



CHRISTMAS TIME NEWS

Charlie and Marilyn's Year

- 2015

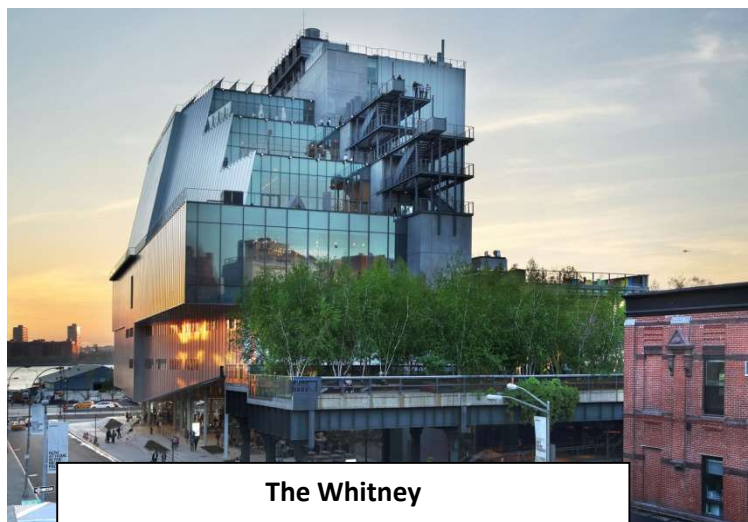
Another Year? Already?

Whoever said, "Time Flies when you're having fun" was right! In spite of being relatively uneventful, it seems the days were all filled.

Health: Charles: After pneumonia in 2013 and atrial fibrillation in 2014, I'm happy to report no major health concerns for either of us (so far) this year. Did have a cataract removed by the "little girl" who lived next door in the 1990's. Excellent results!

Marilyn: A small scar on a knee attests to a successful arthroscopic surgery. Otherwise, "Fit as a Fiddle", whatever that means!

Travel: When the year started, we'd about decided to sell the motorhome and do any travel by car or plane. While trying to find a winter vacation place in Florida that was really "handicapped accessible", we changed our minds. Come January, we plan to head South in the old Bounder, at least one more time!



The Whitney

New York and Boston



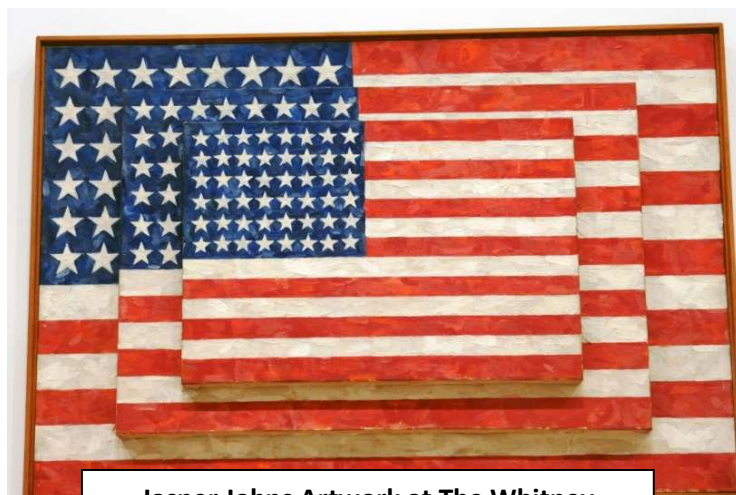
Lower Manhattan Skyline from Ellis Island

A new adventure on this trip was taking the Amtrak from New York to Boston. Since Penn Station was only two blocks from our hotel we attached everything possible to my wheelchair, Marilyn pulled our two suitcases, and we "walked"! Finding Penn Station was easy, but finding an accessible entry, not so much. I guarded the baggage while Marilyn went down the escalator to find someone who knew where the elevators were hidden.

She came back with vague directions about going back outside, up the block to a long ramp leading down to an entrance to Madison Square Garden on one side and Penn Station on the other. We did find it after a bit, but were a little chagrined that access for wheelchairs was not better marked.

Even on a Sunday morning the station was jam packed with passengers of every nationality, color and dress. Fortunately, there were plenty of helpful "redcaps" ready to give directions, times and lend assistance. On weekdays the

Early June found us in one of our favorite places, New York, New York, the town so nice they named it twice! The tall building is One World Trade Center. It had just opened, but we could not get tickets for the observation deck. They were booked solid for a month in advance. Museum of American Art. It sits next to the Hudson River and the south end of the "High Line" a 1.45-mile-long linear park on an elevated section of a disused New York Central Line spur. It's visited by about five million folks a year. From the decks on the upper floors you can get a great view of lower Manhattan.



Jasper Johns Artwork at The Whitney

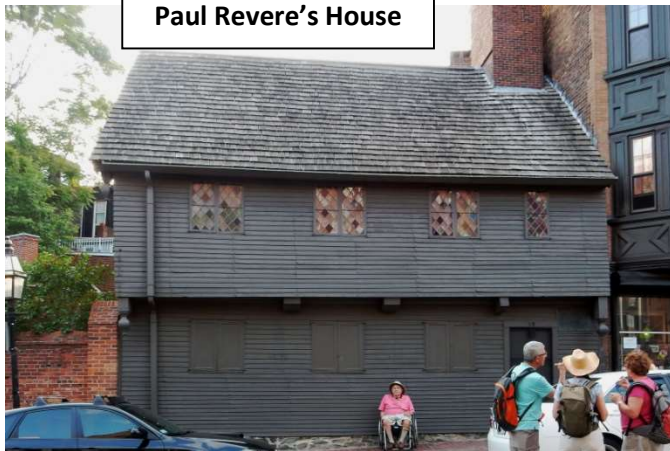
station accommodates 650,000 passengers aboard 1,200 trains! That's right, 1,200 trains! It was hard to believe we were there on a day of "light" traffic.

The train ride was uneventful, but revealed picturesque coastal bays and estuaries, and generally scenic towns and residential developments. Boston itself seemed very different from Manhattan. Many of the streets are narrow and go winding off in miscellaneous directions. A country boy like me would be very uncomfortable trying to drive there. We used busses, cabs and Charlie Cards (*Did he ever return? No he never returned And his fate is still unlearn'd He may ride*

forever 'neath the streets of Boston He's the man who never returned) on the subway system to get around.

In the **picture on the right** I'm sitting in front of Paul Revere's house. We passed the place twice before we figured out this was it. There were no signs or other markers on it, just our GPS telling us we were there (stupid). We'd asked an employee at a bike shop three blocks away where the house was and had no idea. Interesting how "ignorant" some people are of their own surroundings.

Another historic site was the U.S.S. Constitution, "Old Ironsides"! She was in drydock, but we got a good look at her from all sides. So much our nation's history in such a small area is awesome, in the truest sense of the word.



The masts had been taken down for the refitting. When fully outfitted she is a sight to behold. The thought of all those sailors scrambling around in the rigging a hundred or more feet above the water as the ship rolls in heavy seas makes me seasick just thinking about it.



Speaking of sailors working in the rigging, here's Cadet Marilyn checking out the rigging model in the Constitution's museum. Standing on a rope while working with your hands is difficult, even in dry, windless and stationary conditions. Imagine doing it 150 ft. above the deck with lightning, rain and strong winds blowing! Among the many attractions in

Boston, the Museum of Fine Art was the biggest surprise! In fact, we ended up spending three of our seven days in "Beantown" there. Not only was there an astonishing variety in their exhibits, the architecture was wonderful and galleries were user friendly. Entry into the five year old "Art of the Americas" wing was past a

wall with the major contributor's names. To be in the top five required a donation of \$25,000,000 or more. The rest of the wall was covered in order of descending amounts, all the way down to \$250,000. Impressive!

Displays included Japanese classics, gold jewelry, fancy or unusual musical instruments (including a steel guitar made entirely of firearm parts) sculptures, Old Masters, including DiVinci and model ships. In a "Design" gallery the "Spartan Sled Radio" illustrates how product design can make it into a great museum.

While we did get some excellent sea food, one disappointment was not finding any Bluefish Pate' for Marilyn. She'd had it once before on a trip to Boston, but, alas, none could be found. Gives us an excuse to return!



U.S.S. Constitution "Old Ironsides"

Our Siblings, Kids and Grandkids



The Elk Hunt: My son Travis, Marilyn's son Matt and Grandson Jonah accompanied by a friend of Travis took to the mountains of south-central Colorado in October for a week of elk hunting. Their outfitter took them by horseback on a five hour, fourteen mile ride into the back country. It was Jonah's first adventure into such a remote area and, except for some very pointed reminders from his mom about not properly doing his homework while gone, it will provide a lifetime of memories. Unfortunately, the elk had not come down from the areas above timberline, several miles and about 1,500 ft. above the elevation where our guys were based.

Cayman Islands: Jordon's band of Hargroves took refuge from Missouri weather with a trip to the Caymans. They got to pet sting rays, swim with sea turtles, experience a scuba outfit, and generally have a great time enjoying the beautiful beach and sparkling water. The photo at right is a pictorial demonstration of the phrase "seeing eye to eye". Bet I know who won!



First Buck: Brooke started the year off and Jan. 3rd bagging her first nice buck. Her interests and talents range from hunting to poetry to Taekwondo to singing (she's in the school district's Honor's Choir) and dance. Marilyn and I are both blessed with bright, talented and well rounded grandchildren (and they're all good looking too!)

Robbins Family: Marilyn's daughter Mindy, husband Brad and granddaughter's Darby and Aubrey were here last month. Brad did some deer hunting and managed to bag what he called an eleven pointer (it had two straight spikes on its head). Mindy has just finished nursing school and starting her first full-time job since undertaking the Herculean effort involved with home schooling the girls twelve years ago. We had a great visit and look forward to seeing them again come January when we head for our wintering grounds in Florida. Their home in the West Palm Beach area is always a nice place to spend a few winter days!



Idaho

Hargroves: Bas and the kids made it back for visit this year. Syrena didn't get to come this time because of job responsibilities. Work interferes with so many things! This year's school pics illustrate how quickly Alex and Grace are growing. A year seems like such a long time to a kid, but, as us "over the hill" folks know, the more birthdays you have behind you the sooner the next one seems to come. On the upside, it's a scientifically proven fact that the more birthdays a person has, the longer they'll live!

While they were here we got to take them up to our little cabin north of town where they rode Jordon's Chariot (a trailer he built and pulls behind his 4-wheeler) and take the pontoon boat out for

a spin. It's always exciting for everyone, especially Brooke and Christopher, to see their Idaho cousins. Hope they can return again next year!

A St. Louis Weekend: Last Spring the two of us joined our friends Dick and Cindy Malon for a scrumptious dinner at Lombardo's Trattoria close to Union Station in St. Louis and a performance of "The Book of Mormon" at the Peabody Opera House, a first for all of us. The next day Marilyn and I discovered the City Museum which consists largely of repurposed architectural and industrial objects, housed in the former International Shoe building in the [Washington Avenue Loft District](#). It's an "eclectic mixture of children's playground, funhouse, surrealistic pavilion, and architectural marvel." Visitors are encouraged to touch, climb on, and play in the various exhibits. It's a wonderful mixture of whimsy and creativity that delights almost everyone!



SOME PHOTOS FROM CHARLIE'S SIDE OF THE FAMILY



Cousin Barry & Akiko Hamlin – San Carlos, CA



Cousin Carol Hargrove Newland & David – Granite Bay, CA



Cousin Pat Hamlin Runnels & Granddaughter Kali

AND SOME FROM MARILYN'S



Niece Dawn Cates of Joplin just announced engagement to Jason! Lucky Guy!!



Grandson Jonah & son Matt on their Colorado elk hunt



Granddaughters Aubrey and Darby Robbins – Royal Palm Beach, FL

Best Wishes to You All for a Safe, Happy & Healthy 2016!



Charlie and Marilyn