

2014 Peru

June 4, 2014 Miraflores, Lima

We arrived in the late evening and upon arrival to our hotel, we unpacked and went to bed, the next day around noon, we met our city guide who took us to lunch and we talked about similarities and differences between Peru and the US. We enjoyed our walk through the park that was home to many cats. We chose to visit the Love Park over the archeological site and the shopping plaza. We saw surfers and parasailers there.



Some pastry with café con leche was a good finish for the day.

June 5, 2014 - Iquitos, Peru

We took a flight to the north central area of Peru, the headwaters of the Amazon for our next adventure. The city is headquarters for the rubber, lumber and oil industries of the area. It is not accessible by road so everything must come by boat or plane. Thus, there are few private cars. People ride motorcycles or hail a motorcar. We boarded this small boat to travel down the river to our lodge and room complete with mosquito netting over the beds.





he kapok tree. They move very slowly and come down to the ground to defecate weekly. Otherwise, they are always in the trees, near the top.



That evening we went out for a boat ride to hear the sounds of the night and get a few sites of spiders and

butterflies.

We also met the doctor's assistant, Dr. Penelope, with whom we ate meals and chatted about England and her visit to Peru.

June 6, 2014 - Amazon River

This morning we went out to see iguana, pirana and dolphins. Along the river people live in these little houses with thatched roofs. The pink dolphins found on the Amazon are fresh-water dolphins. (They do not photograph well, all you could take a picture of would be the ripples in the water, they come up too quickly.) We went fishing with beef for the parana, Judy and I caught some but they were too little to eat. We had those that our guides caught for lunch.



A dug-out canoe is handy for river travel, they are generally hand-made.





This afternoon we went to see the local Indians who did a tribal dance for us, demonstrated the blowpipe and displayed their arts for purchase.

That evening we went on a nature walk and saw this very well camouflaged frog. The green leaf on top is real, what looks like a brown leaf is really the frog. We also saw these tarantulas.



The highlight of the evening was a snake who managed to get into the bar. This is a red tailed boa.



June 7, 2014 - Amazon

This morning we visited the medical clinic that serves the people of this area. We then continued to the village near our lodge. The men the sun on racks.

were out fishing, women were preserving fish in A man had caught a small alligator. Kids swim in the river while women wash the clothes. Our boatsman gave us a souvenir, a jaw of a pirana. Note the fine, regularly shaped incisors. They are slanted inward, much like a shark's, to aid in tearing.



Monkey is friends with dog.
Below, me with sloth. Below, all the native animals are found.



2 churches for one village.



Washing is part of village life. As is drying fish. These little forest frogs are really small, smaller than your knuckle but are poisonous.



This tapir was walking on the sidewalk right inside our lodge. Tapirs are herbivores with a prehensile snout.

June 8, 2014 - Amazon - River traffic. We don't do this for every tour, we ran out of gas and got a ride to our destination on another small boat. The current was strong so it took 2 ½ hours for the 2 hour trip.



Our rescuer



Wildlife in the jungle.



The longest treetop aerial walkway in the world.



The view from the top of the jungle.



June 9, 2014 - Amazon

After breakfast we went to see the Monkey Island, a reserve for orphans and other monkeys. The monkeys are wild but accustomed to humans so they had no reservations about coming close and hanging on to us. We then went to the larger village of Indiana to see a more civilized culture along the Amazon River.



The town of Indiana



June 10, 2014 - Miraflores, Lima



We met the mayor in the park. That's how to do a bougainvillea. We visited the archeological site in the city and saw the

excavation of this temple to the sun god. You can see the mason's hand print in the brick. Each brick is set sideways, like books in a library. This avoids collapse in an earthquake. Models depict the construction process.



The illuminated cross on the left was erected when the pope visited Lima years ago.

June 11, 2014 - Central Lima



Our guided tour began with a visit to the archeological museum. Most people concentrate on Peru's Incas and the development after the Spanish arrived. Nevertheless, population is recorded thousands of years BC.

In central Lima, demonstrations occur with regularity. Here the police control the demonstrators for higher craftsmen wages.



Children visit the capitol and see the presidential palace.





We went into the catacombs of the central church where many were buried but no photos were allowed. That evening we visited the Magic Fountain. Photos do not do it justice.

June 12, 2014 - Cusco and the ride to the Sacred Valley



At 11,000 feet of altitude, enough to be very Cuzco is shaped like a puma, the Incan symbol representing the god of the middle world, earth. These bulls and crosses blend the Christian and the Incan worlds together. One of the highlights was the llama farm.

noticeable, the city of



The ruins were amazing in the work involved in preparing the farming terraces and the fine block work done this high in the mountains with such precision.

June 13, 2014 - Highlands



raised domestically
tried but they knew
motivated for evasion.



shown here between the hanging rodent and



Today we saw how to cook
guinea pig, a Peru
highlands delicacy. They
don't eat much meat and

the guinea pigs can be caught wild. Of course these critters reproduce readily so a stock is not much of a problem. The pigs for today were and our first task was to catch one in the cage. I that no one ever came back so they were Our host had no trouble catching the rascal. Not the bucket is the kill. She held his hind legs and pulled on his head so that his spinal cord would break. The guy didn't whimper, it was quick and effective. The next step is to remove the fur. Once you assure that he is dead, he does not blink the eyes when touched, you dip him in boiling water and then slap him to loosen the fur. It comes off easily and is used in making adobe stronger so save for construction purposes. The next step is to wash and shave any remaining hair with the razor. Then separate the jaws with the knife and cut the belly open removing the entrails but preserving the organs. The pig is much smaller without fur and guts. Sprinkle with a seasoning mixture containing garlic, oregano and marigold. Then bake. We ate the rascal for lunch.



Next we went for a float trip down the river
seeing the mountains and the flora of the area.



We traveled to Machu Picchu by train in a few days.



Ollantaytambo is the site of Inca archeological ruins. The cells on the side of this mountain are the grain storage chambers. Note the incredible block work performed in the 15th century by Incan stone masons. That afternoon, we helped prepare stuffed peppers for our home-hosted luncheon. Here are the guinea pigs ready to eat. People come from the hills for the municipal market where you buy vegetables, meat and clothes. We took a ride in our driver's motorcar. These three-wheeled motorcycles are commonly used to get around without owning a car. The Andean ladies still go to town in their colorful and warm outfits with unique hats. We visited a pottery factory where workers were making their wares.

June 14, 2014 - Highlands



We visited the home of an Andean family and found this shrine. Notice in the center the skulls of family ancestors. The thatched roof lasts about 10 years. The lady is sewing items for sale at home.



We then rode the train to Machu Picchu. The remains of the Inca site are incredible as to their stone work, stability and creativity.





That evening, we had a local dinner with a band. Everyone was dancing.



That evening a parade commemorated a holiday. There were fireworks.

June 15, 2014 - Machu Picchu

We again climb the mountain on a different path to reach the Sun Gate. Here is another view of the extensive Incan ruins created in the 1500s.



Here we are at the top of our climb, the Sun Gate. Looking down on the gorge. The Inca Bridge.



June 16, 2014 - Cusco - These incredibly large stones are from the Sacsayhuaman ruins near Cuzco. Each stone is likely more than a ton. They have withstood countless earthquakes because they are accurately fitted and shaped as trapezoids leaning inward.



The medicine man performs a healing ritual with an assortment of modern substances and symbols. We were asked to make wishes. I prayed.



The white savior statue, a gift from Pakistan. That evening we went to a folkloric dancing

show. These two were the best.

June 17, 2014 - Cusco



We went to a market and saw bread baked. We also bought apples and pears for the children at the school that we will visit today. Along the way we stopped to talk with a shepherd and her family. They say my office is nice, but this is a really nice place to work.





We then arrived at the school. Though most of the children were participating in a sporting event, a few children were available to talk with us.



Afterward, we went to a weaving cooperative for lunch and to meet with the ladies who worked there. Our lunch host who showed us how to spin thread for weaving.



Making soap from a root with water and a grater. Then you take a hunk of sheep wool and wash it in the soapy water. See the difference! Then we dye the wool in dyes made from trees, berries or insects. Here the loom threads are prepared.



The master weaver shuttles the horizontal threads.



How about alpaca and Andean potato chips for dinner tonight. It was really good!

June 18, 2014 - Cuzco City Tour on foot



Spanish conquest of the Incan Kingdom, they built churches on top of the Incan temples. This one in Cuzco is central for the territory.



The churches in central Cusco and this statue of the last Inka King.



Today is the first day of the festival of Corpus Christi during which icons of the Christian saints are paraded through the streets, 14 in all. Each is followed by a marching band.



Of course at a festival the spectators and participants are going to be hungry so there are many sales spots set to accommodate. And what could be better than guinea pig and bread! This little fellow is all decked out with his cap and poncho.





June 19, 2014 - We are in transit from Cuzco to Puno, the capital city of the Puno Department near the Lake Titicaca, the southeast border between Peru and Bolivia. Along the way we saw lots of cattle and sheep. This is the Wyoming of Peru, that feeds the people the beef and lamb. They also raise alpaca. This looks like sheep wool but alpaca neck so I'm not sure except it isn't a cattle.



June 20, 2014 - Puno: Today we went to see a nearby town, Chucuito, because it was on the OAT itinerary. There is not much there. This is the Inca ruins that they proudly display and charge a fee to visit. You'll notice the large trapezoidal blocks characteristic of that era.



Sadly, the large church building of historic proportions has been abandoned to the birds, this cross stands in front and a cemetery on the side.



In the cemetery, graves are above ground. In the town square there are topiary trees. It seems that trimming is scheduled for tomorrow.



This sundial accurately showed the time but it's off by one hour. I guess they must have moved the time zones since it was erected.



And now what we've all been waiting for, Lake Titicaca, one of the world's largest navigable lakes at 13,500 feet altitude. One asks, "where does all the water come from?" As you can see from the picture, the lake is surrounded by mountains even taller. Some phenomenon avoids the water going to the sea.

Returning to Puno, we visited the cathedral, the home church of the bishop in charge of the diocese.



There is an illuminated ornate cross on the front of the church. On the top of the hill, overlooking the city, the Condor, the Incan symbol for the heavenly world, looks over the city.



It was a treat to watch the parade that followed this icon of a religious saint around the plaza. Ladies watch the festivities in traditional dress. This is common in older women. Old and young men seem to wear shirts and jeans just like



Americans.



offices as ours would.

While in the department center, similar to our state capital, I thought we'd take a look at the court house. Judy caught this hearing in progress. The courthouse had the same type of



On the way home we saw this music festival, an impromptu band with dancing and spectators.

June 21, 2014: We move to our last quarters, the Yavari ship made in the mid 1800s, brought in pieces and assembled on the lake. It is now a museum and a bed and breakfast.



M/V YAVARI - 1862

In 1861, the Peruvian Government ordered two gunboats for Lake Titicaca from James Watt & Co. and the Thames Ironworks & Shipbuilding Co. in England. The two ships in 2766 pieces were transported in crates by sea around Cape Horn to the port of Arica (then a Peruvian port) in the cargo ship Mayola. The pieces were then transported by train to Tacna and, over six years, by men and mules up the Andes to Puno on Lake Titicaca (12,500 f.a.s.).

The Yavari was reassembled and launched on Christmas Day 1870. The sister ship Yapura (now B.A.P. Puno) was launched in March 1872. In 1884 the Yavari was lengthened by 45 feet. In 1887, following the War of the Pacific between Peru/Bolivia and Chile, the ship became the property of the British company Peruvian Corporation, which in 1914 replaced the Yavari's original steam engine (fuelled on dry llama dung), by a Bolinder diesel engine (Swedish), on board today. In 1975 the lake fleet of seven ships was nationalized.

In 1987 the Yavari was acquired from the Peruvian Navy by the Asociación Yavari, which is affiliated to the Yavari Project in the United Kingdom (directed by Miss Meriel Larken). Since 1988 the Yavari has been recognized by the Peruvian Institute of Culture as a naval museum and she is open to visitors while work continues on restoring and maintaining the vessel.



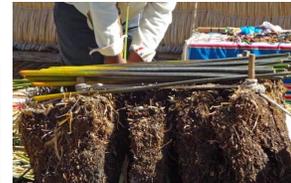
The ship has many world records, highest (altitude) navigable lake. It single propellor diesel powered its engine, cabins and such are refurbished on site.

it is the largest ship on the has the oldest operating steam ship engine. Much of original equipment,



June 22, 2014: Uros Islands and Taquile Island - In Lake Titicaca (titi means Puma and caca means rock in Cechuan language) the from the reeds that grow subject to large variations

Uros people live on islands that they make near the edges of the lake. Lake Titicaca is in its water level due to the wet and dry seasons. So in the dry season when the water level is low, one uses a knife to cut squares of the reeds. You insert a stick into the reeds and tie the sticks together. When the water level rises, the roots break free and float. You then stack layer upon layer of reeds on top of the roots in alternating directions until the heap is 6 feet high. You can stand on the island in fact there are 10 families on this island. They last 100 years until the roots deteriorate and you must start a new island.



On the island you build your house of reeds, you place a stone on which you make a fire and build boats of reeds. Any



excess is piled on top to make the ground more stable. The base of the reed is edible, we tried it but it needs salt. No house should be without electricity, hence the solar

panel. Inside a typical house, above, left inside the cook house. The community elects a president who assigns the tasks and they take turns cooking, hunting, cleaning for the whole 10 family community.



Taquile island is a large rocky island in the middle of Lake Titicaca. It has about 2,400 inhabitants who wear traditional garb. They catch fish, raise cattle, sheep and chicken. They weave their clothes from the sheep's wool. The terraces for agriculture pre-date the Inca period, putting them at about 1100 A.D.



They were making houses of adobe in this hillside. The man is making detergent from a certain tree branch. This is used to wash the wool before spinning.

June 23, 2014 - Sillustani



In this little, lakeside town, one finds a church and these fine pre-Inca specimens which were used for tombs, not cremation of those who had died. The blocks are huge, perfectly formed to convex and have withstood many earthquakes yet still stand because of their engineering. As pre-Inca, these “chullpas” may be 1,000 years old, whereas Inca structures are “only” 600 years old.

With this we return home, a lovely experience with nice people. Upon returning home we noticed:

1. No one honks
2. Water with ice in it.
3. Nice humid temperatures in the low 90's

Yet the people in Peru were open and friendly, recognizing what a nice place on earth they had.