staying at

the hotel. Small world! The evening came to a close with a dazzling fireworks display for a splendid conclusion to the year! We had two more cities to visit. Udaipur is known as the “City of Lakes”, and apropos of this we stayed at the Taj Lake Palace, a former royal 18th century marble summer palace that spans four acres in the middle of Lake Pichola. Elegant wooden boats with oriental carpets under our feet and embroidered canvas canopies and helmed by uniformed captains ferried us to the hotel and back to the mainland whenever summoned. Upon arrival at the palace we received a royal welcome with a shower of rose petals. Enchanting! Having great fun exploring the regal courtyards, gardens, balconies and salons of the palace and were happy to stay put. This was magical. But the City Palace Museum complex on the mainland is truly magnificent, and we had to pry ourselves away from the hotel to visit this important

landmark which is one of the largest palace complexes in the world. Mumbai was our last stop, and our room at the Taj Mahal Palace overlooked the waterfront and the “Gateway to India” monument commemorating King George V’s visit to India in 1911. After an amazing adventure, we were ready to go home. Returning to Palm Beach, Irwin’s circumnavigation completed, mission accomplished!

A final observation: I was pleased to see how many locations we visited are protected by the UNESCO World Heritage Site designation and hope their visitors appreciate the importance of conservation and preservation.

Irwin and Melanie in Agra



SVALBARD ARCTIC EXPEDITION

BY JANET & HENRY RESTARICK
At Large-Louisiana



Svalbard is a Norwegian archipelago in the Arctic Ocean. The islands are located north of the Arctic Circle midway between Norway and the North Pole. Our trip started in Longyearbyen, the northernmost city in the world, just a couple hundred miles below the North Pole.

Glacial ice covers 60% of Svalbard, 30% is barren rock and 10% is vegetated. Some of the glaciers are up to 1,800 feet thick. Winter temperatures range between 3 – 5 degrees F, a record low was recorded at -51-degrees F. Summer temperatures range between 39 – 43 degrees F.

On a clear day, the serene beauty of the jagged peaks and slopes, mantled with snow under a vivid blue sky is breathtaking. Some of the mountains rise straight up out of the sea and look like giant carnivorous teeth. The air is chilled and incredibly pure. It is extremely refreshing.

A large part of Svalbard’s “land area” consists of sheet ice that spreads out across the ocean as far as you can see. It’s an incredible sight. On the ice, seals give birth, rest and



molt, which in turn makes it the perfect hunting ground for the polar bears. One day’s adventure was to frolic on the ice as if we were polar bears.

During our expedition, each day we made at least two wet landings in our zodiacs with armed guides. We hiked up the mountain sides, traipsed across frozen tundra, or wandered over rocky beaches. We were constantly in search of the Arctic fox, the

Svalbard Reindeer, huge playful walruses and polar bears.

Polar bears are the iconic symbol of Svalbard. They weigh 800 to 1,600 pounds and can stand up to ten feet tall on their hind legs. We saw nine huge bears including one female with her baby in tow. One male polar bear was only 50 yards away, about as close as one ever needs to be in the wild.

We saw the Alkefjellet, one of the world’s most impressive bird cliffs. Columnar stone towers rise more than 300 feet straight up from the sea. Here some 100,000 pairs of



guillemots occupy the small ledges along with their neighboring kittiwakes. We also saw colorful puffins with their baby chicks flying and nesting in the jagged cliffs. For a rare treat, a family of Blue whales, the largest animal on the planet, surfaced right next to our ship. Later, we had a close encounter with a very fat bearded seal on the ice and a pair of mischievous walruses attempted to get into our zodiac.

At our northernmost point of the expedition, we did the polar plunge into the sub-freezing waters of the Arctic. We have now taken the plunge into both the Arctic and Antarctic oceans.

A trip to our 7th Continent, Antarctica, which started in the southernmost city in the world, Ushuaia, inspired us to explore the unofficial 8th Continent, The Arctic. It was just as exciting. Both trips will always be remembered as two of our greatest adventures.

NOTE: Janet and I were assured, if we went into an abrupt loss of heart function or cardiac arrest, due to the shock of the freezing plunge, there would be no problem. Since they had some high proof Norwegian Aquavit and a high voltage heart defibrillator on board, the crew could easily bring us back to life.



Henry and Janet on polar bear beach



Henry takes a plunge



RUSSIA COAST

LARGE FOOTPRINT OF THE BEAR

BY W. BRADFORD GARY
Palm Beach Chapter

This past summer, my wife Susan and I traveled 8000 sea miles across the Russian High Arctic to explore the coast of Siberia and look at Russian centers for weapons research. On board a small German ship we would see part of what the Russians are doing in the Arctic north to develop new maritime warfare – conventional and nuclear.

Tromso is a port in Norway north of the Arctic Circle—our departure point across the top of the world.

We were heading east to Soviet Asia and the Russian Far East – once a denied area for any Westerners. Murmansk is the home port for the Russian Navy and Red Banner Submarine Fleet.

During World War II allied convoys kept Russia alive with shipments of armaments and food from the U.S. and U.K. to Murmansk across the turbulent and ice-jammed Barents Sea. Thousands of U.S. and British civilian mariners lost their lives in

the sea battles of the Barents Sea during the naval war of the 1940s.

The Barents Sea - whose frigid waters mark the Western boundary of the North Sea - is an enormous stretch of water circling the North Pole that for thousands of years has been ice bound and impassable for maritime traffic. This year the rapid thaw of ocean ice has brought a new geopolitical dispute to the list of international flash points.



Northern ocean passage

NOVAYA ZEMLA – THE ATOMIC ISLAND

Our research vessel closed in on the remote island of Novaya Zemla —Russian for “new land” —where allied sailors were shipwrecked on the ice and rock shore after their vessels were sunk by the German Kriegsmarine during World War II. A few sailors survived to be rescued by Norwegian commandos.

After the war, Novaya Zemla became the Soviet test center for advanced thermonuclear weapons. Now settled by ethnic, tribal Russians, Novaya Zemla is below freezing for much of the year. There are two small towns connected by a five mile road. A military airport at Rogachevo is restricted. Special permission is required to land here.

TSAR BOMBA was a thermonuclear device of unprecedented power dropped in 1961. During the period of forty years of the Cold War, more than 224 nuclear bombs were detonated on Novaya Zemlya. Devices intended for Soviet forces against the U.S. were developed at NZ.

The mushroom cloud from TSAR BOMBA reached over 40 miles into the atmosphere and shockwaves travelled three times around the globe. Novaya Zemla – the land of beautiful mountains and glaciers – became ground zero for a dangerous arms contest between Russia and the U.S.

As our ship sailed east into the ice fields we crossed over the final resting place of the Soviet nuclear submarine Kursk. Kursk was a huge war ship –the size of two 747 airplanes and the pride of the Russian Navy. A massive underwater explosion ripped open the forward compartment of KURSK and 118 crew were lost. The explosion registered 4.2 Richter scale and recorded by hydrophones worldwide.

Russia declined to allow international rescue by submersibles of the US Navy and other NATO vessels. Some Soviet naval ratings and officers may have survived in the aft sections of the boat only to drown as their air supply was exhausted. A hull of titanium should have prevented fracture except by the most violent impllosion.

Western intelligence believe KURSK was involved in a top secret trial of a revolutionary high speed torpedo called “Shkval” (squall in Russian) designed as an

underwater super weapon. With speeds of over two hundred knots the torpedo had the ability to defeat any NATO naval force.

The Soviets refusal to allow a submarine rescue effort suggests that they wished to restrict knowledge of the new weapon. Reportedly the last words from the Soviet Captain were: “We have a malfunctioning torpedo – permission to fire it.”

MURMANSK

As we sailed into Russian territory we were told the Rodina has placed increased firepower and military resources into the Arctic under the direction of Vladimir Putin. The military build-up has caused a nervous reaction at NATO.

As a countermove, U.S. combat units have been sent to Norway – the first time since World War II that U.S. forces have been based in Norway. Soviet Air bases on the Russian Islands were once viewed only as cold war staging posts for long range bombers set to overfly the Arctic and attack targets in the United States. Now Russians are putting together a conventional military in the Arctic Frontier.

Russia now has 42 ice breakers – including two nuclear boats – designed to break ice and transport troops and landing forces over the Polar Sea to North America.

Unfortunately the United States has two old ice breakers more suitable for the Great Lakes. Soviet radar installations and air fields on Arctic Islands and the polar ice cap are being rapidly built. Modern launch facilities and anti-ship weapons have been moved into the region.

We came ashore in Murmansk – a city full of military history. Large models of Russian warships occupy the museums. Blue jacketed Soviet sailors patrol the noisy and crowded girl bars of the waterfront.

A statue of a Russian sailor dominates the hillside overlooking our anchorage. The nuclear icebreaker LENIN lies at anchor in

the frigid bay waters close to docks jammed with containers destined for shipment on the Northeast Trans Russia ocean passage.

The Northeastern sea route runs from Murmansk to the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska. According to the Russian Navy, the Northeast transit is the “new Suez Canal.” Ship sailing times from Europe to Asia will be cut by 37 percent on water controlled by the Russian Navy.

The Bering Straits offshore Alaska are



The KURSK before sinking, photo curtesy of the U.S. Navy

considered to be prime territory for any blocking action by the Russian Navy. A retired Russian Admiral tells us that the Bering Straits “are the next pressure points in the Cold War.” The Russian war plan is said to contemplate seizure of St. Lawrence Island in the Bering Sea for use as an “air bridge” to challenge US air forces defending Alaska and the lower 48 states.

Our government guide tells us: “There is no reason for the United States to be concerned, I can assure you. Russia has never had any aggressive aims – we are a very friendly people.”

The Russian Prokhanov published an essay in 2016: “The Arctic is a fundamental element of Russian greatness and a force for national reinvigoration.”

THE VOYAGE

Our ship is heavily loaded. As we moved east towards the start of the passage, we become stuck in ever thicker ice. The ship repeatedly

reversed and rammed forward.

Fortunately, the boat is built to withstand ice two meters thick. The rough ride across ridges of ice is like driving across a vast desert with uneven white sand dunes that must be broken apart.

We passed through streams of open water– large oceanic lakes with blue green icebergs that appear out of the thick fog. There are lighthouses on the coast, but they have not been maintained and do not function as aids to navigation.

The Captain warns us, “If something happens out here the closest search and rescue station is two hours away by helicopter – nobody will help us – not the Navy, not Putin, not God.”

We leave the Kara Sea behind for the open waters of the Barents Sea. Our course looks like a wild set of curves carved into the enormous ice field with stops and reverse tracks visible all the way to the horizon.

The Captain explains that since Putin became President in 2000, Moscow has paid attention to the Arctic. He established an increased military presence in the north. “It is good we have Putin and Putin is starting to get things done like Stalin. If Stalin had only lived a few months longer everything would now be OK.”

TIKSI - THE NEW NORTH

We come ashore at Tiksi, a town of 4,500 people on the coast of the Laptev Sea. Surrounded by thousands of miles of permafrost the town has no outside connection and is totally dark for half of the year due to its location north of the Arctic Circle.

The barren landscape is subject to vicious blizzards. It is the principal military location for the Russian Northern Command. An air field, control tower and large hangars are the only modern structures. A local official greets us at a military wharf:

“We live in a wonderful place – you must come again in winter when the snow goes to the third story of this airport control building.” he says.

Our friend describes the rest of Russia as the “mainland” and says he does not feel personally comfortable outside the remote military district of Tiksi.

Tiksi is located on the wide delta of Lena River where the Soviets established a port in 1938. Tiksi became a hub for timber transported down the Lena from Siberia. The port has a repair facility and room for anchorage of up to thirty vessels. A long range weather station occupies the restricted compound outside the main town.

Our guide tells us that “Tiksi is the central point - the northern sea route is right here, and even someone flying to China has to pass over Tiksi on their way to Beijing.”

He tells us that military pay for service in Tiksi is three times that of Russia. Length in service here counts double. A massive dormitory is being built to house 1000 troops.

THE LAST FRONTIER

Russian ship traffic on the Northern Sea Route has increased tenfold since 1991.

The town of Sabetta is on the central Siberian coast and has 15,000 workers and engineers engaged in energy exploration. The employees are housed in blue and orange aluminum huts - well



Abandoned ranger station



Susan Keegan Gary with new friends in Chukotka



insulated and better suited for the harsh climate than the earlier Soviet concrete pre-fab structures. Russian energy companies have been granted exploration areas all the way east to the Bering Strait adjacent to Alaska.

We visit the French company TOTAL/CNPC. The joint venture is developing gas reserves and building a liquefied natural gas plant on the tundra close by the Arctic Sea. Next year the company will start shipping LNG on its own fleet of icebreaker cargo vessels. The sea route will be across the Northeast Passage to Europe and Asia.

A local woman speaks to us about the difficulty of living in the High Russian Arctic: “In 1981 when we first came here, my husband followed me outside with a shotgun every time I left the house because bears come into our settlement and women were not allowed to carry guns.”

She is a member of the Meteorological station staff, wears a long skirt and is a member of the Russian Orthodox community – very different from what you would find in Moscow or St. Petersburg.

Her hair is white but soon has a grey tinge as hordes of mosquitos cover her head. In the short summer, mosquitos are everywhere and locals often wear modified fish nets over their heads to protect against attack.

Tatiana tells us that her mother was a prisoner at a Soviet era work camp at Salekhard. Her family home is still there next to the prison.

“It was only in the 1990s that people started to talk about the fact that we lived in a Gulag.”

NEW NORTH POLE STATION

Russia now has a new North Pole Station being built at the Admiralty Yard in St. Petersburg. The large blaze orange vessel resembles a naval warship with helicopter operating platforms and multiple propellers to keep the station on position.

The floating Russian base will be self-propelled with a high ice classification and nuclear power that will allow for continuous sailing in the polar sea at the top of the world. With a navigational crew of fourteen the base can accommodate an additional fifty Russian sailors or special action troops.

The North Pole platform will replace Arctic Stations based on drifting ice floes. The last “floating ice station” was evacuated in May 2013 due to break up of the ice pack.

The Admiralty yard has built several of Russia’s Arctic military platforms. The actual new vessel will be 200 feet in length and will weigh in at over 10,000 tons. The vessel can attain twelve knots and break ice up to three meters. The Admiral noted that it is no longer possible to establish Russian stations on ice flows due to weak ice pack conditions and open water in the Polar Sea.

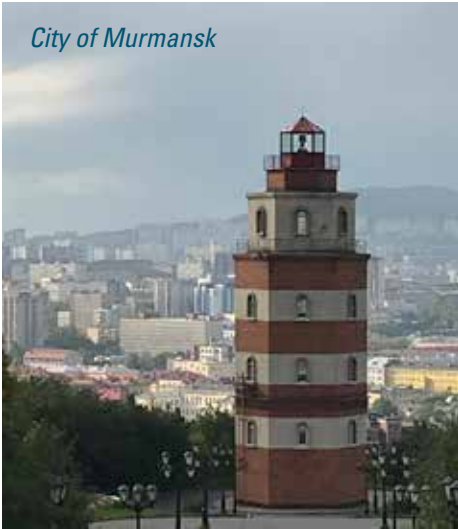
In addition, the long runway at the Russian Air Base on Franz Joseph Land will soon be open year round for large military transports. The air base is at 80 degrees north and was originally established in the 1950s as a staging base for Soviet long range bombers able to reach North American cities.

As we sailed away from the coast of Siberia at Wrangle Island and headed for the open water of the Bering Sea it occurred to me how much has changed in the Russian Arctic but control of the top of the world still belongs to Russia - as it did a century ago. Over a million miles of the Arctic – including the North Pole – is now claimed by the Russian Federation.

At our final stop at Wrangel Island we saw squads of Russian naval infantry training in Arctic White battle uniforms. Armed with the latest high technology weapons and advanced drones, the naval infantry is practicing a full assault on an abandoned set of buildings on a corner of the large airfield.

What is the future of the High Arctic?

The message is clear- If you want to transit the Arctic or travel to Asia faster you will come under Russian oversight. The large footprint of the Russian Bear is already here.



STEPPING INTO SYRIA: THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY

BY STEFAN KRASOWSKI
Pacific Northwest



There they were---back to school shopping in Damascus, with a fresh squeezed blackberry juice refresher.

It is hard to believe in August 2019 that this is the Syria at war. Mothers with children in tow are buying school supplies at market stalls in Damascus. Fathers are treating their children to ice cream cones.

Yet, the northern third of the city lies in ruins. The M5 highway north passes destruction and checkpoints until, north of Hama, traffic is stopped entirely for the campaign in Idlib Province. Travelers to Aleppo, where little of the historic old city survives except the iconic citadel, must divert far to the east, through towns such as the Isma’ili center, Salamiyah.

A TRIP TO SYRIA

Syria has been in civil war since 2011 and was effectively closed to tourists until late 2018. Then, travelers of some nationalities began receiving tourist visas. US passport holders had to wait until summer 2019, when a few, including me, were approved.

Why did I want so much to go to Syria that I tried every legal avenue for two years? As one contact put it, “A one-way trip is easy. A round-trip...”

I became a Circumnavigator in my travels to every country in the world. The number of countries in the world is hotly debated among ‘country collectors.’ Clubs are dedicated to arguing that question. Some travelers even make up their own lists to then be able to argue they are the first person to visit ‘every country in the world’. The United Nations has 193 member states and is the foundation of every ‘every country’ list.

By 2017, I had traveled to 191 United Nations member states. What I expected as a project into my senior years was accelerated by, initially, living in China for nearly a decade, then, returning to the US, learning airline and credit card rewards programs to bring previously cost-prohibitive destinations within reach.

In April 2019 I traveled to Socotra Island, Yemen, the ‘Galapagos of the Indian Ocean’ for its famed flora and fauna, highlighted by the Dragon’s Blood Trees. Flights had resumed after the several years that the Saudi military did not allow flights through the airspace it controls. That peaceful island, where the residents do not have guns, or for that matter dogs (they would harass the island-wide free-range livestock), or even chickens (“We love eggs, but we hate chickens.”), had been an unreachable island of calm while war raged on the mainland.

192 TO 193

In August, my 40th birthday approached, and I wanted to reach my 193rd by then. I told myself that my selfish goal meant that if I could go, it would mean good things for the recovery of Syria.

Later, while sipping tea in the garden of the Syrian National Museum, tears came to my eyes to hear that Ghaidaa, the young woman who got my visa through officialdom, was born in Syria to Palestinian refugee parents – she, and hundreds of thousands like her, have permits to live and work in Syria but are stateless with no country willing to accept them as visitors. When she later spoke via WhatsApp video chat to the Modern Middle East History Class at my alma mater, Breck School in Minneapolis, Minnesota, she said, “I travel vicariously through you all.”

BEARS IN SYRIA?

It was a Friday that I got word that “Things look promising.” On Monday the visa was approved. I booked a flight to Beirut for the next day.

I left in such a hurry that despite typing out all my contacts, flights, and hotels, my wife hadn’t had time to digest my destination. On my way out she asked, “Did you bring a coat? It could be cold.” I said, “It’s summer, I should be fine.”

Then, she asked, “Are there bears there?”

What an odd question? A few days later, in Damascus, it occurred to me that in Chinese, her native tongue, the transliteration for Syria and Siberia are quite similar. She soon knew, when a mutual friend at a dinner party, exclaimed, “Siberia? No, Stefan is in Syria!”

‘SAD TEARS AND HAPPY TEARS’

A fellow recent traveler to Syria summed the experience as ‘sad tears and happy tears’.

A Muslim driver, Wael, and Christian tour guide, Fadi, spoke of the diverse society that has been ripped apart. The complexity of the conflict is beyond my geopolitical expertise. On the ground, the enormity of destruction was like those scenes of razed towns in World War II movies.

The ‘fortunes of war’ are hard to fathom as one village sits almost untouched next to a village leveled, even one home to the other. Those who lived in the southern sections of Damascus and Homs may have homes to return to, if they are alive. Those in the north, if anything is left, try to make one room habitable, then set to work on the next.

A BAKER AND THE GRADUATES

The fashionable town of Muhradah, streets lined at night by hookah smoking youths at cafes, is where we met Danny, a Syrian-Argentinian who once translated for Spanish-speaking presidents and prime ministers. He learned to bake ornate wedding cakes in these eight years.

The party venue had re-opened weeks prior, shell marks still visible over the swimming pool. A high school graduation party, students and parents dancing the night long, welcomed us to celebrate. Why wait till August for a graduation party? “To give students time to re-take the graduation exam if they don’t pass the first time. We want to celebrate all together.”

How did these students go to school while war raged into their town? Life had to go on.

VISITING TOURIST SITES?

Before arriving in Syria, the list of tourist sites on the itinerary seemed like a package holiday.

Each place was so much more. Churches with defaced and burned artwork showed newly arrived reproductions from Russian donors. Fresh, white plaster erected a once-topped minaret. A highway rest stop proudly rebuilt, serving the Syrian mini pizzas that seem the only solid accompaniment to the diet of tea and cigarettes favored by many men.

Everywhere possible for families to be out enjoying life, they are. All have suffered, yet they must live. In Hama they watch the towering water wheels while noshing halawet el-jibn, the city’s famed dessert of semolina and cheese dough roll, filled with cream.

FORWARD

At the famed Crusader castle Krak des Chevaliers, never taken by force, though once by trickery, the proprietor of the hilltop overlook guest house surveys the 20 years since he first started building. Several years of investment has resulted in the best castle view and garlic roast chicken in the area.

A decade of prosperity was thrashed by forces spilling over from nearby Lebanon. Eight years of loss and damage is shown in the shattered windows and bullet-ripped walls. Yet, the restaurant is once again open with his wife and him in the kitchen. A roof tile felled by a shelling, now serves as a makeshift tea tray.

Syria would need a Marshall Plan to rebuild, though only sanctions and more strife are in sight. World and regional powers will continue to blithely push their strategic goals.

After eight tragic years, tourists are a start, however small, to rebuilding the prosperity of the Syrian people and re-establishing person-to-person ties with the world. Those travelers who make the journey open-minded will find hospitality, tragedy, and hope that will shape their being.



Hama waterwheels



Hotel breakfast



Stefan in Homs



Damascus convent school



BY SALLY COLE
Palm Beach Chapter

MAGICAL ROAD TRIP *IN SOUTH ITALY*

Cosa Nostra, volcanic ash, and cave dwellers, oh my! What were we thinking? Last spring, two college pals and I were inspired to do a road trip to Southern Italy - the only region of Italy that none of us had explored. Our plan was to start in Sicily (the ball) and meander to the "boot" of Italy on the mainland. The next thing we knew, we were in Palermo in a rental car, calling ourselves Thelma, Louise and Lucille but hoping for a happier ending. The true impetus of this trip gathered steam years ago when I read an article about the small Paleolithic village of Matera in the Basilicata region of Italy; but I digress... Our whirlwind road trip around Sicily was spectacular. Visits inland to the renown mosaic ruins of Villa Romana del Casale, the UNESCO Heritage sites of Noto, Ragusa, and Siracusa (made more memorable when we discovered our car had been towed, but that's another story) were as you would expect - breathtaking, historical and educational. On to Mt. Etna to see the moody steam rising off her peak (we missed

the lava explosion by two weeks!), a memorable wine tasting and lunch at Gambino Winery, and a few nights in the "St. Tropez" of Sicily - lovely Taormina.

Then on to 'The Boot'! A car ferry ride across the Strait of Messina delivered us to the Calabria region (the toe) which was rural, authentic and manageable but on twisty roads. We overnighted in the gorgeous seaside town of Tropea which earned a cover photo in National Geographic Traveler magazine last spring.

On to Puglia (the heel) where we stayed in centrally-located Locorotondo in an Airbnb for several days, venturing out to country-side towns of Alberabello (trulli central), Martina Franca (wine capital), Polignano a Mare (drop dead gorgeous Adriatic seaside town); Ostuni (olive orchard region) and Lecce (The Florence of the South). All remarkable towns on their own, but I was getting antsy because I knew our next destination was Matera - the anticipated highlight of our trip.

Marvelous, magical Matera did not disappoint! This Paleolithic town in the Basilicata region (the instep) was once considered the shame of Italy and called "a Dantean horror" due to its citizens living in caves until the 1950s. The Italian government eventually moved the cave dwellers into government housing and attempted to clean up the squalor. Over time,



it was nearly abandoned until investors saw an opportunity to make this historic, ancient place livable again. In 1993, Matera became a UNESCO Heritage site and was eventually awarded the European Culture Capital in 2019.

We stayed in an Airbnb in the heart of Sassi (stone settlement) de Matera, looking over irregular terraces and stairways, narrow alleys, and stone dwellings where the roof of a house could be the floor of another. It is photography nirvana at every turn with exceptional restaurants, accommodations and exhibits displaying and explaining the town's unique history.

A self-guided tour of 16th century Casa Nova was a good introduction to the history of Matera, followed by a two-hour guided walking tour of the Sassi. The guided tour included entrance into several exhibits with the 15th century grotto Church of St. Mary of Idris as a highlight. St. Mary's boasts 12th century frescoes and crypts and affords visitors a unique view of Matera and the gorge (familiarily called the Gravina).

Matera museums are numerous albeit small, intimate and easy to navigate in a short period

of time. We visited the art museum in the Palazzo Lanfranchi, Casa Grotta (a traditional peasant cave dwelling), and the exceptional Museo Archeologico Nazionale.

Inventive and renown Italian chefs have opened restaurants that rival any I have visited in other parts of Italy. Vitantonio Lombardo had a hip, eclectic vibe inside a renovated cave. Regia Corte boasted not only an exceptional menu but also a patio overlooking the Sassi. At night, the Sassi glows with warm lights flickering like candles in the windows of the stone houses. It is a sight to behold and softens the edges of the ancient city.

Accommodations are plentiful and unique in Matera. For those with an unlimited budget, stay at Sextantio le Grotte della Civita, a five-star hotel that the New York Times listed as one of the ten most beautiful hotels on the international scene. At the very least, go for an Aperol Spritz on their outdoor patio overlooking the weathered limestone caves across to the Gravina. Better yet, take a bottle of wine, a loaf of bread and cheese and drive to the Belvedere di Murgia Timone and enjoy the breathtaking vista looking back at the Sassi.

For regular travelers like Circumnavigators, sometimes it's difficult to find unique and exceptional places especially in countries many of us have visited frequently like Italy. Matera is one of those places - remarkable in its history, visceral, and proof of hard lives lived. It is continually rebuilding and like Gaudi's Sagrada Familia, it will never be 'finished.' Go before Rick Steves writes a travel book about it.

As we completed the loop back to Sicily and Palermo's airport, we stopped in a little-known hilltop town in Calabria called Santa Severina. We were the only obvious tourists in the quiet town with the beautiful 11th century Norman Carafa Castle guarding the town cliffs. Our last stop in Sicily was the coastal town of Cefalu. This is another inspirational seaside town on the north shore of the island that sits on a promontory licking the Tyrrhenian Sea. Once again, we experienced exceptional restaurants with jaw-dropping views.

In retrospect, we should have taken two separate trips as Sicily and The Boot deserve the separate time and attention. But between negotiations with our lifestyles, jobs and husbands, we didn't want to look a gift horse in the mouth and take the chance that a second trip might not happen.



Sunset in Matera



BY JUDY SCHRAFFT
Palm Beach Chapter

Judy at tomb of Ali

IRAQ - “THE LAND BETWEEN THE RIVERS”

“Mesopotamia, where civilization began” is as much a byword as “Africa, where modern man began,” although some 300,000 years separate the two estimates. The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers which rise in the hills of western Turkey delineate Iraq as they flow south and join together near the southern city of Basrah.

Because of the courses of the two rivers, Iraq is divided into two parts. Where the rivers are closest to each other, north of the capital of Baghdad, it is called Al Jaziera (The Island) and the southern part of the country was - and still is - called Babylonia by the Romans. All of Iraq has Biblical connotations, from Baghdad north to Nineveh and south to Ur of the Chaldees, as it is called, and five UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

The two rivers, which are the lifeblood of the county, actually come together in the confluence at Querna, a short drive from Basrah, almost at the southern tip of the country. This wide waterway, called the Shatt-al-Arab, flows from Querna into the Persian Gulf, although the Arab states surrounding it - Iraq, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait and the United Arab Republic - refer to it as the Arabian Gulf.

Querna is believed to be the site of the original Garden of Eden and even has the Adam Tree to prove it.

Basrah is a modern congested oil boom town with oil derricks on the horizon, many aflame with gas being burned off. Its history includes 1,300 years as a trading center and port, and even earlier, as Alexander the Great

in 314 B.C. was establishing the kingdom of Carmania seventy miles upriver.

In the 19th century it was established as a military base and now is important as a port on the Shatt-al-Arab, which also boasts two derelict palaces built by Saddam Hussein in his heyday in the 1980s. One palace on the cliff overlooking the river is in the process of being turned into the Basrah Museum. Besides the stacks of lumber and various building materials just outside the front portal, it contains several glass showcases with small artifacts, all unidentified, and some larger architectural pieces, all of which may sometime in the future comprise a proper museum.

Saddam Hussein built, some estimates say, 40 or so palaces throughout Iraq, many of which he never inhabited, and all of which have been completely destroyed, covered in graffiti and left without even a decorated marble floor intact, as component pieces have been pried out. Hussein as a Sunni Muslim was hated not only for the ravages he inflicted on the country, but also as a Sunni in a country of 95 percent Shiites. His reach was so great, his murderous arrogance so strong, that he viewed himself as the reincarnation of Babylon Prince Nebuchadnezzar, who himself believed he was the reincarnation of earlier Babylon King Hammurabi.

North of Basrah we reach the first of Iraq's World Heritage Sites known as The Marshes. Made famous in such literature as Wilfred Thesiger's “The Marsh Arabs,” this area of reeds, reed islands and reed villages had been occupied for 5,000 tranquil years

sharing space with millions of migratory and indigenous birds, as shown in Sumerian reliefs. In Saddam Hussein's quest to make the oilfields to the south more accessible and also to punish the marsh dwellers for their close relationship with Iranian Shias, he ordered the marshes to be drained, dammed and fitted with locks that rendered the marshes unfit for normal habitation. Thus, the residents, whose lifestyle revolved around reeds for homes, boats and water buffalo, vacated their ancestral area. Some are now returning to their former lifestyle, fishing and weaving reeds into homes and boats. Water buffalo, up to their ribs in water, still wend their way up and down the small canals that connect the reed islands in an earnest recreation of what used to be, and the ecological damage has been somewhat mitigated.

Along the roads, now paved and selling merchandise not formerly available to the marsh dwellers, are thousands of flags interspersed with pictures, mounted on poles and walls, of martyrs. Iraq it seems has as many martyred men and clerics as the present youthful population. It is sad and humbling to realize how many sons, husbands, brothers, and fathers gave their lives defending their country throughout the many wars and movements Iraq has endured, the Iraq/Iran conflict followed by the Gulf War with Kuwait being the most draining and reviled. Hussein's war for the oilfields resulted in the deaths of some 500,000 Iraqis. From the quantity of posters and pictures in the south, it seems



Baghdad fish vendor

that a disproportionate number of fatalities were from this area.

Now flags flutter amid the photographs, each representing a dramatic statement: red for blood, white for purity, black for mourning and green for Iraq. Even Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini who was exiled from Iran for fourteen years is represented, and reminders of death are a constant.

With the antiquities and ancient sites that we have come to see ahead of us, we arrive at the modern city of Nasiriyah, the jumping-off point for a visit to the Sumerian city-state of Ur, once home to some 35,000 people and reputed to be the birthplace of the prophet Abraham. In 1922, British archaeologist Sir Charles Leonard Wooley began the work which occupied him for twelve years of excavating the royal graves at Ur dating back to 3,500 years before Christ. His work indicated that the prehistoric area of burials was succeeded in later periods so that several layers of kings, queens and sacrificed animals and' courtiers were found.

Such grave goods as gold, clay vessels, musical instruments and gemstones from other locales were found, including one tomb containing four women harpists with their fingers still on their harp strings. Some artifacts are exhibited in museums worldwide, and what is now in evidence at Ur are buildings ascribed to later periods.

The well-preserved pyramidal ziggurat at Ur is the most prominent structure with three levels tapering to the small room on top representing the bedchamber of the god and goddess of Ur. Nearby are the remains, open to the sky, of the temple, the king's palace and the home of Abraham. All are silhouetted on the stark dry desert and are built in the same

mud brick style as the rest of Mesopotamia. Due to recent rains, we were fortunate to find wooden paths leading from ruin to ruin, to prevent our sinking into deep glutinous mud, and reminding us why mud brick was the building element of choice.

Further along is the monumental site of Uruk, which was governed by King Gilgamesh and from which the country derives its name. German archaeologists have been the excavating force since its discovery and have in fact built a narrow-gauge railroad around the site to facilitate their work. Uruk can be viewed from a nearby hill which gives an idea of the size and complexity of the ruin.

However, its influence cannot be overstated as this is where writing was invented, although not in the form we recognize. Cuneiform writing entailed marking with a stylus forms such as jars, loaves and animals into wet clay tablets, sending trading messages, and it took a very long time to morph into the style of writing we know today. The Sumerians were also first to use a wheel for a vehicle.

The excavated site of Uruk was also known as Warka, and it was there that the Warka Vase was found, the world's oldest carved stone ritual vessel dated to 3,200 B.C. It was looted from the Iraq Museum's treasury during the 1990s by the Islamic State but was later found and returned to the museum in Baghdad.

En route to Baghdad and sites further north, we spent some days in the two holiest cities in Iraq. Al Najaf is home to the shrine and tomb of Imam Ali,

Prophet Mohammed's son-in-law who was married to his daughter Fatima. Every street in Al Najaf has a mosque and also boasts of the holiest and most sought-after cemetery in the world, with five million graves.

At the holy shrine of Ali, Fourth Caliph and First Imam of the new religion, the dome is covered with 7,777 pure gold bricks, and his tomb is within a gold and silver fence entered through a gate framed by two minarets covered in gold with gold and silver doors. The interior of the shrine, always mobbed with thousands of devout pilgrims, is a fantasy of millions of shards of mirror plastering the walls and ceiling, with many massive crystal chandeliers, in a phantasmagoric display of wealth and reverence. All women must be covered head to toe, and we must either have or purchase appropriate clothing. In all cases we go through a special security check and are questioned and patted down in order to enter.

The body of Imam Ali was carried from Kufa by a white camel, and wherever the camel stopped was to be the location of the coffin and shrine.

In Karbala, the site of the shrine of martyred Imam Hussein is almost as dazzling with gold leaf cupola and minarets and two massive and jewel-encrusted doors donated by Farah Pahlavi, wife of Iran's shah in recognition of its Shia brotherhood. Here the distinct Shia and Sunni sects were established, and small round clay discs engraved with a Koranic text to be pressed between the ground and the forehead during prayer are sold. Huge bags of these artifacts are found in markets throughout Iraq.

Nearby is Ukhaider Palace made famous by well-connected post-Victorian British archaeologist Gertrude Bell, friend to such luminaries as (T. E.) Lawrence of Arabia and Winston Churchill. Before her participation in redrawing the lines of most of the Middle East kingdoms after World War One, she excavated Ukhaider Palace, now reconstructed, and founded her own Baghdad Museum. Her dedicated, and complicated, life



Spice vendor



Ishtar Gate

ended with her suicide in Baghdad in 1926. She donated 50,000 British pounds for her museum's completion and upkeep, which now seems a casualty of the fog of many wars, as we were unable to locate it.

One of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, were probably part of the ziggurat, long destroyed, created by Nebuchadnezzar to please his wife Amytis who was homesick for some greenery in the stark desert. The Ishtar Gate, a mosaic of shiny fired turquoise bricks with bright yellow animals on each, would almost have been enough. A replica of the original, now in the Pergamon Museum in Berlin, greets visitors to the reconstructed city of Babylon.

Along Babylon's interior walls, hundreds of colorful fired clay bricks depicted various animals, winged bulls with human heads, winged divinities and other fanciful creatures. Outside overlooking the Euphrates River stands the original Lion of Babylon on a stone plinth.

Babylon's history began in 2350 B.C. as a small village and gained importance under King Hammurabi during a later century when it became a walled fortress of a city. Babylon was destroyed many times and crushed by many "foreign" kings, but it remains one of the most important cities of its time. Until Saddam Hussein resurrected its crumbling hills with vast courts and yet another of his many private palaces overlooking the river, now completely looted, Babylon was just another abandoned great city.

Of later origin but no less inspiring of admiration and interest is the ancient city of Ctesiphon. Founded in the third century B.C. by a Sassanian king, it went through all the usual sacks and habitations as most cities of the period but left behind one of the most magnificent structures in Iraq. The 90-foot high vaulted arch, the Taq Kisra, towered over the throne room and still maintains its powerful integrity today although made of the same ubiquitous mud brick.

At the time of our visit, Baghdad was our northern limit due to the continued presence of the Islamic State. The so-called Green Zone in the capital was off-limits to anyone not connected with an embassy, consulate, or government agency. A short time after our departure, the barricades were removed and the Green Zone reopened, as it was felt that the IS threat had been minimized. That potentially makes all the other World Heritage Sites such as Nineveh and Nimrud available to travelers and their safety more assured. This may not happen immediately as northern cities such as Mosul have been decimated by IS, and hundreds of thousands of citizens left homeless and penniless, and relegated to refugee status, although the more northern province of Kurdistan may be visited by flying direct from, for instance, Istanbul.

During our time in Iraq we were warmly greeted, and as the only Americans in the country except for the embassy staff and a few independent contractors, we were the subject of countless selfies as all Iraqis seem to have iPhones. We never felt apprehensive or in danger, although everywhere were either the military or the police with AK-47s and chest pockets crammed with grenades. Hotels could not be entered without going through several layers of security with one extra for women. Bomb-sniffing and guard dogs were a constant, although well controlled.

In most cities we spent time in the souks, or markets, surrounded by unimaginable quantities of Chinese imported goods and clothing, the requisite foodstuffs and hanging bits of various animals. The mysterious souks remembered from other Middle Eastern locales are probably now also crammed with Chinese merchandise and have far less local color and intrigue, although the pastry vendors are just as irresistible.



Mosque of Reeds

Meals in Iraq are served family style as in most Middle East countries. For large groups, platters are placed along the long tables, with grilled lamb, chicken, and a special fish from the two rivers (never pork), fresh vegetables and salads and fluffy rice scented with cinnamon. Hot wheels of bread are brought throughout. When in the Marshes, we sat on woven mats on the floor of a roadside "reed" cafe, where lunch was just as well served as in a city and just as much fun, with hands reaching left and right for more. Hotels offer buffet breakfasts.

Nobody in Iraq drinks tap water, so bottles are everywhere and contribute to the trash piled up along roads and in waterways.

On a more positive note, all cities at night in Iraq resemble the Las Vegas strip, with bright (some would say garish) displays of neon in every color of the rainbow. Each shop and restaurant is decked out with flashing signs and LED staging. My favorite was the guns and ammunition shop they called "Chicago," perhaps in reference to the once-criminal aspect of that city.

The privilege of being in such a country as Iraq with its multiple layers of history and civilization and living its present lifestyle influenced by its omnipresent past more than compensated for any adjustment we may have made to our own. Walking in the footsteps of kings and tyrants and understanding how our world evolved through this one special setting, from Paleolithic hunter-gatherers to fabulously rich despots and more kindly leaders, makes us grateful for the opportunity and thankful for the warm reception we always received from all Iraqis.



*Lisa Brighton in Jordan.
See the camel in the clouds?*



Patricia Buescher in Chile



Henry Restarick in the Arctic

WONDERS OF CLOUDS



*Kristen Koontz
in Montreal*



Sally Cole in Michigan



Helen Jenkins in Switzerland



Robert Chapman in Singapore



Ann Swinford in New Zealand



SCHOLARS REFLECT ON THEIR ADVENTURE

Our Foundation scholars tell us what they discovered on their amazing circumnavigations. We asked them about the countries they visited, highlights, favorite places, lowlights/surprises, dining experiences, and, most importantly, about friendship and what they learned about themselves.



Scholar Fiona Singer Reflects on “The University of Life” Georgetown University

What countries did you visit on the circumnavigation?
I visited the UK, Belgium, Israel, South Africa, Cambodia and Argentina.

Was there a highlight on the trip?
The highlights were unexpected adventures. Discovering a prophetic tomb in Israel and walking through time and history with just a candle was incredible. Sharing that with new friends I’d just met was incredible, it gave me so much perspective on all the wonders of the world. I also loved going on food adventures in Argentina or Cambodia, or hiking through the clouds on Table Mountain in Cape Town. I think those moments are when I caught the ultimate travel bug, I spend so much of my life at school running from class to class and getting the opportunity to see so much more of the world is something I’m so grateful for.

Was there a favorite country or place?
It’s hard to pick a favorite but the place that most surprised me was Buenos Aires. I loved the mix of people who roamed the beautiful streets, parks and boulevards of the city. The country has the second largest immigrant population in the world after the U.S.; it was amazing to see Jewish families, Italian Argentines, Chinese Argentines, Swiss Argentines, etc. It reminded me of my home in New York. I can’t stop reading up on Argentinian culture and history!

Were there any low lights, or surprises?
There were moments where I did feel unsafe. They were few and far between but that’s never easy. I really value my independence, so I was really reluctant to ask for help. It was hard to accept my limitations, but after being chased on the street in Cape Town I needed to ask for support from fellow travelers.

Was there a favorite food or dining experience? Any bad ones?
There were too many favorite food experiences. I got the incredible pleasure of going on a food tour in Cambodia and ate flavors I’d never even conceived of, fermented fish stocks or fish steamed in banana leaves were not in my culinary repertoire. I also ate a lot of airplane food along the way, some better than others.

Did you make friends with whom you will stay in touch?
Recently, I received pictures of my friend Tom and his “selfie” with a dog he met in Mendoza, Argentina. He has been traveling nonstop for four years and whenever he gets somewhere new, he sends me a picture with a new pet he meets in his new home! I met so many people, and still get regular updates from them! It warms my heart, and we are trying to plan a reunion sometime soon, which may involve me going to Thailand... to be determined!

What did you learn about yourself?
My parents like to joke that my experiences this summer were like a degree from the “university of life.” I was pushed every day, from coordinating foreign transportation in languages I didn’t speak to making friends and pushing my sometimes-shy self to meet so many different people. It was a whirlwind, but I am so grateful for all the confidence I acquired along the way!

Scholar Christopher LaMountain: World Ambassador Northwestern

What countries did you visit on the circumnavigation?
I visited Germany, Uganda, India, Samoa, Australia, and Chile. These six countries are home to Baha’i Continental Houses of Worship, and my trip involved research of Baha’i choral music at such Temples.

Was there a highlight on the trip?
One of the many highlights of the trip was an excursion that I took to Haarlem, Netherlands. My choral conductor, Dr. Donald Nally, was touring with his GRAMMY-award winning professional choir called “The Crossing.” This choir was presenting a recently composed choral work that employed the poetry of a Dutch poet. With a few Northwestern alumni in Dr. Nally’s professional ensemble, it was wonderful to catch up with them among the cobblestone and canals of Haarlem.

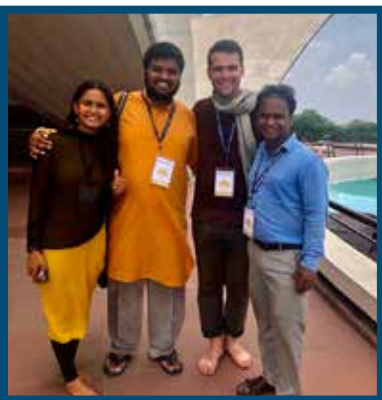
Was there a favorite country or place?
The Lotus Temple in New Delhi was a favorite place from my circumnavigation. I would wake up every day to share some chai with my Airbnb host, and then proceed to the Temple grounds. The Lotus Temple is by far the most visited Baha’i Temple in the world, with about 10,000-100,000 visitors a day. I was able to join the 20 other youth volunteers that orchestrate the flow of Temple visitors and join the four Temple chanters during devotional services to sing Baha’i prayers.

Were there any low lights, or surprises?
Lowlights... of course! I ran into various issues trying to develop fluency for each destination’s public transportation system. For example, in Samoa I was hoping to see some of the island, but taxi travel was rather expensive, so I ended up hopping on a few of the public buses. After a three-hour bus ride around the Samoan perimeter, I ended up on the opposite corner of the island and was informed that a returning bus would not come for three days. I started walking along the empty dirt road, hoping maybe a kind driver would take me back to my hotel. It was truly tragic: a deserted island. I was fortunate enough to stumble upon a beach fale (open-air hut) resort, so I booked three nights there and ended up making some wonderful friends.

Was there a favorite food or dining experience? Any bad ones?
After learning the hard way about New Delhi street food (PSA: Delhi Belly is real), I was incredibly excited to be joining a host family in Australia, who promised home-cooked food every night. The Rowshan family of Sydney, Australia was absurdly hospitable to me, offering me my own room, including me in their family activities, and making me the best Persian food for every dinner.

Did you make friends with whom you will stay in touch?
The world shocked with its kindness. I was very nervous that I would have difficulty finding communities or feeling constantly alienated; however, everywhere I went, I was fortunate to meet welcoming and open people. Perhaps pursuing research on Baha’i choirs was helpful with this aspect, as I had a community in every destination that I visited for the most part.

What did you learn about yourself?
On the most basic level, I developed the deepest appreciation for the American luxuries of near ubiquitous Wi-Fi and liberal culture. While it was surely nice to have some time unplugged to be present in my environments, communication back home and finding my way around was often challenged by the lack of internet. Over the course of my trip, I came to learn the importance of my position, and I’ve been inspired to find ways to use my privilege as an American to better the world as best I can, be that through religious studies scholarship, choral music, NGO work, or simply just by welcoming others. In many ways, the circumnavigation trip develops the circumnavigator into an ambassador of the world. And while I will never be able to perfectly capture the essence and story of every friend that passed me on my trip, I hope I can at least reflect the openness and hospitality that was shown to me as my journey continues.



FOUNDATION PRESIDENT’S *LETTER*

Dear Fellow Circumnavigators:

Our Around-the-World Travel-Study Grant Program strives to promote scholarship at the global level across a wide range of areas, and we take tremendous pride in our Foundation Scholars for the seriousness of purpose and contributions they make to furthering international understanding. Club members at Chapters which participate in the grant program are fortunate to have the opportunity to interact personally with our returning grant recipients and learn more about the personal rather than academic takeaways from their circumnavigations, and we thought that the membership at large would also find such reflections of interest. As seasoned globetrotters, we Circumnavigators know that often the most rewarding parts of our travels are the little things that make us smile when they come to mind years later. Please take a moment to read the accompanying interviews with our most recently designated Foundation Scholars, Fiona Singer of Georgetown, who considers her travel experiences of the past summer “...a degree from the “university of life,” and Christopher LaMountain of Northwestern, who became inspired during the course of his travels to “...use my privilege as an American to better the world as best I can.”

As we embark upon the final year of our first half-century of grant-making, it is encouraging indeed that, notwithstanding advances in travel and communications which have made the world smaller since our founders first set sail, circumnavigation continues to be a magical and life-changing experience.

Luck to You!

Gregory Rider
President

OVER THE HORIZON

Kenneth Behring
Blackhawk, CA
June 25, 2019

Ralph Glenn
Bloomfield Hills, MI
June 8, 2019

Jerome N. Bluestein
Silver Spring, MD
August 30, 2018

Alec Thompson
Bedfordshire, England
December 5, 2019

Dennis Fredrickson
Naples, FL
December 24, 2019

William R. Thompson
San Diego, CA
July 15, 2019

Marilyn Fredrickson
Naples, FL
July 3, 2019

Samuel J. Watson, III
Alexandria, VA
December 23, 2019

IN MEMORY OF SAMUEL J. WATSON III



Former Washington DC Chapter President, Samuel (Sam) Johnston Watson III passed away on December 23, 2019. A retired US Army Colonel of the 101st Airborne with three tours in Vietnam War, Sam was a true American patriot. He served as the Vice President’s Deputy National Security Adviser at the White

House and as Chief of Staff at CIA for the Regan-Bush Presidential Transition Team. Sam worked in Iraq later in his life for over two years as a State Department advisor on public diplomacy and governance. As President of the DC Chapter of the Circumnavigators Club, Sam helped increase membership and encouraged junior members to take an active role in the Chapter. He was especially fond of the annual lunch for Chinese New Year. Sam was an inspiration to all he met and is missed by many.

chapter highlights



CHICAGO

Chicago Chapter Holiday Party

Front row (left to right) Jim Keating, Barb Wanke, Marilyn Fischel, Jim Houston, Mary Houston, Karen Schlueter, Don Parrish, Virginia Mullin, Barb Franch, Sue Nelson, Dr. Pat Young and Amy Gardner. Back row: Tim Foufas, Jim Franch, Don Blom, Ken Sbiral, Dan Peterson, David Waring, Jaclyn Winship and Kent Winship

PALM BEACH

Palm Beach Chapter Luncheon

Ted Peroulaitis, Judy Schrafft, South African park ranger Jim Currie, David Mink, and Elena Peroulaitis.



MICHIGAN

Michigan Chapter members and guests celebrated the holiday season with a lovely brunch.



NAPLES

Naples Chapter Holiday Gala

Richard Gregory, Rachael Jacks, Marian Nissen, Robert Alcock, Sophie Classen, and Rosemary Bonham-Smith



UNITED KINGDOM

United Kingdom Chapter House of Lords Dinner



(Left to Right) Jamie Thompson, Jayne White, Lord Richard Faulkner of Worcester, Chapter President Helen Jenkins, Keith Cook, Carole Green, Ian Quinn, Matthew Tiley, and Colin Rogers

PACIFIC-NORTHWEST

Pacific-Northwest Chapter Holiday Party



Front Row: Marilyn McGrath – Chapter Treasurer, Tess Krasowski, Maria Mason, and Caroline Farrell. Back Row: Johann Duenhoelter, Stefan Krasowski, Jim Farrell – Chapter President, Will Mason, Douglas Nickson, and Geoff McGrath

DESERT

Desert Chapter Fall Meet and Greet



Linda and Frank Gruber, Robert Guiler, Art Bradley, Michael Licamele and Kay Ahern

chapter highlights

PACIFIC-SOUTHWEST

Pacific-Southwest Chapter Holiday Party



Eric Baker, Virginia Foster, Sheila Purdy, Michael Puldy, George Beebe, Kathleen Beebe, Cristull Hasson, Lynn Payette, John Berg, and Arthur Hammons

NEW YORK

New York Metro members and guests celebrated the holidays at Church of Sweden in New York City



SINGAPORE

The Singapore Chapter held their mid-year dinner in Goodwood, Singapore





WELCOME *aboard*s

THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE WERE ELECTED TO OUR "GREAT CIRCLE" BY OUR BOARD OF GOVERNORS

FRAN CUCCHIARA



When not traveling, Fran spends her time between homes in Estero, Florida, and Kennebunkport, Maine. She enjoys a wide variety of activities, including golf and a devotion to her family that includes eight grandchildren. She is a student of genealogy, actively tracing her family roots to the British Isles and parts of Eastern Europe. Her husband, Vincent, is also a new member of the Club.

VINCENT CUCCHIARA



Vincent has a professional career in long-term healthcare in which he held a number of senior positions at organizations such as Massachusetts General Hospital. He founded the Grantham Group which was awarded the "Governor's Citation" for excellence in operating affordable assisted living communities. Vincent along with his wife, Fran, have traveled extensively around the world. The Cucchiaras will join the Naples Chapter.

NICHOLAS FANG



With a Masters degree from Oxford University and a background in journalism, Nicholas joined Singapore's oldest think tank, The Singapore Institute of International Affairs. He is currently the Director of Security and Global Affairs for this top-ranked organization. A former national athlete, he has represented Singapore in fencing and triathlon. He also served a term in the Singapore Parliament.

MICHAEL FAYHEE



Michael is a pilot who flew his own plane, a Piper Malibu Meridian, around the world. In 2009, he started and ended in Chicago with numerous stops on the way, including Pakistan, Japan, Vietnam, and Alaska. He learned about the Circumnavigators Club from First Vice President Dan Peterson, also a pilot, who shares the same hangar at Chicago Executive Airport. An attorney, Michael lives in Illinois and joins the Chicago Chapter.

JAY FOONBERG



Living in Beverly Hills, California, Jay is an attorney, CPA, author and lecturer. Among his many accomplishments, he has run marathons on all seven continents and in more than 60 cities. He is also an experienced scuba diver with dives in many spots around the world. As a traveler, he has visited 153 countries. He has also written 13 books and articles in many newspapers and magazines. He joins the Pacific-Southwest Chapter.

CRISTIANE FUHRER



Cristiane lives in San Diego, California with her husband Henry who is also a Circumnavigator. She is a dietetic technician with many years of experience providing nutrition counseling to patients with diverse social, cultural and economic backgrounds. She speaks three languages including Spanish and Portuguese. She joins the Pacific-Southwest Chapter.

SUSAN GIBBONS



Born in the United States, Susan lived as a child and young adult in France and Switzerland which she still considers "home". After a long career with IBM, she retired to Naples, Florida, where she is engaged in many civic, cultural and charitable organizations, including the Cultural and Performing Arts Center in which she serves on its board. She joins the Naples Chapter.

LACEY KING



Lacey is retired in Naples, Florida, after a long career with the U.S. State Department. She served in a number of U.S. embassies around the world. A graduate of William & Mary College, where she honed her writing skills, she has written numerous magazine articles and recently her first novel *The Snitch: an Agent without a Badge*, based on a true story. In Florida, she has received honors for her philanthropic service. She joins the Naples Chapter.

IRWIN KUDMAN



Born in Brooklyn, New York, Irwin is a physicist with a number of patents and technical awards. He has written extensively in technical journals. He now lives in Palm Beach, Florida, and the story of his recent circumnavigation is featured in this issue of The LOG. He joins the Palm Beach Chapter.



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NANCY LEASIA



After many years in Northern California, Nancy now lives in Bonita Springs, Florida. She and her husband Richard maintain a second home in Saratoga, CA. She had a long, distinguished career as an attorney and has been involved with a number of charitable and community organizations. She joins the Naples Chapter.

JACK McCARTHY



Living in London UK, Jack was a Circumnavigators Foundation Scholar in 2014. He now pursues a career in private equity in which he specializes in start-up companies. Jack's passion for travel has continued and he says he looks forward to experiencing new cultures. He joins the UK Chapter.

SUSAN NELSON



Living in Northbrook, Illinois, Susan is a Spanish teacher and educator with numerous honors and awards to her name, including Chicago Distinguished Teacher. She grew up near the Cuban barrio in a small neighborhood in Chicago. This began her passion for learning foreign languages and cultures. Susan loves to travel and her motto is "Before it is my turn to leave the planet, I intend to see it". She joins the Chicago Chapter.

RENYEONG SNG



With degrees from Yale University and London School of Economics, Mr. Sng works in Singapore as Portfolio Manager for Temasek Holdings, a sovereign wealth firm specializing in investments. Previously, he was a distinguished military officer with the Singapore Armed Forces. He joins the Singapore Chapter.

FRANK STERDJEVICH



Born in Serbia, Frank and his family escaped in 1965 as political refugees. He earned degrees in international banking and finance and went on to have a long career in banking. During his career, he traveled extensively to five continents and more than 40 countries, where he was able to capitalize on his ability to speak seven languages. He now lives in Naples, Florida with his wife Deborah and son Alexander who he hopes to give the same opportunity to see the world. Frank joins the Naples Chapter.

EUGENE TAN



Mr. Tan is Director of the National Gallery and Singapore Art Museum, both important landmarks in Singapore. With a PhD in art history from the University of Manchester, he has been involved in numerous art projects in his country. He joins the Singapore Chapter.

PAUL WEBSTER



A native of Minnesota, Paul served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War. After the war, he worked for and became president of his family's business in hardwood lumber manufacturing. He traveled the world during his career, visiting every country in Europe. He also lived in Iran for two years in the 1970s, helping to build a railroad for the Shah. He has traveled to remote regions as a result of his lifelong passion for high mountain hunting. He and his wife share their time between homes in Naples, Florida and Minnesota. He joins the Naples Chapter.

STELLA WENNER



Born in Germany, Stella moved to the U.S. and was educated in Illinois. Her subsequent job with Trans World Airlines gave her the opportunity to travel and appreciate the diversity of world cultures. Her husband Hardy, who recently passed away, was a Circumnavigator. Stella is involved in many civic and charitable organizations in Naples, Florida, where she now lives. She joins the Naples Chapter.

JOANNE WYSS



Joanne is now retired after a distinguished business career. She and her husband Karl, also a new Circumnavigator, live in Naples, Florida, where she is engaged in a number of important civic organizations. Among her many activities, she was founder and past Chair of *Books for Collier Kids*. She has received several awards for her leadership.

KARL WYSS



With degrees from Zurich University and New York University, Karl was the Chairman and CEO of several companies. He and his wife Joanne traveled the world and until recently had a home in Switzerland. Karl has visited more than 75 countries. He is the Past President of the Naples International Men's Club. The Wysses join the Naples Chapter.

Goodwill Connection.... *Around the World*



The purpose of the Goodwill Connection is to bring together Circumnavigators as they globe-trot. Please consider adding your name to the list of greeters – those who will welcome members to their city. Contact Tracy Sancilio at Headquarters, (201) 612-9100 or e-mail: club@circumnavigators.org to sign up to serve on the Connection. Should you be planning a trip to a city where there is amember, please contact Tracy with your arrival and departure dates and the hotel where you will be staying. She will be happy to contact the member for you.

AUSTRALIA - Queensland, Brisbane
GREECE - Athens, Kifissia
CANADA - British Columbia/ Vancouver
SINGAPORE - Singapore
SOUTH AFRICA - Cape Town
THAILAND - Bangkok
UNITED KINGDOM- London

U.S.A.

ARIZONA - Scottsdale, Sedona
CALIFORNIA - La Jolla, San Francisco
FLORIDA - Palm Beach, Miami, Naples
ILLINOIS - Chicago, Elmhurst, Northbrook, Winnetka
MICHIGAN - Detroit
NEW MEXICO - Albuquerque, El Prado
NEW YORK - New York
PENNSYLVANIA - Philadelphia
SOUTH CAROLINA - Hilton Head
WASHINGTON DC
WASHINGTON- Seattle

International President David Mink and his wife Dottie visited the Pacific-Northwest and Pacific-Southwest Chapters in the Fall. Members welcomed them to their Chapter event where David made a slide presentation on Club history and traditions.



Paul Buescher, Dottie Mink, Patricia Buescher and David Mink



Henry Fuhrer, Cris Fuhrer, David Mink, Dottie Mink, Ken Mink, Kathleen Beebe, George Beebe, Virginia Foster, Arthur Hammons, Lynn Payette, and Shelia Purdy



Past President Esther Dyer attended the House of Lords dinner in London and was welcomed by UK Chapter President Helen Jenkins and member Lord Richard Faulkner.

SCUTTLE BUTT



Second Vice President **Brad Vogel (New York Metro)** worked for more than a year to co-name a Brooklyn, NY street, "Walt Whitman Way", in honor of the famous American poet's Bicentennial this year. Brad is a member of the

Walt Whitman Initiative and helped coordinate national 200th birthday celebrations in honor of Whitman's poetry. "There were many leaves of grass out there who helped make this year of celebrations happen!" Brad noted.



Photo credit: Eric Conrad, Walt Whitman Initiative

Edwin Galkin (New York Metro) made his third around-the-world flight, raising funds and awareness for Alzheimer's disease, in his single-engine airplane in 2018. He is now planning a fourth circumnavigation in his Cessna 210, departing New Jersey in late March and returning in May. This trip will also help raise funds for Alzheimer's disease awareness. Along with his co-captain Mark Seeman, they will fly the northern hemisphere with their longest leg being about 1500 nautical miles (1726 statute miles) — from Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates to Nagpur, India.

Because of the long distances involved, they will be carrying an additional 120 gallons in a custom designed fuel bladder, or ferry tank. This will require removing four seats in the aircraft. This will give them

a range of over 2,000 nautical miles if totally filled.

Circumnavigators are encouraged to support Ed's mission. His website will be posted on the Club site.

Luck to you, Ed and Mark!

Stephen Carmichael (Rochester, Minnesota) was selected as the Honored Member for 2020 by the American Association of Anatomists (AAA). Among his contributions to the AAA was being Editor of Clinical Anatomy, the official journal of the AAA. He took the publication to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro on his third (and last!) climb to the top, proving that Clinical Anatomy is the top journal in Africa!



The **Singapore Chapter** was honored in December

by being invited to ring the gong to open the market at the Singapore Stock Exchange (SGX). This the same as ringing the bell at the New York Stock Exchange but, given the Singapore culture, they bang a Chinese gong. The event was televised live on CNBC.

Chapter President **Michael Palmer** presided over the event and made a speech explaining the Circumnavigators Club, its inception, history and principles and the essence of our Singapore Chapter. Invited on stage to join him were **Graham Bell** (Vice President) and **Mr. Ang Hao Yao** who is a stalwart of the Chapter and has served in many different positions on the Chapter Board. He is currently in charge of International Relations. They were hosted in the gong banging by **Mr. Tan Boon Gin**, CEO SGX. Eighteen Chapter members were in attendance to witness the event.



THROUGH MY LENS

TIPS FOR A TRAVELING PHOTOGRAPHER

VANTAGE POINTERS

BY
CONTRIBUTING
EDITOR
ROGER
WEATHERBURN-BAKER



Most of us have done it many times; taken a picture of someone standing in front of a famous monument or a glorious view. There's nothing wrong with that but have you ever tried changing the angle or point of view for a different effect? Happily, a number of our members have, and with great results! I've used some of their photos here to illustrate a few ideas you might want to try.



LOOKING DOWN

David Mink looked down at a group of brightly colored watercraft nestled side-by-side below him and saw the chance to capture the brilliantly vivid photo seen here. He noticed the boats were tethered around a jetty in an interesting circular pattern, which wouldn't have been seen from almost any other angle, and kept the unusual grouping centered in his lens.

LOOKING UP

How often do we stop to look up with camera in hand? Perhaps, not enough. Yet, looking up for a change can yield all kinds of interesting possibilities. As I found shooting straight up standing under ancient Roman pillars in Jerash, Jordan shown here. The Eiffel Tower is one of the most instantly recognizable structures in the world. We all know what it looks like, right? So, it doesn't really matter if we leave the top off. Molly Morgan did just that, opting for a refreshing shot of only the base of the famous tower but she included the landscape it dwarfed. By doing so, she captured a powerful sense of its towering bulk, without actually including it.



I love the shot looking up at a palm tree strung with lights. The imaginative double-take image of a photo within a photo taken by **Lisa Brighton** turns an ordinary image into something much more memorable.

LOOKING HIGHER

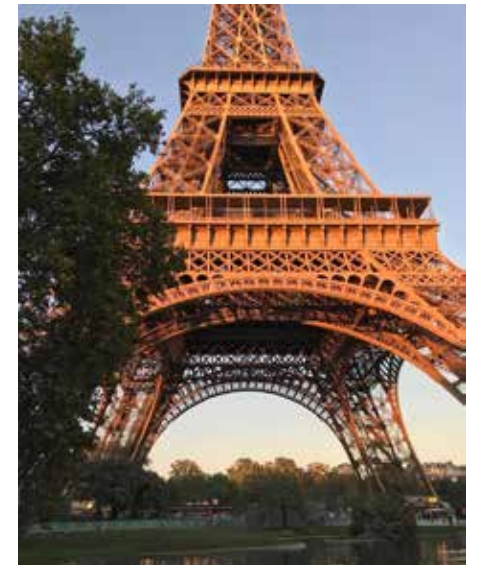
Getting higher than your subject will often give you an unusual perspective, sometimes a surprising one. Standing on steps, a low wall or even a chair will work, but the higher you go the more your lens can include in the picture. If you're nervous of heights, a creative setup on terra firma can make all the difference, like **Anne Swinford's** fun photo of a side-by-comparison of elephant and human toenails and her close up of a megga pharaoh's foot seriously in need of a pedicure!

LOOKING PAST

Shooting in profile is another little used but interesting perspective. Shown here is a shot of the side of a medieval dwelling in the 11th century village of Carennac in southwest France. I took it at an angle to show details of the texture of its construction, while also including its place in the wider context of its neighbors.

LOOKING UNDER

Seeing the Grand Canal in Venice from a gondola under the Rialto Bridge, for example, offers an unusual perspective of a world-class view and stimulates additional interest. Like **Ann Swinford's** elephant photo seen here. It looks like we're right there peeking out from under the vast belly of one of the herd!



LOOKING OVER

Similarly, taking a shot from over the shoulders of others who're also looking at the same subject as you has the wonderful payoff of putting the viewer right in the picture.

LOOKING THROUGH

Putting some feature in the foreground gives your subject a sense of perspective and scale. This effect can also be used to frame a subject, like Downton Abbey was seen between leafy branches of trees at the opening of every episode. **Lisa Brighton** gives us another evocative image shown here, this time a wide expanse of sea glimpsed through the spokes of a bicycle. Isn't the image effortlessly reminiscent of summer bike rides to the beach? Thanks to everyone who sent in their photos helping to prove that sometimes, less is more.





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Club Merchandise



Contact Executive Director Tracy Sancilio at
club@circumnavigators.org or
go to our website www.circumnavigators.com
to purchase to following items:

Ladies Scarf - \$ 25 | Hat (Black or White) - \$20 | Red Tie - \$25 | Club Badge - \$50

CLUB HEADQUARTERS The Yale Club of New York City

50 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, New York 10017



The Yale Club is International Headquarters for the Circumnavigators Club allowing members to utilize the facility for private dining, special events, cocktail receptions and meetings. The club offers three restaurants including the elegant Roof Dining Room, the pub-like Grill Room and the Yale-inspired Tap Room. Members will have access to these rooms by checking in at the front desk and letting the staff know you are a Circumnavigator Club member. There are also well-appointed guest rooms available from studios to suites. When booking an overnight stay, guests have full access to the club including all three restaurants, a full-service library, and a fitness facility with a swimming pool, squash courts, cardio equipment and freeweights. Once a reservation is made, a personal credit card is required upon arrival. Reservations for overnight accommodations must be made through the Executive Director – please contact headquarters at 201-612-9100 or email at club@circumnavigators.org. Please do not call the Yale Club directly.