

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings from Ontario! I am sorry I missed the last issue, but I was asked to enter my seven frame "Rhodesia" exhibit in a show and it took me some time on the computer to get it all re-assembled.

When our two children were growing up, we used a tent trailer to explore the eastern seaboard of the continent, from Prince Edward Island all the way to South Carolina and really enjoyed this means of seeing some great scenery. Later, when the kids were grown up, we had flown to Portland for the ATA show and seen wonderful scenery from the windows of the plane, which we determined to investigate! The chance came in 1985 with the show being held in Reno, Nevada, so we decided to fly to San Francisco and rent a car to get to the show.

Three days in the city gave us an opportunity to ride on cable cars, take a bus tour round the city, visit a giant Redwood forest and have a boat trip to see Alcatraz and the Bay Bridge. Then we rented a car and were off to Reno, through Sacramento and over the Sierra Nevada via Donner Pass at 7,000 feet and really spectacular with Donner Lake south of the highway.

The city of Reno was certainly an eye opener—slot machine heaven! The hotel was fairly old and was given the name "early makeshift" by one of the ATA members, since it had recently undergone some remodelling.

Thursday June 20th was Barbara's birthday and we had breakfast with Sally and Jerry Husak. We asked if they would like to go for a drive later and we went to Carson City for lunch, then through the mountains to Virginia City, the centre of the old days of the Gold Rush. In the evening, I was off to my second Board meeting and it was interesting to find the number of subjects that came under discussion, with recommendations for future show sites.

The show was actually held in the Pioneer Hall, across the road from the hotel and it proved to be a great place to hold it with no slot machines. There were 33 dealers in attendance, and 33 exhibits in 200 frames, all of them (strangely) from "out-of-state!" It was interesting to note that many of the exhibits were more advanced than in some of the earlier shows and therefore more interesting.

One of the great things about the ATA crowd is the camaraderie, best illustrated by the usual gathering on the Friday evening in one room that has been set aside for wine and cheese and lots of conversation!

The Awards banquet was buffet style and before we started Jerry Husak introduced Margaret Hackett, a delightful lady from New Jersey, to present the annual Distinguished Topical Philatelist Award and she read out my name! Well, I am sure my jaw dropped at least six inches, but I was surprised and pleased to receive the award.

The Grand Award went to "Nuremberg: Tale of a City," by Ingeburg Fisher. The Reserve Grand went to "The History of Railways: Steam Train Era," by John Griffiths, and the Biology Unit Award went to "The World of Owls," by Fred Ziemann. There was also a very good ten-frame exhibit on "Wine" that received a gold. Also, on Sunday evening, a group gathered for supper and discussion about the show.

Someone had told us that we should not leave the area without seeing Lake Tahoe, so on Monday we left and after a fairly steep climb with hairpin curves, we reached the lake and drove round to Emerald Bay, which was spectacular, since it was an emerald-coloured bay in a blue lake—amazing! We then headed south for Yosemite and went through Tioga Pass at 9,945 feet to see the Rainbow Falls, then on through Fresno to San Luis Obispo and back to San Francisco via Highway 1.

We now had a future planned of holidays to the annual ATA show to meet all the philatelic friends we had made and explore more of the American West!

Until next time...

Alan J. Hanks