

## 2017 Trip Southwest – Review, Stories & Tid-Bits

2017 marked our 14<sup>th</sup> trip Southwest since 2002, involving at least some travel in New Mexico. This year's journey was shorter than most, but still included new sights, new experiences, and new friends.

Our cats, Topsy, Cisco & Timmy, saw the suitcases come out for packing, so they knew another trip was imminent. Topsy crawled into Sandra's and shed a goodly amount of her white hair so she could accompany us vicariously, while Cisco plopped on top of Bill's and tried to cave it in. Friday, June 2nd, was the day they dread most – the trip to Waggin' Tails Pet Resort, with their nice cages and play area. We accomplished that task bloodlessly, said “goodbye” to the little darlings, had supper at El Monterrey, and finished loading Subie 2, the 2017 Subaru, for an early Saturday departure (if the 2015 Subaru had had front collision avoidance as this one does, we'd still be driving it) .

Day 1 was supposed to be a nice 335 mile jaunt to Great Bend, KS, with a stop at Lindsborg. We were off and rolling by 6:30, donuts from Yummy's in hand, via our usual roads through Holden, Pleasant Hill (past Blinker Light Road), Louisburg, and the first of many oil wells seen on the trip. Around Freeman (MO) we saw a jeep with WWII-era military markings waiting to pull out. Must have been a WWII reenactment or timeline somewhere that day. Our first comfort break was outside of Ottawa, where we always stop at a C-store at KS-68 and I-35, since it's conveniently 2 hours out – and where once we met an all-lady bowling team from Nebraska bound for Wichita; they'd stopped for beer and a smoke.

Refreshed, we continued on KS-68 past Osage City and on to Council Grove, once an important stop on the Santa Fe Trail. Some early treaties were agreed to there and are commemorated in a park; one passes cut-out silhouettes of mounted Indians on the way into town. We started looking for lunch as we headed west – nothing in Herrington, but we found a friendly little place for a hamburger in Hope, the Gridiron Cafe. We also found an old-fashioned thresher just begging for its picture to be taken. We obliged.

After lunch, we pressed on toward Lindsborg, about 250 miles from home. Our first glitch: as we drove toward an isolated string of hills rising from the prairie, Bill said, “I think I missed a turn.” No problem, we took a paved county road parallel to the hills (Coronado Heights - drove right past a “castle” on the hill – later learned it was a well-known landmark) and arrived on the west edge of town around 1 PM. The town is Swedish – or at least it was settled by Swedes - and the local folks make the most of that heritage. About every 50 feet along the street you'll find one of those blocky Dala horses, painted (of course) to represent local heritage or a sponsoring business. We took a few pictures, then stopped at the local library, where Bill found a book to his liking among the books for sale. Bill also noticed a nail in Subie 2's left rear tire.

We drove on to Great Bend, checked in at the Holiday Inn Express, then went over to the neighboring Walmart to see about getting the tire fixed. Second glitch: too close to the sidewall, couldn't be fixed – and no tire that size in stock. Have you ever tried to find an odd-size tire on a Saturday night? In a town of 16,000 where nobody is open on Sunday? Yeah, right. Thank goodness for the internet, after drawing blanks in towns along our planned route, we had hope – in Wichita. Had dinner at Perkins down the street instead of Kiowa Kitchen (seen as we entered) and started to replan.

Tid-bit: One of the towns (notes illegible) sported Miss Lizzie's Clothing Emporium

As Sunday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, dawned, our whole trip was still threatened by that tire. Bill called NTB in

Wichita to verify they had the tire needed. “Hold it for us, we're on the way.” So we left about 8:30 after topping off the tire, heading southeast rather than west. We drove a nice, reasonable speed (meaning everyone on the road passed us), stopping at a Casey's to make sure the tire still held air. It did. We arrived at NTB a bit after 11, and they had us back on the road about an hour later with a new tire and \$200 on the Mastercard. We barely had time to cancel the reservation at Lamar, CO, and make a new one at Liberal, KS.

The upshot of this is that we didn't get to see & photograph Castle Rock and Monument Rocks in western Kansas; instead we toured Greensburg to see how it had recovered from the tornado a number of years back. One thing I noticed there was the amount of solar and wind power in use, as well as the lack of mature trees. We drove past Mullinville, home of Michael Liggett's whirligig 'totem poles,' and Meade, where the Dalton boys planned their unfortunate trip to Coffeyville. We got to Liberal about 4:30 PM, had supper at the Cattleman's Cafe (a fine consolation prize), and stayed at another HIE.

Sunday's detour also required a change of plans for Monday, June 5<sup>th</sup>. A 7:30 start took us through the town of Hooker, OK (their “lady of the evening” welcome sign is long gone) to Guymon, then a long, lonely drive west through the Oklahoma panhandle to Boise City and on to Clayton, New Mexico, home of the famous landmark on the Cimarron Cut-off of the Santa Fe Trail, Rabbit Ears Peak. A good, modern, recently repaved road took us through the Raton volcanic field to our next stop – Capulin Volcano National Monument. The NPS apparently has decided to allow regrowth to the trees they once removed from the slopes – somebody figured out that the trees and shrubs are what stabilized the slope and preserved the long-extinct cinder cone. We've visited here several times in the past, even hiked the complete rim on our anniversary in 2010, and have never seen the countryside as green as it was this day.

If you've done any traveling in New Mexico, you know that the state shuts down on Mondays. Not really, but many museums and restaurants are closed, including our favorite in Raton. The local Welcome Center, however, was open, and suggested an alternate place for our first taste of “green” of the trip – we never would have eaten at The Sands, but renamed to Casa Lemus it was quite satisfactory.

Another 110 miles, this time on I-25, to Las Vegas. We passed Wagon Mound, another Santa Fe Trail landmark, a volcanic mound that looks from a distance like a covered wagon pulled by two teams of oxen. Not far past here, we ran into the edge a pretty good thunderstorm with either tiny hail or large raindrops. We were out of it by Watrous, where the Mountain Route & Prairie Route merged.

Las Vegas was once a wild place, but is known for its 19<sup>th</sup> Century gunfights, not 20<sup>th</sup> Century gangsters (like the one in Nevada). We ate at Charlie's Bakery & Cafe; they like their green chile hot (every place we've eaten in this town prides itself on hot chile)! Another night (and our first laundry of the trip) at a HIE, and we're back on schedule, only 130 extra miles on Subie 2.

Tuesday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, and Bill wished he'd had a topo map when he planned this day. A story on a blog about hunting for Forrest Fenn's treasure talked about Hermit's Peak, so we thought we'd drive up this back road (NM-65) to maybe get some clear shots of it. Didn't realize that it just kept going up and up through the ponderosa pines, so we found a safe place to turn around and went back down to Las Vegas. Not to be discouraged, we took off toward Mora, this time taking another “road less traveled.” NM-94 was curvy, with frequent farms and a few little villages along the way – exactly what a back road should be. One abandoned log building had a newish sign reading “guest house.” Don't think we'll be staying there.

Mora is an old Spanish town in a verdant mountain valley. It appears that the prior day's thunderstorms had deposited quite a bit of water, since ditches were running and a crew was cleaning mud from a street. A few pictures of scenic buildings, a stop at Family Dollar for something Sandra needed, a comfort break, and we're headed north on NM-434 toward Angel Fire. This is another very back back-road, narrow, winding and without a center line in parts. There was no place to pull off to take pictures of the row of cabins at an abandoned horse camp, mainly because the state is busy improving this section of the road; pavement is gone and the new roadbed was open to the rains of the night before. Maybe we should look for a car wash?

About ½ way between Angel fire and Eagle's Nest, a white structure looms on the hillside. This is the the chapel at the New Mexico Vietnam Memorial. We have stopped there a number of times, and it never fails to be an emotional experience. Bill lost high school and Academy classmates in Nam, while Sandra worked at the Army Home Town News Center in K.C. (Hardesty & Independence Ave) during this time. We pulled in right after a group on bikes (Harleys, not Schwinn's); they were preceded by a van with a sign about motorcycle tours. Guess we never thought that bikers would want a tour guide.

Pulled into Taos right around lunch time. Naturally, Bill missed the cut-off that avoided all the traffic at the main intersection in town, but he found a side road that not only avoided the tie up, but also brought us out right where we wanted lunch, El Taoseno. El Taoseno's clientele is mostly locals, with a smattering of tourists. Bill thinks the green chile strikes just the right balance of heat and taste; so we ate there twice more before leaving on Thursday.

We braved the traffic jam as we headed north to our motel, El Pueblo Lodge. This is a classic old establishment in several buildings, all in classic pueblo style (duh!). We had a large downstairs room in the newest one, comfortable and quiet. Then, it was downtown to the Plaza, where we checked out the souvenir and T-shirt shops and bought (gasp!) nothing! Our favorite Taos book store had changed owners, changed names, divested the bookstore cats, and were out of Anne Hillerman's latest. Supper was at (you guessed it) El Taoseno.

Wednesday, June 7<sup>th</sup>, promised to be a hot one for our first visit to the Taos Pueblo. This, our 6<sup>th</sup> (at least) visit to Taos and we'd never made it to the actual Pueblo. Breakfast was at Michael's Kitchen, a Taos destination in itself, where Sandra had a waffle a Bill bacon & eggs (with 4! thick strips of bacon). Thus fortified, we were off to the Pueblo. We were held up in traffic by a religious procession headed out of the city of Taos, to ???.

Did you know that roads on the Pueblo (technically, all their land is their reservation) can be closed for bridge repair? That made the drive a tad dusty. We parked in a dusty parking lot devoid of shade, paid our entry fee at a building in the modern section and walked in. We were free to wander any place that didn't have a "do not enter" sign, but decided to wait for the guided tour by the church. A young man, UNM college student, showed up, told us and others about the church and the Pueblo, and started the tour with a visit to the ruins of the old church, the one shelled by Missouri troops when putting down a revolt by Taos residents against American occupation during the Mexican War. The cemetery outside the ruins is still in use and Bill noted many government military stones.

Each remaining building in the Pueblo is privately owned and maintained by family members descended from those who built it. Some buildings weren't as well maintained, so Sandra got her chance at photos of failing architectural features. After the tour, we stood in the shade along the little river that runs through the Pueblo and asked the guide questions. They call themselves (translated)

People of the Red Willow. About that time, the church bell started ringing and the procession we saw in town arrived, circled the Plaza, and entered the church. Later we heard singing. Shops were open in many of the buildings and under the arbors outside the multi-story pueblo by the time we left, hot and hungry.

Back to the motel to catch our breath & cool off, lunch at Michael's, and back roads out to Walmart (we've learned the routes the locals take to avoid the traffic tie-ups near old town). Then we drove to Pilar, went into the Orilla Verde recreation area and took pictures of the Rio Grande running high and kayakers/rafters on the river, crossed the Taos Junction Bridge, and climbed out the west side of the gorge. There's a nice, smooth road running parallel to the gorge and connecting to US-64 and the Taos Gorge bridge. This is a high bridge and the walkways on both sides are jammed with tourists. We walked it once, but it's a long way down.

Another visit to the Plaza, another supper at El Taoseno, and we're ready to call it a day.

Do you know the way to Santa Fe? Actually, we know several, but decided to take the "low road" this Thursday (June 8<sup>th</sup>) morning. But first, breakfast at the motel. It was similar to standard motel food, with a few twists – a toaster for artisan bread, mini-breakfast burritos (or were they tamales?), a fancy coffee maker.

En route to Santa Fe, we stopped a couple of times along the river to take pictures and look for rafters (the kind you see on the river, not the kind in your attic). Saw plenty of water, some nice rapids, and even a little whirlpool, but nobody on it. In the city, we headed straight for the Plaza, parked, and visited the Museum of the IAIA (Institute for American Indian Arts). The museum features modern art by its students and alumni, as well as an Allen Houser sculpture garden. Across the street, in the park adjoining the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, was an exhibit called the Prado in Santa Fe – more on that later. It was close to 11 AM, and we had a tradition to honor.

We were the first diners in for lunch at The Shed, so we got our favorite table, the one we had on our very first visit in 2004. We discovered it by accident that day, and Bill took a prize-winning photo out the window. When our friend Sandy Irle told us she was going to Santa Fe, we told her about The Shed, and she called us while having her blue corn enchiladas there. So now, when we eat at The Shed, we call to "remind" her.

After lunch, we visited Collected Works bookstore, home of Forrest Fenn's books on the Chase (again no latest Hillerman), toured the NM Museum of Art, visited some stores around the Plaza, than sat at the Plaza listening to the street musicians. One young lady, with a well-behaved dog at her side, was playing violin music that sounded like it had Gypsy or Jewish roots, then she finished with a slow version of "Ashokan Farewell." Back to the car, out Cerrillos Road to the HIE, dinner at Tortilla Flats, and did some laundry.

Friday, June 9<sup>th</sup> was Museum Hill day. We wanted to see the new exhibit at the NM Museum of Indian Arts and Culture. En route, we stopped at Smith's (a grocery store chain) and picked up some beer on sale, then bought cheese at Albertson's up the road a bit. Bill was pleased he remembered the back roads to get to Museum Hill. While he read every tag on every exhibit, Sandra visited the gift shop and found ... the book Bill wanted – and we bought it without having to pay sales tax!

Back downtown for lunch at Tia Sophia's, then the Prado in Santa Fe exhibit. The Prado is, of course, Madrid's world-renowned art museum. The open air exhibit had large scale repros of representative

(and famous) art works from the museum's collection, with information about each artist and about the work. Bill, of course, had to read every word about the pictures and artists. Sandra fidgeted.

Then it was on to Fennboree. "What is a Fennboree," you may ask? Well, it's a gathering of people who are searching for a small chest filled with gold and other valuables to the tune of \$1 million or so, placed somewhere in the Rocky Mountains (excluding Idaho, Utah & Canada) north of Santa Fe, by retired fighter pilot & art dealer Forrest Fenn, and featured in his book "The Thrill of the Chase." Actually, it's a several day party in Hyde State Park in the mountains above Santa Fe. Participants know each other by the screen names used on various blogs devoted to the search and enjoy putting faces to the names. There, we've run into people like Tim Nobody, Iron Will, NTMI, Spallies, Boomer Girl, jdiggins, fundamental design, Wisconsin Mike, Desertphile, etc. Mr. Fenn, himself, attended.

We spent Saturday from 2 to 7 and Sunday from 9 to 3 at Fennboree, at 8500 feet. I have no idea where we may have dined either night.

Sunday in New Mexico, June 11<sup>th</sup>. We left Santa Fe for Albuquerque a bit before 8 AM, planning to stop at Tent Rocks for some photography. Oops – a sign said no through traffic, so we gave up on that and headed on to the big city. We'd planned to take an aged friend to lunch at a nearby Garcia's, but he wasn't up to it, so we had lunch at the Frontier. This is an Albuquerque/UNM tradition, open 24 hours. You order at the counter and wait for your number to flash on the "meals ready" light. Then you take your tray to one of 4 rooms, the walls of each adorned with art. 45 minutes later (that's how much free parking you get), you're on your way. Bill, as usual, had green chile stew.

In our case, we were on our way to the Old Town, the Plaza and local museums. The Plaza has two brass mountain howitzers left over from Gen. Sibley's 1861 incursion, the usual tourist traps, and Treasure House Books – Bill walked out of there with an Anaya and 3 Steven Havills (starting to see a pattern here?). We visited the Albuquerque Museum of Art and History, with a brand new exhibit of movie memorabilia "New Mexico in the movies." From there it was on to the NM Museum of Natural History, where we visited Stan the T-Rex, smooched in the Chixulub meteor exhibit (where we once caught a pair of staffers doing the same), and jumped up and down to create our own earthquake. Supper at a Village Inn (definitely a cut above Denny's and Country Kitchen), laundry at the Holiday Inn Airport, and that's a day.

We had a couple of options for our Monday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, leg to Las Cruces. We chose the direct route down I-25, rather than the side trip to the ghost town of Hillsboro (maybe next year). We left around 8 AM after breakfast at a Waffle House (Bill says "mmm, grits!"), with stops at Belen for snacks and T or C for some water at Walmart. This Walmart is the only one we've seen with shaded parking, shade provided by the elevated solar panels – what an idea! It being Monday, the restaurants were closed, so it was on to Hatch. Hatch is the chile capital of New Mexico, source of the green chiles that make what we consider the signature of New Mexico dishes. We ate at the Pepper Pot, known for good food and slow service, cash only, then took the river road toward Las Cruces. The Rio Grande was higher than we'd ever seen it in this area.

Arrived in Las Cruces about 3 PM after crossing the Rio Grande at least 4 times. Since we needed to wait a couple of hours before meeting Sandra's Uncle Murray for dinner, Bill went ahead and started processing his pictures from Fennboree. Dinner was at Si Senor and very tasty (as usual), and we planned for Tuesday's activities.

Did we mention that southern New Mexico was in the middle of a heat wave? Even if the heat is dry,

when the thermometer hits the upper 90s, it's HOT. And so it was on Tuesday, June 13<sup>th</sup>. We had two objectives – visit the Las Cruces Railroad Museum and shop at COAS bookstore. We accomplished both, sandwiched around lunch with Sandra's 1<sup>st</sup> cousin, Darren, Uncle Murray (& friend Peggy) at the High Desert Brewing Company (food and beer both good). The museum, in the old Santa Fe depot, included artifacts, history, and a room with three electric train layouts – guess which room had the most visitors.

We were rather frugal at COAS, which takes some doing as it has a large collection of titles of all kinds. Bill says he needs to bring in a bunch of duplicate books for credit, then go spend the credit. Maybe next time. In the meantime, we managed to walk out with only 4 books & a CD!

Wednesday, June 14<sup>th</sup> started with a miscalculation, either by Bill, by the military, or by both. The main road between Las Cruces and Alamogordo was scheduled to be closed between 8 and 9 AM for a missile test on the White Sands range. We left about 8:40 and dawdled our way up the mountain pass – and found ourselves in a Class A traffic jam. The missile shot was late, so we were sidetracked onto a packed parking area. Had plenty of time to look at the back side of the rugged Organ Mountains, and “help” change a tire for a lady parked right in front of us (by “help,” we mean loaning a tire gauge to the men doing the work).

This interlude put us 2 hours behind on our longest driving day of the trip, distance-wise. Our planned museum-and-lunch stop in Roswell became lunch only – good thing Bill knew where to turn off the bypass. We'd eaten at Los Cerritos before, so got our last taste of green chile before leaving New Mexico. Then it was off on the 70 miles of long, lonely, empty road to Portales and Clovis. No stops there, either, and we pressed on across into Texas to Canyon, where we gratefully settled into our HIE, top floor. What, no ground floor rooms? Nope, all filled with denizens of a couple of tour buses, out at Palo Duro Canyon at the time. Dinner at Feldman's Wrong Way Diner, notable for American food and two different model trains circling over our heads.

We started Thursday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, back on Central time, which may help explain why we didn't get started until 8:45 AM; the packed breakfast area at the HIE may have also played a role, as we decided McD's would be quicker than fighting the tour bus people. This McD's had ordering kiosks; some other folks started to try one, then gave up. I-27 to Amarillo, I-40 into Oklahoma (after a short stop at Route 66 icon Shamrock TX), and off the interstate for the sight-seeing destination of the day. But first, hot beef sandwiches for lunch in Cheyenne, OK, at Zoe's (pronounced “zoh”). Then it was back to the Washita Battlefield, where Lt. Col. Custer had his greatest triumph of the Indian wars: an 1868 attack on a Black Kettle's sleeping village of peaceful Cheyenne, the survivors of Chivington's similar attack at Sand Creek, CO, in 1864.

We had previously visited other major Indian War sites – Sand Creek and the Little Big Horn, so we wanted to visit this one. The rather nice visitor center interprets the Indian wars as “a clash of cultures”; Custer was just following standard policy established in D.C. by killing men, capturing women, burning their belongings and killing their horses. I guess the women and children killed were just what we today call “collateral damage,” and Custer's thirst for glory was just incidental. In any case, Custer missed the truly hostile camps just down the small river, tarnished his reputation by not looking for a detachment that chased some of the Cheyenne too far and were annihilated, and set off 8 years of unrelenting warfare on the plains. Bill recently read “Son of the Morning Star,” which deals with the principals in the Little Big Horn event as well as details of the battle, but he preferred the movie portrayal of Custer in “Little Big Man.”

The battlefield/massacre site itself is restored prairie – we presume “restored” since ag terraces aren't natural. It was too hot to hike the 1.5 mile trail to the site of Black Kettle's winter camp, but at least the bugs were nowhere near as vicious as those at Sand Creek last year. We headed off through rolling hills on scenic back roads through the Black Kettle National Grassland into Custer County and on to Weatherford for the night at another HIE. Weatherford was the home of Astronaut Thomas Stafford, so naturally it has a Space Museum; we didn't go. Supper was at Lucille's Roadhouse Diner (it has three distinct areas, and only the “steakhouse” was open when we ate), walking distance from the hotel. The name made me think of the Little Richard song, but the décor was Route 66, not 50's Rock and Roll.

Friday, June 16<sup>th</sup>, and we're headed for the Wichita area, determined to avoid interstate highways. We crossed the Canadian River, which flows southward out of northern New Mexico, turns east into Texas, north into Oklahoma, and finally joins the Arkansas in eastern Oklahoma), then passed through Watonga, home of a pow-wow circle, and Kingfisher, where we crossed the Cimarron. The Cimarron flows out of Johnson Mesa in New Mexico, crosses into Kansas within about 40 miles of the Arkansas, and eventually flows into the Arkansas near Tulsa. In New Mexico, this is known as the “dry Cimarron,” which explains one of the reasons the Cimarron Cutoff of the Santa Fe Trail was risky (another reason was Comanches). From Kingfisher, Sam Walton's birthplace, we went north through Enid to the Kansas border town of Caldwell. We knew that some of Sandra's relatives were (or had been) in the area, but we didn't look them up, mainly because we'd lost their contact info.

Now, Caldwell is one interesting town. During the heyday of the Chisholm Trail it was a regular wild west cow town, known as the Border Queen. In case you don't believe it, they have historical markers all over downtown telling the earlier history of the current building (or the one that was once there), as well as what happened there. To make sure you get the idea, atop a corner once-a-bank building you'll see the figures of a couple of cowboys engaged in a shoot-out with imagined foes down below. One of the markers tells about a hill south of town, where the local “soiled doves” would set a lookout for the next northbound herd, then hurry back and alert the town that money was on its way. In its heyday, it put Dodge City to shame. For the story, see <http://www.legendsofamerica.com/ks-caldwell.html>.

After lunch at the Red Barn (best hamburger of the trip), we passed through Arkansas City (pronounced Ar Kansas, not Arkansaw), Winfield and Augusta en route to El Dorado (pronounced with long a). We met the Colonel of Bill's CW reenacting organization (he's been at it longer than Bill, who started back in '87) at a Mexican restaurant, where we talked about battles past and future events. Spent the night at our last HIE of the trip and got ready for our last day.

Thunderstorms swept SE Kansas late Friday night and early in the morning of Saturday, 17 June. We left about 7:30, back on our usual schedule, and headed east on US-54. US-54 runs from Pittsfield, IL to El Paso, TX, and we've driven every mile except the stretch between Alamogordo and El Paso. We drove through Eureka and Yates Center, then took a comfort break at a Casey's in Iola. There we heard people talking about power outages and trees damaged; a bit further east we noted that cornstalks looked like they'd been shredded, perhaps by hail.

Pulled into Ft. Scott about 10 AM, and immediately headed for the National Historic Site. The fort was one of a chain (Ft. Leavenworth & Ft. Gibson) along the military road. It housed dragoons who were tasked to protect the border between settled areas to the east and “uncivilized” Indians to the west. As the Indians were moved farther away, it was decommissioned, then re-manned during the War for Southern Independence (aka Civil War). Interpretation is based on the earlier period, although it does host a major Federal CW reenactor encampment annually. We toured the open fort, taking pictures until Bill's camera decided it didn't like the memory card installed. Talked to one interpreter, dressed in

dragoon summer fatigue uniform. Bill, who reenacts without his glasses, noted the interpreter was wearing modern specs. Oh, the horror!

Left Ft. Scott about 11 AM, not seeing a satisfactory place for lunch. When we got to Pleasanton, we found the only place for lunch was a Casey's by the new highway. A couple of slices of pizza later, and we headed back to the Mine Creek Battlefield State Historic Site. Bill participated in the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary reenactment, held on the actual battlefield (to the detriment of later archaeological endeavors), and wanted to see if the ground still quaked when trod upon. The heat wave, again, forestalled any hiking.

Mine Creek in late 1864 was the only CW battle in Kansas involving regular troops on both sides. Lt. Col. Frederick Benteen (you may have heard of him – at the Little Big Horn) led a charge that helped break the Confederate line. Col. John Phillips, later on the winning side in Warrensburg's 1870 Old Drum trial, was another Federal commander. Confederate Gen. John Sappington Marmaduke was captured; he would become Missouri Governor well after the war.

Now we're on the home stretch: US-69 north to Louisburg, east to Holden and supper at Annie's 58 Drive Inn, back roads to Warrensburg (MODOT's website told us a bridge was out on MO-58) and home about 4:30 PM. Sandra started requesting immediate repatriation of the cats, but we couldn't pick them up until Monday. We busied ourselves unpacking, as well as wondering how our neighbors were able to get the grass cut with our and their broken mowers – not to mention wondering how that new screen door installed itself during our absence. On Sunday, we bought a 3<sup>rd</sup> cat carrier so we wouldn't have to stuff two large cats into a single carrier. We picked them up Monday AM; amazing how easily they entered their carriers to go home. Three cats on the bed Monday night – we're back to normal.

Our trip was 2826.7 miles, of which 136.1 were in Missouri, 200.7 in Texas, 400.2 in Oklahoma, 881.4 in Kansas, and 1204.1 in New Mexico. Overall gas mileage was a bit over 31 MPG. We spent 1 night in Oklahoma, 1 night in Texas, 3 nights in Kansas, and 9 in New Mexico.