



## CELEBRATING THE 50TH

**This** year congratulations are in order. Mom and Dad (Shirley and Bill) celebrated their 50th anniversary. Though the official date was October 7, it was decided the local clan would head back to our favorite Southern California haunt in Palm Springs during mid-May to share in the spirit of it. The weather was remarkably comfortable for the full week. Temperatures were in the middle 80s when we arrived and record heat did not move in until our last day.

One can't go to Palm Springs without planning a round or two or three of golf and who were we to mess with tradition. Worldmark Palm Springs has arrangements with several courses in the area for reduced rates and we were very happy to take advantage of them. But golf was not to be our only amusement. In addition to the challenges of golf, and all the fabulous feasting to be found, one day was spent on a side trip to visit one of Dad's friends near San Diego. The town is actually Lake San Marco and the residential area centers

around a long, narrow lake settled in a valley among the coastal greenery. From the desert to the coast the climate change is like night and day. Of course, since it was day when we left and night



*Desert scenery in Joshua Tree National Park*

when we returned, that does lend a bit of credence to the notion, but the 30-degree temperature difference and the collection of clouds floating about in the sky closer to the ocean confirmed it nonetheless.

We spent another day on a leisurely drive through Joshua Tree National Park, returning by way of the Salton Sea (at an elevation of 232 feet below sea

level). Joshua Tree, once actually a national monument, now designated a national park, is a great expanse of desert, full of wildlife and vegetation acclimated to the few inches of rain the area receives annually. Its namesake, the Joshua Tree, so dubbed for its outstretched arms that early settlers compared to those of the Biblical character, is found throughout the park,

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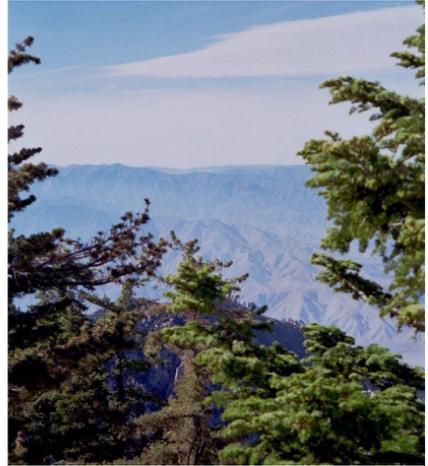
## 50th Anniversary

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as well as other areas of the California deserts. Some areas have greater concentrations than others, but whether a single member of this yucca family or an entire forest, their unusual appearance justifies the basis for a park. Sweeping vistas, isolated oases, and wind-worn mountain ranges inhabit the acreage along with other unusual and beautiful features, such as the Cholla Garden, heavily populated by another of the indigenous desert vegetation.

Scott and I had flights several hours after Brad and the Folks, so we spent some time in the local Air Museum, a very well-accountered and educational facility. Several aircraft outside were very interesting, but admittedly, by this time, with temperatures now soaring well above 100, it was difficult to spend much time out of the protective cover of air conditioning. Still, it was well worth the effort.

In the end, after such a wonderful week it was tough for us all to head our separate ways again.



*A view of the San Gabriels from the tram station at the top of the San Jacinto Mountains.*

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## LAST CHRISTMAS

Last year's holiday visit to Florida blessed us with copious amounts of sunshine and warmth. For the most part golf was, as usual, the recreation of choice, but sandwiched into our schedule was an overnight trip to Orlando, that ever-growing tourist spot.

We spent the first day at Sea World, which boasts quite an expanse of exhibits beyond its famous centerpiece, Shamu. In addition to some of the more common aquaria, which are always beautiful, one of the most fascinating displays was that of the ice cave, offering glimpses of cold climate life, from seals and walruses to

polar bears. Be sure to take a sweater, it's chilly in there! The main show, of course, was quite a demonstration of training. The antics of several varieties of porpoise preceded the Orca whales with snappy opening numbers. By the end of the show, though, those in the rows closest to the pool were tapping



*Epcot during the last days of 1999.*

their feet in considerable puddles of water, hurled over the sides by

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## How We Spent Our Summer Vacation

Mom and Dad came out to Seattle again this summer, this time just a little later in the season, the end of July, in order to ensure good weather. Fortunately, the La Niña event which somewhat subdued our summer last year, was nowhere to be found this time around. Temperatures were consistently in the mid-70s (mid-20s for those of you on Celsius time) and allowed us to enjoy a great week.



*Shirley and Bill (Mom and Dad) still looking good in Port Ludlow.*

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exuberant aquatic life. Wisely, we chose to stay on higher and much drier ground.

Epcot was our destination on day two. Always enjoyable, entertaining, and educational, the events anticipating the year 2000 added even more spectacle than usual, with additional exhibits, a unique parade, and an expanded fireworks display to compliment the natural growth of the complex. We soaked up the ambience of the river rides through Norway and Mexico, enraptured ourselves in a film tour of France, dined delicious in Japan, and reveled in the holiday choral concert before the skies were set ablaze to close the day's activities. Arigato, Epcot.



*View of the Olympic Mountains from Hurricane Ridge*

Between golf games we found time for a drive to Hurricane Ridge in Olympic National Park, a return to Mt. Rainier, (this time without so much snow), and a visit to Northwest Treks Wildlife Park, where we found buffalo roaming and deer and antelope playing. The folks were also able to spend a couple days with Uncle Frankie in Bellingham. Of course, we still found the best of the reasonably-priced restaurants, including Manresa Castle in Port Townsend, which we had discovered on the Olympic Peninsula several years earlier.



*A Bison mows the lawn at Northwest Treks Wildlife Park.*

## *In Memoriam - To Greener Pastures*

This fall marked the passing of Anne Huntman-Nelson, mother, grandmother, sister, or friend to many of us. A strong, disciplined, loving, and creative woman, she spent the last three years fighting a cancer that had been predicted to take her within six months. Though she will be missed, it



*Anne Huntman-Nelson (1905-2000)*

is also a comfort to know that after such a long and fulfilling life, she has been relieved of any suffering resulting from her disease and the loss of short-term memory in recent years. We bid her a fond farewell and wishes of grandeur in

her new life.

### THE REAL NEW CENTURY

Now that we are on the verge of the REAL new millennium, and despite the fact the celebrations will not likely reach the proportions of a year ago (except perhaps here in Seattle where fear of millennium mischief stifled such activity last season), it's time to sit back with a glass of sherry

and reflect on all that's happened to us in the last 1000 years. Well, I don't know about you, but I can only remember the last 45 or so, so I'm simply going to sit back with a glass of sherry. Happy holidays and a wonderful new year to all of you.

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