

Jefferson Annual Report 2016

February 10, 2017

Dear Friends,

As 2016 has ended and a new year is upon us, we are truly grateful for our health and good fortune, for all our exceptional friends and family, and for another year without personal tragedies. Most of us have been blessed in so many ways and so often fail to realize it. When you do, it is quite humbling. From this, we decided to take this opportunity to catch you up on what has been happening with us.

Now, 2016 in review... First, Catherine's Moylan family round up:

- Daughter Jess, 31, is finding herself as an artist, is working for one and is running her own studio. She lives in the City of Sonoma, quite near us.
- Son Casey, 35, has been moving up the operating room ranks to Cardiac Anesthesia Tech at UC, San Francisco, a major teaching institution. He now is taking calls for emergency cardiac surgeries on weekends. His wife Sandy is working as a marketing director of a small startup with unusual promise. They also are nearby, after years in SoCal.
- The apple- of -our -eye, Casey and Sandy's Daughter, Madeleine Quinn, is 3 ½. we enjoy keeping her for days at a time and exposing her to all the excitement of this big wonderful world. Like talking! LOL. It's a fun age!
- Mother, Peggy, 91, a transplant from Florida three years ago, is in relatively good health and adjusting to living in California and in assisted living in Santa Rosa, just over 20 minutes from us. She still reads and writes, calls and keeps up with her many friends back East,

Jefferson Annual Report 2016

and uses her compute for solitaire, email and Facebook.

- Brother Dan (also a recent FL transplant) is in a sponsored day program, “Becoming Independent,” which has been selected to be featured in the upcoming season of an award-winning PBS series called Visionaries with Sam Waterston. We are grateful to have such a fine organization for Dan to attend. He is one of the shining stars of all the disabled BI participants.

Last year’s international travel

This past April, Dave left for Hong Kong and Manila on a wine business trip. In May, Catherine flew to Amsterdam for a couple of days then, stayed mostly with our Dutch friends in Gorssel, and drove around Western Netherlands for a week. Holland is such an unbelievably verdant green country. The Dutch are the masters of prune and shear, pollard and espalier. As they have molded the sea, so do they the plants.

Catherine was able to actualize a life long dream of visiting Keukenhof in Lisse, the world’s largest flower gardens, and the showroom for the bulb growers. Open for only 8 weeks each spring, the 79 acres are planted with 7 million Dutch bulbs of which there are over 800 kinds of tulips. Though this is for sure, Tulipmania, the gardens, are also planted with crocus, daffodils, hyacinths, freesias, lilies, roses, orchids, iris and others. Landscaped in the 1830’s, the “bones” of the garden are 2500 gorgeous old specimen trees, rhododendrons, azaleas, flowering cherries, and over 9 miles of winding paths, with lakes and water courses.

In late May, we rendezvoused in Cape Town, South Africa where we rented an off-road truck and drove from the Western Cape to the Eastern Cape, then up the coast to East London, and industrial city. The next morning, we crossed the Transkei, and headed Northwest to pick up our Basotho guide who would take us up the Sani Pass into the country of Lesotho. (Lesotho is a little bigger than Massachusetts, is chiefly mountains, and completely surrounded by South Africa.) The Sani dirt road climbs 4,370 vertical feet in a barrenly majestic treeless landscape

Jefferson Annual Report 2016

with switchback after switchback. Catherine has a fear of heights but after making it up the pass, she felt great. Little did she know that for the next week we would be either approaching a pass, going over the pass, or on our way down to the next one. And, most passes were far steeper than the famed Sani. And it was COLD. We rarely had adequate heat in our rooms and frequently slept in our clothes. (These places give new meaning to the word resort!) Lesotho is known for having the highest lowlands (at 4,593 ft., almost a mile high) of any country in the world. (Little wonder they were able to maintain their independence from the Zulus.)

Nevertheless, today most of Lesotho is on an “agricultural subsistence” basis with small villages everywhere, with substantial numbers of boys and men serving as shepherds of small to medium sized flocks of sheep and goats, and small herds of cattle. Most of the people eat a largely vegetarian diet, eating pap which is a corn gruel with no flavor whatsoever. Pap for breakfast and pap with spinach for dinner. Pap with meat only on weekends. Due to only 10% arable land, most people in Lesotho are concerned with simply surviving. The total population is about 2.2 million; further, the HIV infection rate, per an organization that specializes in HIV/AIDS, is very close to 25%! That would mean over 500,000 people are in serious need of caregiving by others, a very large burden on a society from economic, social, and emotional standpoints.

However, there were many highpoints during our visit. We saw dinosaur foot prints where they are in larger concentration than anywhere else in the world, visited a mohair spinning and weaving collective run by a church organization for disabled women, and hiked around Maletsunyane Falls, at 630 ft. is one of the largest in Africa, and the site of the highest commercial abseiling in the world. Almost needless to say, we saw lots of beautiful mountain scenery; Lesotho is a fascinating country.

From there, glad to leave the cold, we spent a few days in the lovely city of Durban in South Africa’s province of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) on the coast. Believe it or not, the Zulus still hold the murderous King Shaka of the 1800’s in high esteem! KZN has an extensive warm water coast line, semi tropical weather, and endless miles of sugarcane fields. It is a major vacation and retirement area for South Africans.

Jefferson Annual Report 2016

Swaziland was next, about half the size of Lesotho, or just a bit larger than Connecticut. During our seven days in there, we stayed at two game camps, and saw lots of rhinos, both white and black, visited a glass blowing factory, and attended a Rotary luncheon. Swazi is both warmer than Lesotho (lower in elevation and closer to the equator) and has much better soil. Interestingly, both countries are kingdoms and they revere their Kings, who authorize the practice of polygamy. (We are sure it takes a lot of practice as most people are POOR, although not as desperate as Lesotho!) In both countries, most people live in little one-room rondavals with no electricity, running water, or bathroom. Each cluster of rondavals shares a shiny corrugated metal out-house, installed by the government.

In many ways, the high point of the Swazi experience was gifting Mseni (our exceptional Swazi guide (single at age 32) with enough Rand to build a bathroom, and electrify his concrete block home. Now he (and his parents and brothers with families, all who live close by) will all be able to take hot showers for the first time ever. Our only requirement, since he now also has lights, was he must read every evening. Because he always was a good student, and a well informed guide, he readily agreed. He sends us regular emails with pictures of the progress, and tells of the excitement of his family about his good fortune. He always signs off by saying “Warmest Regards, HAPPY LUCKY MAN.” (We honestly feel we are equally fortunate to be able to impact significantly the life of a kind young man. His reaction, when we told him our plans for him, was priceless. We all were close to tears.)

We left Swazi at its Northern border heading for Mpumalanga and Limpopo Provinces. The objective was Blyde River Canyon (third largest canyon in the world, and with palm trees at its water’s edge, also the largest “green” canyon in the world). And again, Catherine’s courage on precipitous winding high roads was tested. Dave thought it somewhat ironic, as she planned the trip and knew perfectly well in advance the challenging topography! Though certainly a beautiful tourist destination, Blyde River was so remote there were relatively few people there. However, the canyon and river is spectacular and well worth the effort!

Finally, before flying home from urban Johannesburg (Gauteng province) we visited the “Cradle of Human Kind”. This 180 square mile preserve, one of the most important paleoanthropological sites in the world, is where the famous Sterkfontein Caves are located and where, in 1947, the 2.3-million-year-old remains of *Australopithecus Africanus*, “Mrs. Ples,”

Jefferson Annual Report 2016

were discovered. In fact, one third of all early hominid fossils found in the world are from this area! We toured the caves, as well as visiting a fascinating museum, for a day before spending a little time shopping in the metropolis of Jo'berg.

It is worth mentioning that we attend Rotary meetings during our travels whenever we can. (Catherine helped found a local Rotary club here in Kenwood a few years back and is a very enthusiastic member.) If we can't make a regular meeting, we then usually get together with a local Rotarian to chat about charities for which they are involved in raising money, and learn about anything else they may be doing. It has given our travels another dimension that we enjoy. It helps us meet local people, and find out things in the area that may not make it to the newspaper.

Kenwood vacation units

-

Catherine found this sleepy little Kenwood area 40 years ago, and never left; she showed Dave a two-acre property on a creek at One Mound Ave in 2001, and he was hooked. Over the next 10 years, we did extensive building, partly to be able to lodge friends and family. When relatively few showed up, in 2012 we started operating guest rentals in our Red Barn vacation apartment, and added the Creekside Cottage in 2015. Today the units are providing us with a steady stream of visitors from all over the world. Much to our surprise and with a robust Wine Country vacation market, we are doing well enough that Catherine retired from selling rural real estate and now is a full-time hotelier/concierge. We're continually trying to make the experience for travelers a better and more gratifying one, as well as improving our own operations.

Her last project of 2016 was our new vacation rental web site, www.onemound.com. Due to the parade of guests from www.airbnb.com, we have more occupancy every year. However, Catherine is inundated with daily emails from prospective guests and those who have already booked. Finally, we concluded that a website is a way for our guests to have most questions answered in advance, as well as providing a ready repository of information for restaurants, wineries, hikes, day trips to the Pacific and local events. We hope you click on the One Mound link so you will find our website in its infant form and give us feedback.

Jefferson Annual Report 2016

Since, when we travel, we also use Airbnb as much as possible, we thought our own new website could be a good place to record our international trips. Many of our friends and guests want info on places where they may also go, given a little help and encouragement. (We plan to add more galleries, including sections on our other international adventures, once Catherine can organize her photos.)

Each trip takes many weeks of full-time planning so our trail should help others starting out. As you will see, we have created a substantial photo gallery with text about our fall trip to Australia, which had been on our Bucket List, but then precipitated this year by a close friend's son's wedding. (Young American moves to Sydney, becomes Aussie citizen, and marries a charming local girl. Old story, eh!)

We loved Australia, and would consider moving there if we were younger and not wedded to Sonoma County. OZ is beautiful, interesting, the people couldn't be friendlier, and they speak very entertaining English. A high point of our trip Down Under was attending a performance of My Fair Lady directed by Dame Julie Andrews at the Sydney Opera House, sitting in the 6th row! Beyond words!! Australia has clean cities, wonderful unusual animals, and, perhaps uncommon these days...they even like Americans! We made numerous good, new friends, and will be back. (But first, Ireland, New Zealand, Czech Republic, and maybe Alaska.)

Home fires

During 2016 Dave was consumed with selling a big Napa vineyard he and other partners have owned for 43 years. When the sale finally closes in late February, some of the partners (who do not want this to be a big taxable event) will do Section 1031 exchanges; so Dave has to "identify" and buy "replacement" properties within six months. Stressful, sure, but this may be the first step toward some sort of retirement. We'll see ...

Jefferson Annual Report 2016

As of late, Christmas Eve has become a bittersweet evening for us; we lost Dave's dad unexpectedly that night in 2005. This year we and Helen, Dave's sister who lives near, gathered together with Catherine's offspring here at One Mound for the holidays. Ken Jefferson was an exceptional Minnesota-Nice gentleman, loving father, retired Telco engineer, scout leader, unpublished poet, and insightful philosopher. Without effort or agenda, he invariably delighted and charmed all he met. We remember, of many wonderful sayings he lived by and taught us, perhaps the kindest and most characteristic was, "A stranger is just a friend you haven't met." That magnificent mindset and attitude has proven the best, time and again, as guests/new friends continue to appear at One Mound, and as we meet exceptional people in our travels. There are honestly few strangers in our lives, just the many friends we do not see often enough. So, with that in mind, beam good thoughts in our direction, plan to come on by and visit us, and Ken Jefferson will smile on us all.

Happy New year, folks ~

Dave and Catherine Jefferson

Kenwood Catherine Moylan Jefferson
Catherine Moylan Jefferson

One Mound Avenue
Kenwood, CA 95452
cell: 707.484.7228

DRE #: 01012290