

DOTTY'S DIMENSIONS: THE COLUMN Issue #9

Summer 2016

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Hello all. I am going to start this column by promoting my blog because the latest essay, as of March 2016, is called "Los Angeles Without a Car." During the first week of December 2015, I stayed in LA and used their public transportation: the Metro subway, light rails, and busses. I also decided to travel from coast to coast by trains instead of flying. The details and the reasons why I traveled the way I did are explained in that essay. Meanwhile, you can download it for free from my website by clicking "My Blog." The best news is that there is no more advertising! You no longer have to put up with pop-up ads or ads taking over the entire page. I now pay Tripod for my website because some of those ads were getting too aggressive. In addition, you can also see some of the pictures we took on this trip along with the essay. While I was there, I visited the following places: 1) Union Station, 2) the Hollywood Museum, 3) Sony Studios, 4) Paramount Pictures, 5) Warner Brothers Studios, 6) the Grammy Museum, 7) Caltech, and 8) TCL Chinese Theater. If this or my other travel essays convinces you to want to travel to any of these destinations, then my efforts are worth it.

As for this issue of DOTTY'S DIMENSIONS: THE COLUMN, issue #9, I visited New York City for a day; attended Balticon 2016 (Baltimore Science Fiction Convention[SF Con]) at the Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace Hotel, Baltimore, Maryland, for four nights and days; and visited six places in Bergen County, New Jersey. I've been to Bergen County before. Back in February 2009, I visited the NJ Naval Museum in Hackensack, and I wrote about it in THE STATE I'M IN, Issue #3. If you would like more information about Bergen County, NJ, contact the following source: Bergen County Tourism Office, One Bergen County Plaza, Hackensack, NJ 07601-7076 or phone 201-336-6972.

Saturday, March 5, 2016: Since 1970, I have been visiting NYC at least once a year. Otherwise, I'd feel like a fish out of water. For this year, after

I got off the train at Pennsylvania Station, I walked on that cold but sunny day to the National Museum of Mathematics, 11 E. 26th St, between 5th Ave. and Madison Ave. (212-542-0566). I knew that some of you were wondering if I flipped my lid because math wasn't my best subject, but please hear me out. Even if you were a below-average math student, you would find this place interesting. Where else could you ride a bike with square wheels? With the help of the enthusiastic staff, I learned about how mathematics could influence different patterns around us. Many of those math patterns looked colorful! Therefore, even artists could benefit because some of these exhibits covered geometry. Most of the exhibits on two floors were hands-on and proved to be popular with children. In fact, this was one of those places where bringing children could enhance your visit, but even if you didn't bring any children, you could still learn something while learning how math looks and sounds via many do-it-yourself exhibit areas. Later, I walked over to Eisenburg's Sandwich Shop on 5th Ave. near 22nd St. for lunch. They advertised that they have been raising NYC's cholesterol since 1929. Their menu offered many items, especially many kinds of sandwiches, and the staff seemed efficient and friendly. Judging from their grilled-cheese sandwich, I could see why this place has been in business this long. Afterward, I wandered through the rows of a food market called Eataly on 5th Ave. near 23rd St. (I'm glad I ate lunch before roaming through here.) Thus, I saw row upon row of many different kinds of Italian foods: pastas, oils, and wines as well as meats, produce, baked goods, desserts, etc. Finally, I ended my trip by heading back to Penn Station--and do my feet hurt, but it was worth it.

Friday, April 8: If you could find your way to Route 9W and turn onto Bruce Reynolds Blvd. heading east, then cross Hudson Terrace, you could drive into Fort Lee Historic Park, Hudson Terrace, Fort Lee (201-461-1776). Upon entering and parking as well as paying to park, I went into the modern looking visitors' center. Here via two floors of exhibit items of 18th-century clothing, weapons, and domestic tools, as well as modern texts, audio presentations, touch-screen videos, etc., I learned more about George Washington's purpose for starting a fort in this location: Washington planned to prevent the British from taking control of the Hudson River. Nevertheless, it didn't work out that way, and Washington ordered a retreat in November 1776. The American troops had to hurry in retreating so fast that they had to leave their weapons and supplies behind. This led Thomas Pane to write that famous line in his essay, *The American Crises*: "These are the times that try men's souls." Outside on the grounds, I saw the following recreated buildings: a soldier's hut, an officer's hut, and a blockhouse, as well as seeing different gun batteries and great views of the George Washington Bridge, the Hudson River, and Upper Manhattan. In addition, costumed docents explained the history of the area and about the everyday life for the soldiers posted here. Nearby asphalt-covered trails made for easy walking, and this park has been part of the Palisades Interstate Park in NJ and NY. Thus, they provided different recreational opportunities year round!

Saturday, April 9: Here was another place that Washington stayed at: The Hermitage, 335 N. Franklin Tpk., Ho-Ho-Kus (201-445-8311). Parts of this house dated back to 1750, and the owners, Colonel Prevost and his wife, Theodosia, also played host to such famous men as James Monroe, Alexander Hamilton, Marquis de Lafayette, and Aaron Burr. Later, after Colonel Prevost died, Aaron Burr married Prevost's widow, Theodosia, in 1782, in the parlor of this house. Shortly afterward, the Burr's sold the house, and different people owned this house until 1807, when Dr. Elijah Rosencrantz became the latest owner. This house stayed with the Rosencrantz family until sometime in 1970. In 1847, the Rosencrantz family chose to have the house enlarged and remodeled into a Victorian-Gothic-Revival style. Nowadays, the house exterior displayed a steep

roof with wooden-lace trim and diamond-shaped window panes. Inside the house on a tour, our tour guide explained how a wealthy family of the mid-1800s would have lived as well as how they showed off their wealth to others. While some of the items, artworks, furniture, and clothing belonged to the Rosencrantz, other items, arts, furnishings, and clothing belonged to periods from the mid to late 1800s. On two floors, I observed where the Rosencrantz worked, entertained guests, ate, and slept. At the education and conference center, located at the late 19th-century house next door where I bought tour tickets, I looked at temporary exhibits covering parts of life in the 19th century as well as information about the Revolutionary War. When I was there, I especially noticed a light-brown silk dress from the mid-1800s.

Sunday, April 10: On Friday, when I visited Historic Ft. Lee, I mentioned that Washington's troops had to retreat in a hurry from there. Historic New Bridge Landing, 1209 Main Street, River Edge (201-487-1739) was where the American troops arrived at after leaving Ft. Lee. Currently, this place comprised of five buildings and a bridge. Farther up the Hackensack River, was an older bridge called "Old Bridge;" therefore, this bridge, the original bridge dating from 1745, has been called "New Bridge." It also has been known as "the bridge that saved a nation" because if the British had captured the American troops, that would have been the end of the Revolutionary War. The current bridge, however, dated back to 1889. Of the five buildings located here, only the 1752 Steuben House was at this location in 1776. George Washington made this house his headquarters. Later, The Bergen County Historical Society had three of the other buildings located here from other areas of Bergen County: the 1794 Demarest House Museum, the 1774 Campbell-Christie House, and the 1889 Westervelt-Thomas Barn. Then in 1990, they reconstructed an 18th-century-styled out kitchen behind the Demarest House. Nevertheless, all of these buildings have only been opened to the public during special events. I checked their website in advance, and when I was there, the special event was Author's Day. In two of the buildings, I noticed different authors selling their books, and some of them gave readings from parts of their books. I mainly entered the five buildings to see what was inside. Thus, docents in 18th-century dress enthusiastically told me the history behind these buildings and the history of the area from the time of the Lenni-Lenape Native Americans into the 19th century. They also explained the everyday life in the 1700s, and some of them demonstrated 18th- and 19th-century chores and crafts. One of the houses included a gift shop, refreshments, and a rest room, and three of these buildings have been in the Dutch-Sandstone style. The staff told me that this style of building is found nowhere else in the world.

Thursday, May 26: I started Balticon by following a favorite tradition for me whenever I attended Balticon for the whole four nights and days: 1) The Civilized Dinner. For 2016, I ate at the Cheesecake Factory, Pratt Street Pavilion, 201 East Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD 21202 (410-234-3990). Because I've been a fan of the TV show *The Big Bang Theory* (TBBT), and a character in the show, Penny, used to work at the Pasadena, California, branch, I decided to try the Baltimore branch. Inside, the interior loosely displayed an Egyptian design, and the hostess seated me almost as soon as I entered. Our waiter was friendly and efficient, and I ordered a Renee Special: a half sandwich, a cup of soup, and a salad. In my case it was a chicken sandwich, the soup for that day-tortilla soup, and a Caesar salad. Nevertheless, what sounded like a light meal turned out to be more than I expected. It looked like I had a bowl of soup, an entire sandwich, and plenty of salad. Meanwhile, the quality of the food matched the quantity. It tasted good and the prices were moderate. Afterward, I finished off this dinner with a slice of their original cheesecake. I would put their cheesecake in my top five favorites, but my

favorites have still been Lindy's followed by Junior's. While the Cheesecake Factory was not cheap, compared to other restaurants in the area, you got your money's worth. I recommend eating here regardless of whether or not you have been a fan of TB&T.

Friday, May 27: Another tradition I followed for myself whenever I attended a four-night and four-day Balticon was to go sightseeing for a day, and for 2016, I visited the 2) Maryland Science Center (MSC), 601 Light Street (410-685-5225 or www.marylandsciencecenter.org). Back in the early 2000s, I visited here, and I was very impressed with their exhibit areas, especially the area about space exploration. It used to cover much of the second floor. Since then, it seemed as though they reduced the number of exhibit areas, including the area about space. I remembered in the early 2000s comparing the newly-opened "Space Command" section of the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia to the section about space in the MSC and being more impressed about the MSC's space exploration exhibit area. Nowadays, I could say the opposite. The MSC's exhibit area about space, SpaceLink, was a fraction of the size of the former space exploration area. It still covered some interesting subjects about space, and so did the next room, Life Beyond Earth, but both rooms have been a shadow of their former selves. Something new that did impress me was Science on a Sphere. Here, I saw recorded images on a five and half foot globe covering Earth's weather, the Sun, and our solar system. I could have sat watching this globe most of the day. Another area I especially liked, Follow the Blue Crab, informed the public about the Chesapeake Bay area flora and fauna via videos, touch screens, and hands-on exhibits as well as pictures, texts, and exhibits of live animals. Other exhibit areas on all three floors included plenty of hands-on exhibits, viewing exhibits, touch screens, and so forth that were especially popular with children, having to do with physics, biology, and chemistry as well as applied sciences, paleontology, and science demonstrations. In addition, admission included the planetarium. The MSC also presented IMAX films for an extra charge. Although the MSC was mostly for children, adults could find it worthwhile to visit, with or without children, once.

Friday night: After I registered at Balticon, I attended my first event there: 3) *Star Trek* (ST): *Back to the Future?* where Jack and Denise Clemons compared and contrasted the technologies via a multimedia presentation from ST vs. what NASA has currently. For example, the *USS Enterprise* vs. the *International Space Station* (ISS), the view screen on the *Enterprise* vs. the ISS close-circuit TV, the hydroponic gardens on ST vs. the ISS gardens, and other comparisons and contrasts: the communicators vs. cell phones, ST computers vs. the ISS's computers, ST PADD vs. the ISS's iPad, and so forth. Jack Clemons mentioned that Steve Jobs was a ST fan. Then, Clemons found it a bit disturbing that some of the ISS crew were watching *Star Wars* (SW) during their free time on the ISS. Next, I sat in on 4) The Science Behind the Earth Orbiting Satellites presentation. Thus, Frank Kelly and Maria Kelly Hrabinski started their presentation and talked about Angelita Castro Kelly (1942-2015), Filipino physicist, the first woman to become a NASA Mission Operations Manager, wife to Frank, and mother to Maria. I saw a video of an interview with her done a few years ago as well as her receiving an award. She helped coordinate the many satellites orbiting the Earth, and studied the data received from those satellites, among other tasks. Much of her work had to do with Earth's climate and atmosphere. Unfortunately, just as this presentation got interesting, the hotel's fire alarm went off and we had to leave the building. Then, after waiting for about a little more than a half hour, the firefighters gave the hotel the "all clear," and I returned to the hotel and went to the next presentation: 5) Celebrity Inventors and Their Inventions. Iver Cooper quickly, because of lost time when everybody was outside during the fire situation, mentioned some of the following people and what they invented:

George Washington—drill plow, Thomas Jefferson—his many inventions for the office and farm, Benjamin Franklin with his many inventions, and so forth. The next event was a special event: the 6) Opening Ceremonies. This was a chance to see all the main guests of Balticon, the award winners, and others on one stage. Most guests just said a few words, but the main guest of honor (GOH), George R. R. Martin, had more to say. Martin talked about his first SF con, in Washington, DC, in 1971—the year he sold his first story, his past Balticons where he ate crabs and went on a late night Easter egg hunt (Balticon used to be held on Easter weekend until 2001.), and the two Worldcons (World SF Conventions) that were in Baltimore: 1983 and '98. Then other people, award winners and volunteers, had their say on stage, including a Baltimore city council member, Bill Henry, before the ceremonies ended. Finally, for that night, I went to a reception: 7) Friday Face Time: Meet the Scientists Social. After saying "hello" briefly to the head of science programming, Miriam Winder Kelly, I met and talked with other SF fans as I ate snack foods and cheesecake. I also sometimes eavesdropped on some of what the scientists were saying to each other and to some of the SF fans. Some of it sounded interesting, and some of it went over my head.

Saturday, May 28: Balticon's busiest day started for me by going to a presentation that ran a bit late: 8) This is How We Do It: Creating a Convention from Scratch. The creators of Intervention Con and (Re)Generation Who Con, James Harknell and Onezumi Hartstein, talked about their experiences running a media-SF con as well as the differences between a media SF con and a literary-based SF con like Balticon. Because I have defined such differences in other con reports, such as my reports in DOTTY's DIMENSIONS (published from 2000 to 2006) when I wrote about Shore Leave and Farpoint cons, I won't get into the details here. Then, they covered details that I've heard at similar panels on running cons: having good relations with the hotel, getting startup money, having a reliable staff, and so forth. They also mentioned that project management and finance skills have been important. Somebody also talked about how con program books become more slick and glossy as the years go on. After this, I entered the 9) Art Show room. While walking through, I noticed that about 70% of the art included fine arts of paintings and drawings, and the rest showed other mediums: sculptures, pottery, and jewelry as well as hats, masks, and so on. Around 80% of the artworks displayed fantasy themes, and the rest exhibited SF and space art. I especially looked at a few pictures of space shuttles and rockets. Next, I sat in on this panel: 10) What Makes Hard SF Hard? Here, John Walker and Doug Fratz talked about how some editors wanted almost all the laws of physics in place: no faster-than-light (FTL) travel, no explosions in space, and so on. Other editors allowed for FTL if the writer could make it somewhat plausible. They also defined the differences among hard SF, soft SF, and fantasy. In other words, hard SF stories followed all the laws of science except for one or two plausible explanations for made-up stuff, such as FTL. They also said that what was once thought of as hard SF in many "classic" SF stories, especially in space operas, would nowadays be soft SF—maybe even fantasy. Then they named some SF authors who wrote hard SF. At 11) Writing: It's My Job AND What I Do For Fun!, Jody Lynn Nye, Carl Cipra, Jane Marie Ward, and Keith DiCandido answered why they chose to be writers. Some of the answers included working at home, getting to talk to oneself and answering themselves back, always wanting to be a writer, and the thrill of seeing one's name in print. The panel also mentioned being able to "fix things" that couldn't be fixed in real life and networking with other writers for ideas. Another subject they talked about was writing non-fiction vs. fiction or gathering data vs. creating a world. Then somebody asked about the advantages of editing as you write vs. writing first and editing later. Most of the panel said that they did a bit of both. Most of all, they advised the audience not to take criticism personally: Writing has been a business.

Saturday night: Once I came back from dinner, I listened in on the following panel: 12) L5 Habitat Planning. Michael F. Flynn, Donald Kingsbury, Joe Halderman, Paula S. Jordan, and Sharon Lee defined the Lagrange Points: L1, L2, L3, L4, and L5. L1, 2, and 3 have been unstable for a habitat, but L4 and 5 have been stable, and maybe in the future humans may build a space habitat. Different space advocates hope to have L5 become a livable city in space and not just a research station. Then this panel covered the challenges and threats to living in space and of how humans may conquer them. They also mentioned Gerald O'Neil's book from 1976, *The High Frontier: Human Colonies in Space*. Thus, I attended a lighter subject panel next: 13) 1966: The Year That Changed Pop Culture. Here, Joseph F. Berenato and Michael Ventrella talked about the year *Batman*, *ST*, *Dark Shadows*, *The Monkees*, and *The Green Hornet* premiered, among other TV shows and their influence on the public. Even though they premiered earlier, the panel and audience also covered other TV shows from that time as well: *Lost in Space*, *Man From Uncle*, *The Munsters*, and *The Adams Family*. Someone in the audience said that many Baby Boomers back then were becoming teenagers and questioning what was going on around them. Hair was getting longer on boys, and girls were wearing shorter skirts partly for rebellion—and partly for fashion. Another person brought up the civil rights protests and the Vietnam War. Then came the main event for that night: 14) The Masquerade. Out of 27 entries, 22 were fantasy and the rest were SF. Some of the costumes that stood out in my mind were two boys dressed as astronauts, a man wearing a fantasy costume with mostly blue LED lights, a Dalek from *Doctor Who*, a person dressed in a uniform copied from *Fireball XL5*, and a SW spoof with Donald Duck vs. Daffy Duck.

Sunday, May 29: This was one event that I was playing host to because I've been an ordained minister from the Universal Life Church of Modesto, CA, www.ulcseminary.org. I had noticed that for the last few years there was a Friday night or Saturday Shabbat Observance, but nothing on Sunday. When I asked about it and mentioned my credentials to the head of programming at Balticon, she offered to let me host a 15) Sunday Service/Meeting. Counting my husband and me, we had around a dozen people show up. I was surprised. We conducted it like a silent Friends/Quaker meeting (I do attend a local Friends meeting house.), but we encouraged those attending to say a prayer, hymn, or message at this meeting. Almost everybody stood up at different times and said a prayer or sang a hymn—some of them a few times. Overall, it proved to be a very active unprogrammed meeting for worship. From here, I visited 16) the Dealers' Room. Out of 48 vendors, about half sold reading materials of books, magazines, semi-pro-zines, and fanzines. The other half sold other merchandise: jewelry, sculptures, and games as well as toys, buttons, DVDs, etc. I ended up buying a magazine. Afterward, I sat in on a presentation, 17) Women of Science: A History. Last year, Laura Burns presented the life and career of Hypatia. For 2016, she covered the life and career of Ada Lovelace (1815-1852). Lovelace, a British mathematician, worked with Charles Babbage to design an early general-purpose computer. Of course, through the years, many people remembered Charles Babbage, but few remembered her. Ms. Burns also talked about Ada Lovelace's private life and of how Lovelace's notes became destroyed. Nevertheless, about 100 years after her death, some people rediscovered her contributions to Charles Babbage's works. Part of what helped her career was that she was an upper-class lady in British society, the daughter of Lord Byron, and she had been in contact with Michael Faraday and Charles Dickens. Next, at a science panel, 18) Let's Build a Space Habitat, Charles Stross, Jim Beall, Pamela Gay, and Catherine Asaro discussed where and how to build a habitat for humans in space. First: Somebody on the panel said what most likely wouldn't work: a Dyson sphere, ring world, Bernal sphere, Stanford torus, or *Elysium*. These ideas would most likely be in the realm of SF. Second: Where? Would it be on the moon, on Mars, or as a space station? Third: How could it be

made self-sustainable? Fourth: What materials would be used to protect humans from harmful radiation? Someone else suggested that a cylinder shape would be best.

Sunday night: I'm glad that Balticon kept its traditional 19) Balticon Short Film Festival. Out of nine short films, most were fantasies: three of them were music videos—Cinderella vs. Bell rap, an opera during a Medieval BBQ/festival, and a *Harry Potter* spoof/rap. The next four fantasies covered a girl and her imaginary night monster, a horror film about a stuffed bear, a senior-citizen vampire film, and an old man and his dust. One SF film, *Mission Ulysses*, had an astronaut walking on Mars and reporting no life while he had flashbacks about his personal life on Earth. Meanwhile, he was losing oxygen in his space suit. Then there was a documentary about the history of comic books from the 1930s to the current times. Next, I sat in on a panel about 20) SF: The Next 50 Years. Because Balticon and ST were celebrating 50 years, Jenifer R. Povey, Don Sakers, and Christine Meierz wondered what SF books, TV shows, or films that have been current as of 2016 would be remembered in 50 years. They also talked about hard SF because some SF that was around 50 years ago and was thought of as hard SF, would nowadays be soft SF. In addition, they wondered if SF would still be a popular genre in the next 50 years, especially with much technology catching up in our everyday lives. Then they discussed what SF books, films, or TV shows from 50 years ago have stood up to the test of time and still have been popular with current SF fans. One of the panel members thought that written SF might be regarded as similar to live theater nowadays. Not as many people attended live theater currently as they did in the 19th century because of competition from films and TV. Therefore, written SF, even in 2016, has been in competition with SF films and SF TV. Because of this, there has been more attendance at most media SF cons than at most literary SF cons lately. Then, the night ended for me at 21) the Con Suite. Located on the top (12th) floor, this room looked like a restaurant setting with lined up tables and chairs. Additionally, the con committee provided plenty of snack foods and soft drinks as well as chances to talk with other SF fans. Meanwhile, some fans had a chance to do some reading.

Monday, May 30: Things wound down on the last day, and I started that day by looking at the pictures of the winners of the 22) Hall Costume Contest. Out of 92 pictures, I'd estimate that about 80% of the costumes were fantasy and the rest SF. I observed many costumes displaying bright colors and glitter. In fact, some of these costumes looked better than some of the costumes I saw at the Masquerade. After this, I watched a presentation about the 23) ISU (International Space University), the Update, where Laura Burns showed a short video about ISU legend Jim Burk. Burk talked about the ISU bringing about a more peaceful and just world, especially by 2040. He also mentioned Project Phoenix to store stuff on the moon in case of a disaster on Earth. Thus, the core 3I's for ISU have been—interdisciplinary, international, and intercultural, and the ISU headquarters has been in Strasbourg, Alsace, France. Ms. Burns then discussed what went on during an ISU conference that even included a space masquerade. After this, she answered questions from the audience. The last event at Balticon for me was another science presentation, 24) The Latest News from Pluto and Beyond! Dr. Carey Lisse of John Hopkins University showed a video of Pluto close up on a flyby via the *New Horizons* probe. He also presented and talked about what other information has been discovered in these last 10 years. (By the way, as many of you know, back in 2006, Pluto got its status changed from the ninth planet in the solar system to a dwarf planet in the Kuiper Belt.) I also saw close up pictures of Pluto while Dr. Lisse told us different facts about this dwarf planet, and I looked at pictures of the interior makeup of the *New Horizons* probe. Other pictures displayed Jupiter and its red spot as well as one of its moons: Io. Then he said that in 2019, *New Horizons* will be exploring more of the Kuiper Belt. He

also covered some of the discoveries that the *Kepler* spacecraft made in looking for Earth-sized planets orbiting other stars.

Friday, June 17: Most people seldom thought about the NJ Meadowlands as a weekend getaway, but on the date above, I visited the first of three attractions located there: The Meadowlands Environment Center (MEC), 2 DeKorte Plaza, Lyndhurst (201-460-8300 or www.njmeadowlands.gov/ec). Upon entering the MEC, I saw a large diorama of a marshland imitating the surrounding marshlands outside. Thus, I looked at displays of the local flora and fauna: grasses, plants, and a few trees, as well as mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and insects. Another room exhibited specimen jars of small wildlife: fish, reptiles, birds, and mammals. Then, in two adjoining rooms, I noticed a mock cedar forest in one room and a mock cedar marsh in the other room displaying larger-than-life plants and animals. In addition, the MEC provided buttons to press to hear the sounds of the different birds and insects that lived nearby. Next, I walked down a long corridor to the enclosed Marsh View Pavilion where surrounding large windows offered great views of this marshland as well as the distant NJ Turnpike traffic and the more distant NYC skyline. Outside of the MEC, a wooden walkway led to an open-air pavilion that included closer views of the marshland and its inhabitants compared to the enclosed pavilion. Afterward, I walked on two of the close by easier trails: the Shore Walk and the Kingsland Overlook, and each of these trails were about a quarter mile. Along the way, I glanced at some very close flora, especially plenty of grasses, cattails, and tiger lilies on one trail, as well as different bushes, trees, and flowers on another trail. I also got a closer look at a few of the fauna: birds, especially ducks; some small mammals, especially squirrels; and plenty of insects. The MEC also offered longer trails, but I didn't feel ambitious enough to walk them. Nevertheless, I learned that there has been a whole other side to the Meadowlands than what I saw briefly from the NJ Turnpike, in a bus, on the way to NYC.

Saturday, June 18: There has also been a human history to the Meadowlands. For centuries, the local Native Americans, the Lenni-Lenapes, lived here before the first European settlers arrived in the 17th century. At the Meadowlands Museum, 91 Crane Ave., Rutherford (201-935-1175 or www.meadowlandsmuseum.com), located in the 1740 former Yereance-Berry House, I saw three floors of exhibits. Starting on the upper floor, I looked at some geology exhibits and a room containing fluorescent rocks that displayed their day-glow colors under a black light. On the main floor, one room presented a new permanent exhibit about Dr. William Carlos Williams (1883-1963), a pediatrician and a poet who lived and worked in the Meadowlands during most of the first half of the 20th century. Here, I noticed furniture from his house, including a portable manual typewriter that he wrote some of his poetry on as well as furniture and equipment he used in his medical practice, along with texts and pictures of him, his family, and friends. The next room showed temporary exhibits, and when I was there, I saw an exhibit on hats. Meanwhile, nearby texts explained the function and role of hats on the wearers. Although it was temporarily closed to the public for renovation, the staff did let me go down the basement level to see the next two rooms: a late 19th-century kitchen with an iron, wood-burning stove, and an earlier room from the 1700s that exhibited an open-hearth fireplace and spinning wheel. Anyway, between the day before and the date above, I'll never look at the Meadowlands in the same way.

Sunday, June 19: For this day, I was thinking air and space because I visited the NJ Aviation Hall of Fame, 400 Fred Wehran Drive, Teterboro Airport, Teterboro (201-288-6344 or www.njahof.org). First, I watched an introductory film about the history of aviation and space flight with an emphasis on NJ and the people who were born there or lived there. This film covered aviation events from the first balloon flight in the USA, in the 1790s, which traveled

from Philadelphia to Deptford, NJ, to the current air and space projects being done in the Garden State. Then at the Hall of Fame, I saw plaques showing the likenesses along with biological texts of the many men and women who played a part in advancing aviation or space exploration in NJ or they were from NJ. According to one of the helpful and enthusiastic staff members, this room might soon be running out of space for future honorees. Next, in the Dehmel Room, I noticed the world's first flight simulator and many pictures and scale models of aircraft as well as texts explaining different subjects: barnstormers, Tuskegee Airmen, Flying Aces, Flying Tigers, and so on. I spent most of my time, however, in the Great Room. Here, several pictures, texts, and scale models as well as full-sized exhibits, videos, hands-on exhibits, and so forth, presented different subjects such as women in aviation, space exploration, minorities in aviation, among other topics. My favorite place in this room was an area where I sat down and watched different videos about the *International Space Station* (ISS) covering subjects that ranged from how NASA and different space agencies assembled the ISS to astronauts demonstrating everyday life on board the ISS. Once upstairs, I had a closer look at the scale-model and full-sized air and space vehicles that hung over the Great Room, including an astronaut suit. Then outside, I viewed full-sized airplanes, a helicopter, and a fire engine once used at a local airport, as well as some 1950s army jeeps, an army ambulance from WWI, and the nosecone of a jet. Because it was "Open Cockpit Weekend," I was allowed to peek inside some of the land vehicles and airplanes as well as go inside a commercial passenger plane from the 1950s and the nosecone of that jet. Overall, this is a fascinating place to visit!

My next issue, Issue #10, should be out by December. In the meantime, enjoy the rest of 2016.