

7/4, Tues: Today we had a tour of the West Baden (IN) Springs Hotel. The building we toured was built in 1902, updated in 1916, and restored from a ruined condition in 1996. It has an atrium covered by a free-standing dome 200' in diameter, the largest in the US until the Charlotte Coliseum was built in 1955. This is another place we found through its listing by AAA as a "Gem". We hope to return in a few years for an overnight stay.



7/5, Weds: We drove from Vincennes IN, where we spent last night, to Morton IL where we will visit some old friends. Sadly Carol, the friend in Morton we have know the longest, is currently in Venice cruising the canals so we won't get to see her. We met Carol in 1970 in the campground in Rome and have maintained contact ever since. In Morton (pumpkin capital of the world) we are visiting her husband, Roger, and her sister, Jean.

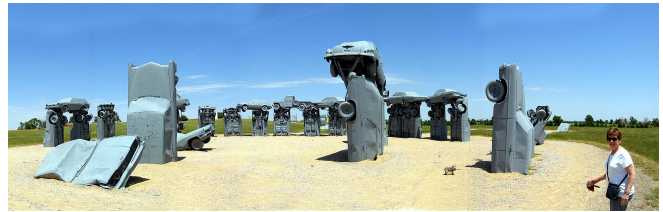
7/7, Fri: We spent yesterday in Morton IL with our friends. Today we visited Oak Park, a neighborhood in Chicago, where Frank Lloyd Wright lived for several years and designed a lot of houses. We walked past about 15, and drove to see the outsides of about 5 others. We are spending the night in Naperville, SW of the city but within greater Chicago.



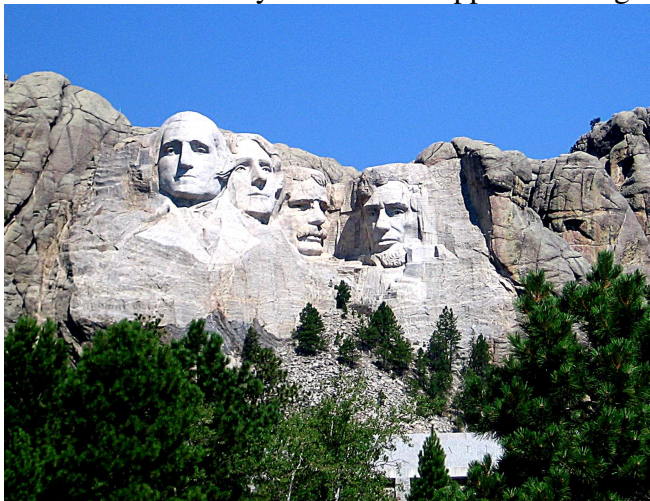
7/8, Sat: Family reunion of some of Kathy's relatives in Romeoville IL. Except for us, the attendees were the families of the 9 children of Kathy's father's oldest sister. We were listed on the attendance sheet as "Long Lost Cousin (LLC) and husband". Lots of fun! Kathy says our "real trip" will start tomorrow when we cross the Mississippi.

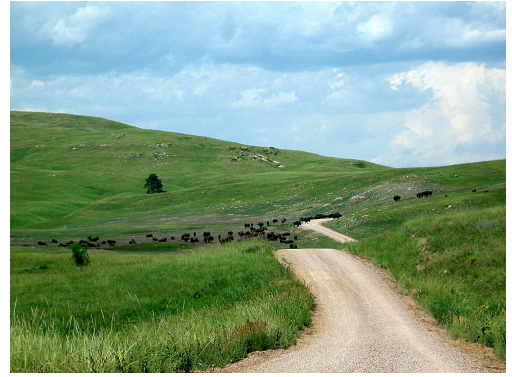
7/9, Sun: A travel day with no sightseeing. Drove from Naperville IL to York NE - roads uncrowded and not too long. We passed near "What Cheer, Iowa" which cheered us.

7/10, Mon: On our way to the Black Hills of South Dakota we stopped to visit Carhenge in Alliance NE; a replica of Stonehenge made of old cars. This was another find from the Atlas Obscura. At the time Carhenge was built the astronomical significance of the alignment of Stonehenge was unknown, so the alignment here has no significance. We are now in Rapid City for 3 days.



7/11, Tues: Visited Mt. Rushmore, Crazy Horse Monument, the Needles Highway, and Custer State Park. Unlike the last time I was here, there's actually beginning to be a recognizable carving at Crazy Horse. On a side road in Custer State Park we found "our own" herd of Buffalo, with no other tourist cars competing for good photo angles. Today we saw Mountain Goats (which are not goats), Pronghorn Antelope (which are not antelope), American Buffalo (which are not buffalo), and Prairie Dogs (which are not dogs). I think the reason we never saw any Bighorn Sheep is because they actually are sheep! At the end of the day our clutch stopped working as we reached the motel.



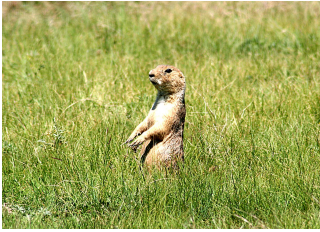


7/12, Weds: Took the car to a local Honda dealer who confirmed that the clutch needed to be replaced. They provided us with a loaner car, and told us the clutch would probably be done by Thurs evening. We visited Spearfish Canyon and Deadwood. We did not stop in Sturgis, which is home to an annual huge motorcycle rally in early August, but we did see lots of motorcycles on the highways and byways, mostly ridden by older men with grey ponytails and beards. Lots of 3-wheelers.

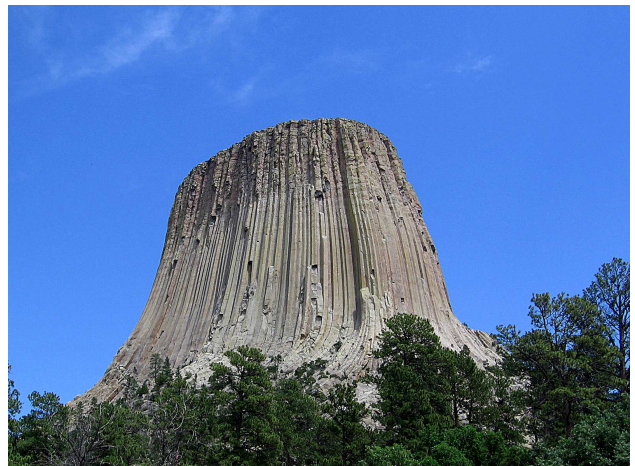


7/13 Thurs: More time in Custer State Park viewing wildlife, including a big Prairie Dog town. Following this we drove over the Iron Mountain Highway, famous for its "pigtail" bridge-tunnel combinations.

Late in the afternoon we learned the car was not finished yet, but it would be ready sometime Friday morning.



7/14, Fri: It was a long day! The car was ready in the morning as promised, but only barely - I drove it away at 11:50. We visited Devil's Tower in NE Wyoming, then drove on to Thermopolis where we had a motel reservation. Although the motel knew of our reservation they had overbooked and had no room. They helped us find a room in Riverton, another hour's drive away. Fortunately the drive through Wind Canyon was spectacular, although it was twilight and not enough light for taking pictures.



7/15 Sat: We drove through the Snake River valley to the east of Grand Teton National Park. I had expected heavy traffic but that didn't happen. We ended our day at the home of some friends in the Pinehaven section of Island Park ID. I had not seen this friend since the late 1960's, although we've been in touch via email for the past dozen years.



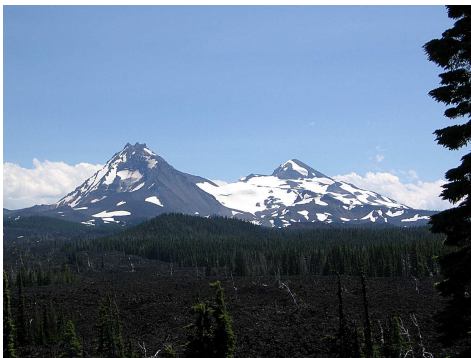
7/16, Sun: Spent the day with our friends exploring the countryside near Pinehaven.



7/17, Mon: Visited Craters of the Moon National Monument. Spent the night in Ontario OR.



7/18, Tues: Today we drove over McKenzie Pass and through the town of McKenzie Bridge OR, and over the McKenzie River. There were beautiful views of 2 of the Three Sisters Mountains (near Bend OR) from the pass. We ended the day at the home of some friends in Eugene OR.



7/19, Weds: Spent the day at the home of our friends in Eugene: doing laundry and catching up with my diary postings. I missed many days of posting this trip log because of the failure of the Wifi adapter in my computer, but I bought a new one yesterday.