

October 15-23, 2017 - My 60th New Jersey High School Reunion (and yes, aviation was involved!)

We had decided to make my 60th Dumont (NJ) High School reunion trip a mini-vacation and to do some of the things that a tourist to NJ would do. While the following photos represent only a small sample of those activities, they will give an idea of what an enjoyable time that we had while in my boyhood home state.

However our primary concern was finding a responsible couple to care for our two Silky Terriers while we were away. *Trusted Housesitters*, provides access to reviewed and vetted members who will do this for **free** in return for a pleasant and interesting place to live, for a short time. Here are us and our sitters Frank, who is from Prague and Viki who was born in Istanbul, Turkey.



We arrived at South Jersey's Atlantic City airport, via Spirit Airlines, a few days before the reunion and was picked up by a longtime friend from my Harrington Park elementary school days. We had breakfast with Steve the following morning at his new senior living facility in nearby Lakewood.

I had always wanted to see Lucy, the NJ elephant, so on our first full day we drove along the south Jersey shoreline to Island Beach State Park and then over to Margate to take a tour through this famous 100 year old pachyderm.



We had arrived a bit before the scheduled tour was to begin so that we could wander around this 60 foot high structure, which we were soon going to see *from the inside out*. At

its upper *howdah* (the basket on which one rides an elephant) we had marvelous views of the Jersey Shore beaches and the Atlantic Ocean just beyond. Weather was fantastic during our entire stay.



Then it was over to the Historic Towne of Smithville. This was a place that I used to often fly into when I lived in North Jersey. Smithville owned the airport which was just a 10 minute walk into the "olde town". Today it was to be lunch at the Smithville Inn.

New Jersey used to have many small airports which featured great eateries either directly on the field or within walking distance or via a short drive on a courtesy vehicle or shuttle. I guess that I have picked up the habit from those days since I still do so many "100 dollar hamburger" flights from my Florida airstrip.

And a good lunch it was. Miriam had a chicken pot pie while I enjoyed the Fish and Chips. After the meal we walked around the town and I enjoyed an ice cream cone while Miriam wandered in and out of the many "olde tyme" shops and stores.

The following day was off toward Princeton where we were to meet my cousin and her husband for an early dinner. We first stopped by the University to walk through its beautiful campus. Below Miriam poses in front of its mascot tiger before we continued onto the nearby Doris Duke Estate and a stroll through its nature preserve and orchard greenhouse.



Another place that I used to regularly fly into for lunch, when living in NJ, was the Greenwood Lake airport. I had wanted to visit it by air again but my friend, Bob Greene's, airplane was not available, so we drove over instead.

This airport is unique in that it features a 1946 Lockheed Super Constellation, which actually flew into the field in 1977, and was incorporated as part of its terminal building. The plane is open for viewing and it is today a museum that features photos from the days when it was in commercial service. It was enjoyable walking through a piece of aviation history.

I took special interest in the large (by today's standards) cockpit which accommodated the pilot, first officer, navigator and flight engineer. It certainly appears to be a whole lot more "busy" than today's glass panels with all chores handled by just two people.



While up in Greenwood we went over to the Ringwood State Park where we had a chance to take a hour long guided tour through the fully furnished Manor House. It cost us \$3 each and we were the only ones on the tour. No wonder New Jersey has such high taxes!

On our way back to the Clinton Inn, our reunion headquarter hotel, we drove along the Palisades Interstate Parkway with its view of the Hudson River and New York's Yonkers just beyond.



On Friday evening we had our first event, an informal dinner at the Tenafly Pizzeria. There were about two dozen present and this was our table.



Of course, the big event for reunion was our Saturday night dinner at which two dozen alumni were in attendance. This is our group photo of the event. And, yes, I am in there... *somewhere*.

