

Staying Connected

PCC Retirees Association
April 2017

Snow Monkeys Are the Highlight of the Lamsons' Trip to Japan's Winter Festivals

By Alan Lamson

We were nearing the end of our National Geographic expedition, "Winter Festivals and Snow Monkeys," and still hadn't seen the snow monkeys. Nearly everyone who signed up for this trip said they did so to see the famous monkeys. Our group had already seen the lovely red crested "dancing" cranes in Hokkaido and the ice sculptures in Sapporo. Both were memorable, but nearly everyone was looking forward to seeing the snow monkeys bathing in their own hot spring.

Another draw for us was the tour expert leading this expedition, David Silverberg, whom we had met nearly a decade ago when he was leading tours in India. David is a most enthusiastic presenter—like the best teacher you ever had—who also happens to have a PhD in earth sciences from MIT. He knows his stuff about how volcanoes are formed—a major topic in Japan— along with much else about the geology of Japan and its ancient culture.

Finally the day arrived for visiting the snow monkeys. We were staying at the elegant Senjukaku resort in the village of Kanbayashi Onsen, within walking distance of Monkey Park.

About the word "onsen." Many of the villages in this area include the term "onsen" after the name of the village. "Onsen" refers to the natural hot springs that exist throughout Japan because of the large number of volcanoes throughout the islands. The spring water in the onsen is heated by molten rock from the volcanoes, of which there are over 100 active ones, including the famous Mount Fuji, call Fugi-san by the Japanese as if she were a living being. When we lived in Japan nearly 30 years ago, we had a view of Fugi-san from our kitchen window. The locals thought this a special gift.

Back to the onsen. The Japanese love their onsen where they can relax from the stresses of daily life. They think that being naked in an onsen enhances the value of what they call "naked communication." Being naked, they feel, breaks down barrier and promotes getting to know people. Business and educational groups often go to onsens for the benefits of this naked communication.

Tourists love them because they are both relaxing and so expressive of Japanese culture. Speaking of culture, there is a well-established ritual to follow before entering an

onsen. I won't go into all the details, but every onsen has a bathing area where you thoroughly wash your body before entering the water. Modesty prevails in the onsen.

A small towel in your room is for covering your private parts before entering the onsen. Once you are in the water, the towel is often wrapped around the head to keep it out of the water.

The Senjukaku Onsen, has both indoor and outdoor hot springs. The outdoor one is chilling with outdoor temperatures ranging from 20 to 30 degrees. But once in the onsen, you can't help but say "ah" as hot spring water quickly warms and relaxes the body. The outdoor onsen is especially attractive because of its naturalness: it is constructed of rock and is surrounded by trees, mostly pines, with clumps of snow on them that occasionally plop into the hot spring.

Besides its wonderful onsens (and meals), the Senjukaku Onsen is within walking distance of Jigokudani Park, home of the snow monkeys. Our guide Aki told us to be ready to leave the hotel by 8 a.m to beat the crowds that have turned the monkey park into an international tourist destination.

Before leaving the hotel, we put on the crampons (spiked iron plates) that we had been carrying since the start of our trip. Aki said that today we would definitely need them to walk the mile or so over an ice encrusted trail that led to the monkey park.

The trail was a challenge. For nearly an hour, Sheila and I slowly made our way over the frozen path that led to the monkey park. As we made our way up the trail, we were glad to have the crampons; the ice was slippery.

As we were returning from the park, a woman asked us: "where do you get those," pointing to the crampons on our feet. "National Geographic provided them," Sheila said. The woman looked disappointed as she, her husband and child uneasily made their way up the first slope.

I have wondered, and perhaps you as well, how these monkeys have managed to survive in this frozen environment. Primates like warm climates. To be sure, it is warm in the summer but the winters are harsh. Monkeys of the same species, macaques, can be found in the thousands all over Japan, but these macaques—about 150 of them- live farther north than any others in Japan. Indeed, they live farther north than any species of monkeys on earth. They have survived because their thick winter fur adapts them to the climate and because they have their own hot spring as well as regular feedings of grain. Both help them survive during the winter months.

By the time we had our fill of watching snow monkeys feeding, fighting, and grooming each other, streams of visitors began arriving along the same trail that we had walked earlier that morning. Time to leave. As we made our way down the trail, we passed large tourist groups, mostly Chinese, making their way to the monkey park.

We ended our trip with a shinkansen “bullet” train ride to Tokyo from Nagano. These trains are a marvel. They are fast and always on time. When they arrive at a station, you only have a few minutes to get on before the train leaves.

The trains are always clean and offer drinks and snacks along the way. Speaking on cell phones is not allowed, so the trains are quiet.

Most amazing is that they have never had an accident during the more than 50 years they have been running. Such efficiency eludes us in the U.S.

Another Japanese value eludes us these days: living in harmony with one’s neighbors. This is how the Japanese avoid the sort of bitter confrontations that are so much a part of life in the U.S. these days. How comforting to be in a country where harmony rules and onsens are plentiful.

The Courier’s 102 Years of Publishing a Printed Edition Comes to an End; Newspaper Goes Digital Only

The PCC Courier, which has been published weekly for more than 102 years, will no longer have a print edition. The Spring 2017 semester will be the first time since WWII that students and staff could not pick up the campus newspaper on Thursday mornings. Weekly publication was suspended for several weeks during the war, but resumed without interruption until a few weeks ago.

Nathan McIntire, the adviser for the Courier, decided that the paper should go digital only. McIntire and the paper’s editor-in-chief John Orona said, “they knew that the Courier’s print edition had to come to an end in order to keep up with the journalism industry. Smartphones have turned into a necessity at this time.

Both acknowledged that in order to expand the Courier’s readership, especially towards students, the website had to be the Courier’s focus. “Most students have grown up in this digital age,” McIntire said. “It’s become second nature for many of us.”

“Using a smartphone may be second nature to some, but there are still a lot of people out there who don’t spend all their time at the computer or looking at their cell phone,” said Mikki Bolliger, who was the Courier adviser for 35 years.

The Courier was one of the first colleges in the state to have an online edition. The Courier launched its web edition in 1996 before most people on campus even knew what the Internet was.

The Courier was publishing online before the L.A. Times, The Pasadena Star News and The Pasadena Weekly. Done Dennison, a Courier editor, taught herself HTML, and she figured out how to start an online edition using her home computer. At that time, the only computer on campus with an Internet connection was in the Library.

“Done did all the work by herself; I can’t believe how lucky we were to have her at just the right time,” Bolliger said.

“[Done] had read a lot about the Internet and was convinced that online newspapers were going to be a big part of the future. She certainly convinced me.”

She got the paper online for free, but it took at least 15 key strokes to type in the URL. I can say for certain that nobody involved with putting the Courier online ever expected it to replace the print edition of the paper.

Bolliger said that even though an argument can be made that a lot of people get their news online, print is not dead yet. She believes cutting out the print edition plunged a knife in the heart of the journalism program.

“I still believe the program should have both print and digital because students just working online miss a lot. I believe you learn so much more about teamwork and deadlines with print. When the paper is only online, a team isn’t working together in the same way to get the paper ready for the printer on a strict deadline.

Stories can come in at different times, and if a deadline is set and the student doesn’t make it, the story can just be posted later. That couldn’t happen in print.

The newspaper had to be complete and at the printer so it could be printed and dropped off on campus the next morning.

The adviser and the entire staff stayed until the paper was complete. Sometimes that meant being there until midnight, but they all had an investment in the product that would fill the newsstands the next day.

We knew people expected the paper to be on the stands by 8 a.m., and they picked it up to see what was going on. It was always fun to get the feedback from the faculty and staff the next day when the paper came out.

With digital, nobody knows exactly when the latest version of the paper will be complete and online. You also have to remember to go online to look at the paper.

Today, bound copies of the printed Courier dating back to 1915 fill the shelves in the Library archives. One has to wonder how all of the online stories will be preserved.

A Trip to Hyde Park to Visit FDR’s Library

By Elvio Angeloni

You would think our road trip through New England in October would have been all about the leaves. To some extent it was, although summer did last longer than expected.

But it was also a personal journey, visiting Ellis Island to see and better understand my parents' immigration experience (with their names on plaques acknowledging said fact), re-connecting with relatives in Boston, dining in the "Little Italy's" of New York and Boston, and even discovering "Elvio's Pizza" in North Conway, New Hampshire. (I had never known anyone else in the U.S. with my name.)

Of the many unexpected pleasures of the trip, one stood out as very enlightening, fascinating, and rewarding. I would encourage others to see it: the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library in Hyde Park, New York.

Just two hours north of the City on the Hudson River, the Library includes the Roosevelt family home, Eleanor's getaway cottage and even one of the Vanderbilt mansions.

The FDR LIBRARY itself was the first of an unbroken tradition of honoring and documenting every president and their administrations since.

In fact, it was FDR himself who conceived of establishing a complete historical record of his tenure as president and his motive was not particularly selfish.

He considered it a national tragedy that so much of the presidential record, from George Washington on, was being lost to the insects, rodents and the elements in general.

Roosevelt believed that historians and the American people should have access to everything relating to his presidency and his personal life. But when he asked his mother (who owned the house and the land) for permission to build the library she gave him a categorical "No!" There was no way she would put up with having a public building and a parking lot in her front yard.

But, having already had the plans drawn up, what was a son—the most powerful man on the planet at that— to do?

He just waited until Mother went on vacation to Europe before ordering the builders to get on with it. This is how Americans have come to enjoy the privilege of visiting presidential libraries strewn around the country.

The Library deals with such subjects as the Great Depression, the New Deal, World War II, the Japanese internment and Roosevelt's memorable speeches. One can also see famous memorabilia, such as FDR's wheel chair and the car he drove (with manual controls) on the house grounds.

The Roosevelt home has been maintained much as it was when the family lived there. You can still see most of the rooms, including the bedrooms, as they were originally

furnished, many of FDR's favorite possessions, ranging from his stamp collection to his paintings, to his bottled naval vessels.

I think it is safe to say that the place is 100 percent original—so authentic that Winston Churchill commented that being there was like staying in a typical American home.

Actually, of course, it was larger than “typical,” but rather modest by the standards of the wealthy during the earlier Gilded Age, exemplified by the aforementioned Vanderbilt mansion.

And don't forget: the only home that Eleanor Roosevelt ever owned (Center- Val-Kill) is but two miles away. She and Franklin lived somewhat separate, but equal lives.

After visiting the Roosevelt Library, I have to ask myself: What with the number of times I have passed through New York, City, why did I never before make it to Hyde Park?

In Memoriam

Marion Murphy, Co-Founder of Retirees Association

Marion Scott Murphy passed away on November 30th, 2016 at the age of 95. She contributed to Pasadena's institutions, notably Pasadena City College (PCC) where she was President of the Faculty Senate, Dean of Personnel, longtime teacher of English and co-founder of the PCC Retired Teachers Association. She also served on the Advisory Board of St. Philip School and as a lector at St. Philip Church.

Born on July 18, 1921 in Forsyth, Montana to Joseph Paulsen Scott (born as Josef Paulsen Skotte in Lesje, Norway) and Iza Scott (born in Kossuth, Iowa), she was raised in Portland, Oregon. Graduating Grant High School as valedictorian, she was given a full merit scholarship at nearby Marylhurst College. She earned her M.A. at Claremont College. Inspired by the sisters at Marylhurst, Marion found meaning in the Catholic Church and attended Mass daily.

In 1943, at age 21, she married Timothy Ignatius Murphy of San Francisco and became the mother of five children. Marion loved to travel, and even at age 68, she went river rafting with all her children, which seemed a metaphor for her strength, determination and ability to successfully navigate life's challenges.

Marion achieved her goal of visiting all seven continents including Antarctica and Africa. Her last international trip was taken to Egypt, sailing up the Nile River at age 88 in the company of two of her sons.

Marion's youngest child, Erin, became a nurse through PCC and graduated from California State University at Northridge. Erin suffered from debilitating diabetes and kidney difficulties. Erin, who never married, became Marion's constant companion, her

ailments inviting a mother's attention. They formed a unique mother-daughter team at the Pasadena Highlands Retirement Community until Erin passed away on Jan. 12, 2016.

John Dickerhoff Family's Tribute

Dear Family and Friends,

I am writing to family and friends of John Dickerhoff to let you know that he passed away on March 17, 2014. He took a fall and fractured his hip, and although he made it through the surgery, he was not able to recover. He lived a long life (he was 92) and was at his home at Belmont, surrounded by his family, when he died.

I was fortunate enough to be living near Dad for the last 10 years, and we became very close after Mom died. He lived a good life and I think he had few regrets. Belmont, the assisted living facility where he lived the past three years, was a caring and warm environment. He participated in the activities there and was well liked by everyone. Over the Memorial Day weekend, his whole family traveled to the redwoods north of Eureka to scatter his ashes in the same grove where we scattered Mom's, ten years ago. We mourned his passing, but celebrated his life. Dad didn't want a formal ceremony or memorial, so I think he would have been happy to have seen his family together, camping with him one last time in the redwoods.

Dad was a wonderful man, father, husband, and teacher. His talents were many and his family is lucky to have his jewelry, art, and woodworking as a constant reminder of just how wonderful he was. He will be missed. Sincerely, Brook, Lora, and Darryl

Vi Gaudin From LAC

Vi Gaudin, who worked for many years in the Learning Assistance Center, passed away on Nov. 29, 2016 at the age of 80.

Vi was one of those individuals who was always welcoming and friendly to everyone. She will always be remembered for her smile that greeted faculty, staff and students when they walked into the Center.

When new students came into the LAC for the first time, she was usually the first person they saw. Something that could be a scary experience, especially for foreign students, was a lot less frightening when Vi took them around and explained to them what they needed to do.

Vi is survived by her daughter, two granddaughters, a great-granddaughter and two sisters as well as several nieces and nephews.

Fay Chandler, English Professor and Mentor

Fay Chandler, a professor of English at PCC for more than 30 years, passed away recently at the age of 90. Fay was a gracious lady who was petite but strong. She was a well-respected member of the English department who served as a counselor and mentor to many of the department's new teachers. She was an individual who had the ability to connect with all types of people because she knew how to listen and how to instill confidence in others.

Fay also served as the adviser to Inscape, the college's literary magazine. Her students loved her, and sought her advice long after they left her classes.

Teaching and adventure were in her blood, and even after three decades in the classroom, Fay wanted more. So just months into her retirement, she signed up with Global Volunteers to teach high school students conversational English in Barlad, Romania. She was hoping to see the world and help others while she was doing it. And she certainly did that. The class in Romania was just the start of a grand adventure that took her to out-of-the-way places all around the world. She was still traveling and teaching in her 80s.

By the time she decided she was ready to settle down, Fay had visited the Ukraine, Peru, Crete, Xian, China, Hainan Island, China and Vietnam, where she taught English to hundreds of students over the years.

Betty Jackson, Nursing Professor

Betty Jackson, professor emeritus and former professor of nursing, passed away on Feb 6, 2017 just shy of her 90th birthday.

Betty wanted to be a nurse since she was a child. In high school, she took every prerequisite for attending nursing school, but she was barred from entering because of her race.

Although that was a setback, Betty opted to work as a nurse's aide to get experience in the field. She married, had four children and the family moved to Pasadena in 1961.

Jackson once again got a job as a nurse's aide, this time at Huntington Memorial Hospital. It was there that a supervisor suggested she take the exam to enter the PCC nursing program. Not only did she get in, scholarships paid her way—all from different funding sources. She graduated as a nurse in 1965, and joined the staff of Huntington Hospital. She worked there until 1971.

She went back to PCC as a teacher's aide and worked there while she earned BA and MA degrees so she could work full time as an instructor in the vocational nursing program. Betty was a wonderful addition to the nursing department. She was an inspiration to all of her students and everyone who knew her.

Betty was named Outstanding Vocational Educator, received an award for being An Outstanding Educator, and was a nominee for the Risser Teacher of the Year

Shirley Burt, Student Advocate, Led PCC Foundation

Shirley Louise (Cartwright) Burt, beloved board member of the Pasadena City College Foundation for almost 17 years, passed away on Sunday, February 12, 2017 at Huntington Memorial Hospital in Pasadena.

Shirley received her high school diploma from Pasadena Junior College (East Campus) under the 6-4-4 system. She was a member of the Fabiolian Club, whose purpose was to acquaint their members with opportunities in different fields of Nursing. Shirley received her Associate of Arts degree from PJC in 1943. She went on to get her Registered Nursing credentials from Huntington Memorial Hospital. Since that time Huntington Hospital's nursing program merged with the nursing program at Pasadena City College.

Shirley continued her education by attending the University of Southern California for her Bachelor of Science in Nursing and received her Masters Degree in Nursing from UCLA. Her career in nursing continued for almost 70 years.

Born and raised in Pasadena, Shirley was married to Gene Burt, a PCC alumnus and President of Omicron Mu Delta from 1945-1946, who predeceased her in 2003. She is survived by her son Chris Burt (also a PCC graduate) daughter-in-law Glenda Burt, and granddaughters Julie Burt of Altadena and Kelley Burt of Seattle, Washington.

The Pasadena City College Foundation has not just lost a board member; we have lost a solid and highly respected advocate for the students, faculty, and staff at PCC. Shirley always had the students of PCC foremost in her mind as she helped lead the Foundation for the past 20 years.