

Another Adventure for Ruth and Glenn: Lewis and Clark and Some Beautiful Places.

Ruth and I are both interested in the adventures of Lewis and Clark and have read quite a bit about their incredible trip during 1803-1806. Over the years, we have visited some of the landmark places on their trip. In 1972, we visited the Gateway to the West Museum in St. Louis, which honors Jefferson for conceiving the idea of a route to the Pacific Ocean (from the Mississippi River to the Missouri River and finally joining the Columbia River), and, Lewis and Clark, who explored this proposed route through what is now the northwestern United States. In 1996, Ruth and I took our two oldest grandsons, Dan and Andrew on a three-week trip through the northwest, where we visited the Mandan area (now Bismarck, North Dakota), where Lewis and Clark spent the first winter at Fort Mandan on their trip westward. (Note: In 1803, the only western areas which had recorded longitude and latitude were St. Louis, the mouth of the Columbia River and Fort Mandan). In 1998, Ben Bassham and I went to the first inter-league baseball game in St. Louis and following the game went to St. Charles, Missouri to see where Lewis and Clark began their adventure. We hiked some of the trail and drove along the Mississippi River to see where they towed their boats upstream. And finally, last year, Ruth and I traveled to Astoria, Oregon to see Fort Clatsop, where the Lewis and Clark expedition spent the second winter at the mouth of the Columbia River preparing for their return to St. Louis and the east. The only major link missing with regard to seeing the geography of the Lewis and Clark trip seemed to us to be the area that Lewis and Clark had to portage around at Great Falls of Montana. We got our airline tickets and planned a week long trip west during the second week of October 2001. The events of September 11, 2001 weighed on our minds with regard to travel for a few days, but we decided to follow our President's call to "get our lives back to normal" and departed October 10th.

We arrived at the airport at 5:30am for our 7:30 flight and were glad we had arrived early. We were selected to have our bags checked in detail, which took an additional half-hour. When we arrived at the gate we were informed that our plane was broken and that a new one was on its way from Pittsburgh. We departed Cleveland 1 hour late and had only 3 minutes to make our connection in Minneapolis. We were the last people to board the Great Falls flight! As we were discussing our happiness that we wouldn't have to wait until 8:00pm for the next flight to Great Falls, but feeling bad

that our luggage wouldn't make the trip with us, Ruth noticed a man running our luggage to the plane! The first big hurdle had been cleared.

We arrived on time (10:30am), picked up our rental car and headed for the brand new Lewis and Clark Interpretive Museum on the banks of the Missouri. It is a beautiful building and contained the entire story of this epic trip. There are replicas of the boats and equipment they used, and individuals dressed as characters of the period told us stories and involved us in the Lewis and Clark adventure. This is definitely the best Lewis and Clark Museum I have visited...better than the Gateway Museum and eons better than the St. Charles Museum housed in a small home! Following the tour, we drove 15 miles to see the falls. It appeared to be a road not traveled by visitors and we soon saw why. Practically speaking, there are no falls. A large dam was built atop the "Great Falls" (the middle of the five falls), covering the western two falls under a reservoir and exposing the eastern two falls. We could see that the Great Falls would have been indeed "great" to see in earlier days, but today most of the water is diverted and one can only imagine what the falls once were. We saw paintings of these falls and they were splendid...probably eighty feet high and several hundred feet wide...the water not spilling over the top, like the Niagara Falls, but cascading over huge rock for hundreds of feet to the Missouri river floor. Lewis said that a foamy-fog rose several hundred feet above these magnificent falls. It was disappointing to see what man has done to this landmark, but it was easy to see why the twenty-one mile portage around these falls that took nearly six weeks to complete. The men turned the boats into wagons by making wheels and axles from cottonwood trees, and pulled them up and over the rough terrain. We were glad we got to see the location of this incredible feat. We then visited the CM Russell Museum of Western Art. Art historian Bassham said this was a "must see" and he was right. It is a modern facility with paintings and sculpture by many famous western artists. There were lots of letters by CM, as I call him, and I would like to suggest that many of you might wish to start collecting the emails and stories I send you for my museum! We took a little tour of the city and had dinner at an Italian restaurant owned by an Italian family who had just moved to Great Falls after spending several years operating a restaurant in New York City. The first day we flew 1750 miles and drove 60miles.)

Thursday. We headed for West Yellowstone, Montana a drive of 270 miles. The scenery changed from hills to low mountains, buttes and valleys. We drove back and forth across the Missouri River many times on our way

through the towns of Townsend and Three Forks. Most of the trip was at an altitude of four thousand feet. We also passed over the Madison, Galatin and Jefferson Rivers, explored and named by Lewis and Clark. We arrived at West Yellowstone, so named because it is the Western entrance to Yellowstone National Park, in the late afternoon and checked out the cowboy and western stores, before watching the Indians lose the playoff opener to Seattle 5-1, from our Stage Coach Inn. It was a leisurely and wonderful second day. Today we drove 270 miles.

Friday. It snowed three inches over night and there was some worry that the Yellowstone might be closed, as it was the day before. We drove to the western gate and the rangers let us in after checking our tires and warning us that the northern loop was closed. We drove to Old Faithful, past many bubbling geysers and snow covered evergreen trees. It was like a winter fairyland. We encountered one Buffalo Jam, as they call them, of 35 bison (Bison Jam just doesn't sound as good!). At Old Faithful, we talked to a couple from Morgantown, West Virginia...and of course told them that our grandson Dan was a freshman there. Old Faithful delivered right on time and we were off to see the Grand Canyon of Yellowstone. The ice was very bad and half way there we decided to turn around and head to the southern entrance. As we arrived at the southern entrance, the park was being closed and they told us we had made the correct decision. We were relieved to get to roads, which were free of ice. Our trip to Jackson was very beautiful, and surprisingly free, of almost any traffic. Entering the Tetons is a once in a lifetime experience. The mountains are jagged, tall and snow covered. As you enter Jackson Hole (named by the Indians because the valley was like a hole in the mountains), you see the valley (probably 10 miles wide and forty miles long) surrounded by these breath-taking mountains. The valley is undisturbed by private or commercial buildings, and you can see elk by the hundreds. During this time of year, the grazing area is brown. Jackson Lake is to the north and a river winds its way down the valley towards Jackson. I hope each of you get to experience this drive. Jackson is at the foot of several ski slopes, and this small town is quaint, but commercial. This was our favorite drive on the trip. Today, we drove 140 miles.

Saturday. Early in the morning we drove north from Jackson to hike. We stopped at a trailhead ten miles north of Jackson and hiked several miles up into the Tetons to a small lake. While standing by the lake, we met a retired physician and his wife who had recently moved to Jackson from Phoenix. They both had graduated from Ohio State...and we agreed that the

Bucks would “blow the Badgers out later in the day.” As we left them, he shouted to us to remember that the Bucks usually lose at least one game a year when they are heavily favored. He was right of course, OSU losing 20-17, after leading 17-0. After the hike, we drove to the Summit at Artist’s Point to observe the entire length of Jackson Hole, and then on to the Jackson Lake Lodge for lunch. This lodge is situated on the east side of Jackson Lake, and offers a perfect view of the lake and the mountains. The lake was down about 15 feet (The waitress said that the lake was down because Idaho controls the lake and that Idaho potato farmers use the water for irrigation. It doesn’t seem plausible that Idaho would control a lake in the middle of Jackson Hole, Wyoming, but who knows...we all have our problems!) After lunch, we visited The National Museum of Wild Life Art, the most beautiful museum we have ever seen. It is new, constructed entirely of Arizona limestone, and blends into a mountain on the western side of the valley. The paintings, photographs and sculptures were outstanding. (You might want to visit their web site at www.wildlifeart.org for a look at the building and some of the art.) Before dinner, we watched the Indians win big and OSU lose a game they were supposed to win. Since it was off-season, we had a suite, complete with a fireplace and whirlpool...thus the OSU loss was less stressful, and the Indians win much nicer! Today, we drove 80 miles.

Sunday. We drove to Park City, Utah (our longest drive), but again the scenery was different and beautiful. We drove through ranch lands, small towns and rolling mountains. The trees on the mountainsides had changed colors and each new mountain was worth another picture, which we will be showing each of you at every opportunity. We stopped at one historical marker in the little town of St. Charles, Idaho (population 100), and discovered that Gutzon Borglum, the sculptor who sculpted Mount Rushmore was born and raised there. We climbed a final mountain range and arrived at Park City, Utah. Ruth and I wanted to go to Park City, to visit Mary Silversweig, a good friend. Mary’s husband, Stan, was a seminar colleague of mine in the D’Agastino-Silversweig Entrepreneurial Institutes for many years before his untimely death four years ago. Mary and Stan and their three young children had just moved to Park City four months before Stan died of a perforated aorta. Mary and the kids decided to stay in Park City, and have thrived in their new environment. We spent the evening talking to Mary at our hotel. Today, we drove 302 miles.

Monday. We spent the day with Mary and a highlight was having lunch at Robert Redford’s Sundance Ski Resort, about forty miles from Park

City. Bob, as I call him, was not there, but he had some nice people working for him. At night, we met Mary's new friend John, and had a lovely dinner with them in downtown Park City. We drove about 75 miles today.

Tuesday. After breakfast with Mary, we drove to Salt Lake City for our return flight home. We had driven over 950 miles, which didn't seem like much on the wide-open western highways. Our flight was to Houston and then on to Cleveland. The last two legs were 2792 flight miles for a total of 4542 flight miles. We arrived home at 11:30pm, one-half hour early. It was a great trip, and one Ruth and I highly recommend. It may seem to some of you that we spent a lot of time in the car, but the scenery was great and Ruth and I enjoyed this time together...no phones or mail...just beautiful scenery and talking about all of you. We made a couple of big decisions while we were gone. Nothing earth-shaking like Ben's decision to never drink cheap beer again that he made on one of his trips, but we decided that life is pretty good and that we will keep doing it as long as God says it is ok. We only talked about our kids and grandkids during the daylight hours, and several times at night. And oh yes, we did decide that Ruth needs new dining room furniture, and that I'm going to do my own leaves and gardening as long as I'm able. The decision about leaves and gardening will enable us to partially pay for the decision about Ruth's furniture. Life is good...and much more beautiful than even Montana, Wyoming, Idaho or Utah.

The End

October, 2001