



Boston with Marie Trip Notes – plus NJ **June 19-23, 2011**

A photo journey of Boston

We started at the John Jeffries Bed and Breakfast on the edge of famous and wealthy Beacon Hill and on the end of the Longfellow Bridge. It originally was used as a hotel for the local University of Massachusetts Hospital. They offer a lovely location, within walking distance to so much of Boston, and reasonably priced



accommodations as well as a continental breakfast. We would stay four nights. I'd stayed here previously.

The first day of arrival I'm sure Marie was glad that Marty had fitted her for the best shoes money could buy. We went miles through the Commons, checking out street musicians, and over to the wharf and all after investigating our Beacon Hill neighborhood. Marie refused to walk the small lantern lit streets insisting it was "gang ridden" and we could get mugged! Wherever did she get that? I've walked those streets alone plenty of times but it was not going to happen with Marie. Ever.



An overview by Old Towne Trolley Tour

This was first on our list for our first full day but not until Marie had found the Ghosts and Gravestones Tour offering and booked it for 9pm that night. Booked it with this pretty but frightening looking guide. And Marie was concerned about gangs but willing to traipse through cemeteries? Yep!

Water cruise - Hanging over the edge and looking at Jelly Fish was more interesting than Boston at the time. So I took pictures so she'd be able to see Boston after the Jelly Fish were gone. But we'd see the water many times as it surrounds Boston and we lived near enough to the wharfs too.





The USS Constitution is the oldest ship in the country. Followed by probably the most expensive Big Dig in the world and the bridge that begins its entry under Boston. It was billions (with a B) over budget and years longer than planned but what a wonderful park system they built where the old highway used to exist.



At Quincy Market Place/Faneuil Hall we found ourselves many times, first for street entertainers, later for more, then for dinner twice, and another time for a ranger led talk in the oldest meeting house in the country. We toured the old state capitol also. Off in another section of the city we found statues of the Irish both when they arrived from the famine and later when they were prosperous.

Old City Hall and a political lesson – The bronze donkey had been well worn and made more gold by the constant riding for picture taking. The old city hall now included a famous steak house. Even the frogs at Frog Pond were well worn and made more gold.



It's more fun in the Commons park and Frog Pond

While one of us presses for education, one of us prefers the park and musicians and animals. The little bunny was super cute and even gorgeous but I kept holding my breath that the big doggy might eat the bunny.



Off to the night-owl Ghosts and Graveyards Tour

To keep kids from revolting or falling asleep, some give was required. I am not all that fond of certain tours but since Old Towne Trolley was giving this tour, it did have some redeeming qualities. It was entertaining for sure with costumed and theatrical tour guides doing their best to entertain at the same time educate too.



Our tour guide had access to keys of burial yards not open to the public at night. He locked us in!



There were stories of double burials and grave robbers and examples of tombstones marking more than one person. In fact one bury yard contained over 2,000 people whereas there were about 1,000 gravestones.



At one graveyard our tour guide locked us in and ran away. Actually disappeared! Suddenly we were shocked to find this character in black top hat and bloody face accosting us. We learned about the haunted hotels and later returned to The Parker Omni House said to be the most haunted in the country and also the oldest continuing running hotel in the country.



It's no wonder Marie wouldn't walk the back streets of Beacon Hill with me at night? Hauntings and graveyards. She missed the most photographed street in America!

We did however get a long walk in through the parks and saw some of the buildings at night. Maybe reluctantly? Here's the capitol building across from the Commons with its many pounds of gold leaf dome well lit up at night.



Emerald Necklace – Boston’s river and bridge park system

I had to choose my walking carefully and decided to see the river and the bridges that were important to Boston. They were designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and much enjoyed by me a few years back when I frequented Boston for business and would run the river and bridges at night. We headed towards the science museum. Well, she wanted to go into the Science Museum but I felt you could see a science museum in any city; I was partly saved by seeing the Duck Tours and giving her a choice. The Duck Tours again were fortunately run by Old Towne Trolley who did a commendable job of getting some education in and not just Quack-Quack jokes like most of these type of tours. Besides the fact that I felt more comfortable with their safety record considering the Duck Tours we almost took in Philadelphia simultaneous to the crash and deaths which ‘grounded’ them for some time.



Scenes from our Duck Tour. This first bridge is called the Salt and Pepper Bridge but is really the Longfellow Bridge at the edge of our hotel.



Reflections in the John Hancock building were lovely: a reflection of Trinity church and another one of the Duck Tour itself.



Boston has so many ‘oldest’ and this jewelry store is that: oldest in the country. So are some of the townhouses. After one of the Boston Marathons, friend Jacqui invited her friends into one of them which turned out to be a multi storied gloriously restored home.

I love the glass buildings of downtown Boston, from the finish line of the Boston Marathon at the John Hancock building to the multi-complex of Copley Square and the connected Prudential Building.



Onto the river portion of the Duck Tour. Our captain explained the inner workings of the boat, the history and how these had been made from the carcass of the original war boats used for land/sea. He let the kids sit in the captain's during part of the cruise where there was, as he said, no history to be found. So they played.



Each Duck Boat had its own creative name and color scheme with a book of the fleet called Ducks on Parade. Back Bay Bertha, Beacon Hilda, Beantown Betty, Charlie River, Dorchester Dottie, Waterfront Wanda, Annie Aquarium, Copley Squire, Faneuil Holly, Fenway Fanny, Frog Pond Lily, Longfellow Bridget, Miss Emma Science, Molly Molasses, Old Gloria, Olga Ironsides – and more!



Every marathoner knows the famous CITGO sign seen here between the sailboats. Then we start to come back in to the Science Museum and locks with a view of the Big Dig Bridge, by the riverfront jail known for luxury and of course commanding views.



We would go by the yacht club where kids and teens can get sailing lessons for \$1. Here are a few kids in kayaks taking lessons.

Science Museum/IMAX

We did get into the museum enough for some displays and for two films on their huge and modern IMAX screen: Tornado Alley and Rescue. The café was an excellent bargain with good choices by famous chefs such as Wolfgang Puck. Here's the view!

MARTA to Cambridge

No trip to Boston should miss Harvard Square and Cambridge so we took their T across the river and walked as much as I dared and as much as the attention span would allow. Finding the huge statue of John Harvard and being helped up (and down) for photo taking was perhaps the highlight for Marie.





I'd previously taken a walking tour of Harvard Square but I didn't have any understanding of the Henry Moore sculptures then so this would be my highlight. This one is called Reclining Woman which changes as you walk around them.

The Town Square

I've always enjoyed the little town and square with colorful students everywhere as well as tourists of course. We once found a wee little gal singing her heart out on a side street and Tom and I both well remember her and have pictures and recordings. Here's one store example: called J.P. Licks.



Maybe every time I've been in Boston I've taken in "Henrietta's Table" in the Charles Inn. I've stayed in that hotel as well as the luxurious Harvard Inn but even when I'm downtown financial district I've found myself over in Cambridge for this favorite restaurant. This time would be no exception.

JFK Library

It turned out to be a very rainy day so perfect to take in the library. It would be the next to last one on my list to visit and with quite a few numbered for Marie too. It wasn't the greatest or the most extensive which surprised me. It did have the best café and some good films and we took it ALL in. She is good at that.





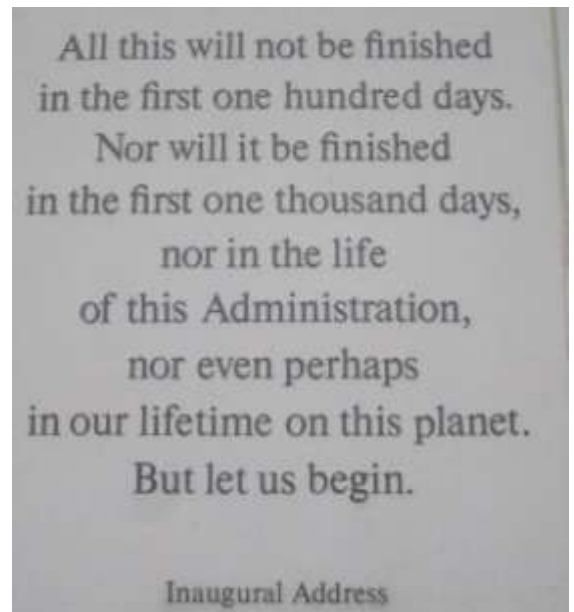
Presidential gifts have been in more abundance in other presidential libraries so perhaps the laws of gift receipts changed AFTER JFK. Look at the gift by the Vatican of a Pieta replica; we just saw the real thing in March. Then a jeweled purse long before Judith Leiber began creating.



All libraries have an Oval Office replica but this one was the smallest and least of all I've seen. The first office where Marie takes up residence was Robert Kennedy's office while he was attorney general. Usually there are sections about the first ladies too but this one had next to nothing but a couple dresses. Many have a huge section of the Berlin Wall and I've wondered how so many presidents qualified.



The big open expanse of building facing the river and this one piece of JFK's inaugural address were my favorites of the day.



Restaurants

- We walked to Little Italy for dinner at the well known and noisy but very Italian seeming "Dolce Vita" and were even blessed with the owner taking our order.
- My usual McCormick & Schmick's at Faneuil Hall.
- Bubble Tea in Chinatown.
- Antonio's Italian Restaurant on Cambridge Street was the most Italian sounding, looking and tasting I recall in the near past.
- Quincy Marketplace for sandwiches.
- Henrietta's Table in Cambridge near to Harvard Square.

The drive home

Momentous. What should have taken 4 ½ hours took us 8 ¼ to get home. Yes, eight plus! It was one of the rainiest and stormiest days in many years resulting in a State of Emergency in the areas we drove through. Roads were closed and traffic was snarled. I've never driven this route and especially Highway 95 through Connecticut without having trouble but this was by far the worse. We were on the Merritt Parkway when a tree fell and killed a man and totally closed down the roadway so we went off into Darien. Ramps were closed for flooding and the entrances to the Tappan Zee Bridge at stages were totally closed for flooding. Some roadways closed down just after we passed by them.

What else did we do in NJ?

We had from June 15th through 29th with Marie's visit and from the 19th through 23rd for Boston.

- The first day was a swim test at Dorbrook Park in preparation for the August Surf Board Camp. She beat all the boys! She's now planning to accumulate five bathing suits so she can wow them every day in August.
- Of course shopping is always in order as I like to help Aunt Loudean with the clothing expenses as well as the time involved to choose. So we shopped until we dropped with clothing that included about five bathing suits, sneakers, trail runners, multiple jeans, shorts, shirts, dress tops, beach towels, undies enough to even supply a kid who rarely keeps a pair of socks together. Where do lost socks go anyway?
- Long Branch to visit Marty who fit Marie for special motion control shoes and advised what trail shoes to purchase too.
- Hiking in Hartshorne Park with Cristina and a meal on the Atlantic Highlands shore followed by a drive through hilltop Victorian homes overlooking the rivers and ocean.
- Hiking in Cheesequake Park with Dana and Maricar followed by a big Chinese meal. This park was featured as one of the best hikes in NJ by USA Today in their June 24th edition.
- More shopping at Eastern Mountain Sports, Target, etc.
- Neighborhood play date for swimming in the neighbor's pool. Well, there were two neighbor's pools but only one had kids.
- Walking the shore of Long Branch with Tom after a convertible ride to get there and a big breakfast at Amy's.
- New York City's Times Square and Discovery Center's special exhibits on both Pompeii (where I was in March) and on Harry Potter.
- New York City's Gay Pride Parade the day after New York approved Gay Marriage! What a celebration!!! Two and a half hours of wild costumes and a lot of very happy folks. No, I wouldn't have taken Marie had I not known that she was at one in Houston recently so this was nothing shocking to her. Few pictures added at the end here.
- Learned to ride a bicycle! Using Tom's little fold-up bicycle because it fit her better, there was success and now Marie is a bicycle rider! As soon as she gets better at watching traffic and using the brakes, she can look to go across the country.



Next trip?

August Marie returns to NJ for Surf Boarding Camp held at Long Branch's Seven Presidents Park.



Above were from the newspapers. Loads of banners thanking politicians preceded the Mayor and Governor. The float and dancers from Trinidad were the most colorful though the entire day had plenty of color! Rainbows! We had a flag and beads (with rainbow flags on the Mardi Gras style beads) as a show of support instead of simply being gawkers.

On Times Square we saw the full time fixture Naked Cowboy who posed with an Asian wanna-be guy. The following pictures are from my nearly 300 photos taken during the parade.





Itinerary

Sun Jun 19

Am Drive to Boston – 5 to 6 hours without stops

Tourist John Quincy Adams Presidential Library or home on the way?

Hotel John Jeffries House – a B&B in Beacon Hill – 4 nights

14 David G, Mugar Way, Boston, MA 02114 Tele: 617 367 1866

Tourist Trolley Tour, Downtown, Parks, River, Aquarium, Planetarium, Museum, JFK Library,
Market place, Walking Tour, Beacon Hill

Thu Jun 23

Am Return from Boston to NJ

“Red Balloon” movie

Shop: Speedo bathing suitcase; camp knife; other?

From Glen in Boston: I don't know the area around the JFK library, but generally think of that as a rougher part of town (South Boston, Quincy are tough, nearby areas are worse). North of Boston in the Burlington area is very safe, and fairly quiet, with a lot of businesses so there should be a lot of hotel options. And it is near 93 which is the north/south artery through the city and down to the JFK museum.