

2009 BOOK ADDENDUM

WE REMEMBER SUBMARINE SEA POACHER AND LA PEDRERA THE REST OF HER STORY

BY

LANNY YESKE

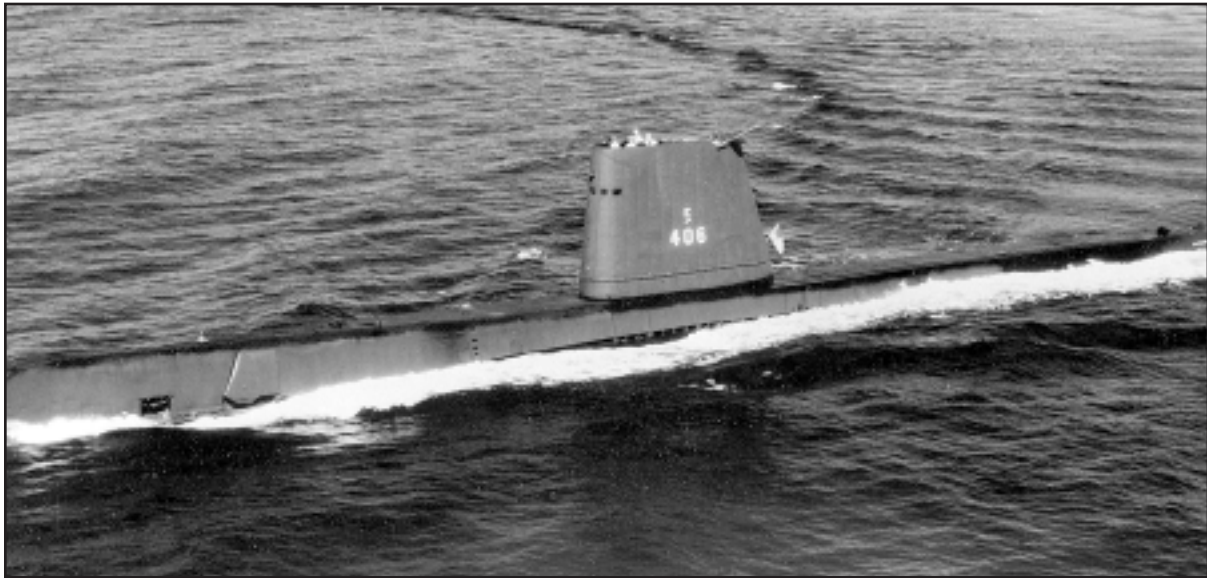
WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:

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LARRY WEINFURTER, SANDRA MERRILL, SHARON LOVE, NANCY CLUBB,
STELLA MURDOCH, FRANCES ZIMMERMAN AND ARLENE WEINFURTER,
AND HEREIN REFERRED TO AS “THE PERU TREKKERS.”



Photo by: Peruvian Navy

Sea Poacher and LaPadrera shipmates and their spouses pose before the Peruvian Naval Submarine School in Callao, Peru on March 9, 2009.



USS Sea Poacher (SS-406) with North Atlantic sail. Circa 1962.

2008 LOOSE ENDS

Our 629 page book WE REMEMBER SUBMARINE SEA POACHER was published and distributed in early 2008. There were three unresolved issues:

Uncertainty as to the actual fate and disposition of Sea Poacher/La Pedrera due to sketchy information and confusion on dates from 1992 to 1996, and the fact that little information was provided by the Funcion Marsano/Callao S.A. Foundry and Peruvian Navy.

The need for someone to travel to Peru and view what equipments had been salvaged before the alleged meltdown at the Foundry, and supposedly on display at the Pub Snorkel on the Naval Submarine Base in Callao.

To sample the Peruvian National drink called Pisco and the local beer.

LET US VISIT PERU

Accordingly, a trip to Peru was proposed at our May 2008 Sea Poacher Reunion in Jacksonville, Florida. I was elected as Special Projects Officer for our Association and was in charge. I envisioned three or four guys going there at some unknown date a long way off. Thirty days later, Joe Murdoch came up with a reasonable one week tour to Peru with Gate 1 Travel Company. His email said “When do we go?”

It looked good and included tours of Lima, Cusco, and Machu Picchu, with free time in Lima if we could arrange anything with the Peruvian Navy. I examined the dates and came up with 4 March 2009, and nearly the end of the Peruvian summer when temperatures would still be a bit warm in Lima, but nice in Cusco and Machu Picchu.

Three weeks later 12 of us were signed up. The hotels would only be three stars, but we could cope with that and might even be pleasantly surprised.

Accordingly, I sent on July 8 a three page letter to Admiral Carlos Gamarra, Commander



BAP La Padrera (S-48)

Photo by: Peruvian Navy

in Chief of the Peruvian Navy, requesting clearance on 9 March 2009 to visit the submarine base and view whatever remained of our beloved submarine. We also requested to visit an active duty submarine, and offered to host a dinner on March 8 and a luncheon on Base for all of the Peruvians involved in our clearance and access.

Two months later, I received a letter from Rear Admiral Edmundo Deville granting us full permission to visit the Submarine Base, and stating a representative of the Commander Submarine Force would be in contact with us to work out the details. In early October, we received a detailed hour by hour agenda from the Peruvians detailing our activities on 9 March 2009. Everything was going like clockwork. They were even going to pick us up in a VIP Navy bus at our hotel, thereby eliminating all possible problems with Base access. They would also provide an English speaking Liaison Officer.

We now had 18 Sea Poachers, including six wives, registered for the trip, and all are contributors to this Book Addendum. Bill Brinkman surmised that we might be the first U.S. submarine crew to actually ever get together with a second crew from another country.

DETAILED PLANNING

All was going well. The 18 of us exchanged hundreds of emails in the next six months that included country information, climates, coping with high altitudes, insects, dress codes for the navy, money exchange, speeches in Spanish, and contingencies. We also looked at the tour options with Gate 1 and signed up for Cusco and Lima city tours, the train to Machu Picchu, and all the local country side tours and folk shows. Bill suggested we visit the Nasca lines a day before our Gate 1 Tour began, and seven of us, who could easily change our airline reservations, signed up.

We arranged to host a dinner for our Peruvian contacts and also started looking at gifts to be presented. We came up with 24 gold and silver dolphins, 8 miniature gold dolphins, 8 miniature models of our submarine, 20 hats and new patches for both Sea Poacher/La Pedrera, stained



BAP LaPadrera (S-48)

Photo by: Peruvian Navy

glass and tray mementos, 24 key chains, 24 challenge coins, 4 hard copies of our Book and 12 copies of it on CD, and six Sea Poacher plaques. That should have been enough, but it was not. Still we were not embarrassed as the Peruvians knew we were travelling and did not expect anything from us. Nevertheless, and after our return, Cal made over a dozen more miniature submarines for the La Pedrera sailors we missed. Jack also designed a Certificate making all of the La Pedrera sailors we met Honorary Life Members of the Sea Poacher Association. These later items were mailed to Peru in mid-

2009.

There was also a regular email interchange with the Peruvians and a final telephone call, and while there were some personnel contact changes, there were no problems. They had arranged for a full day of activities on March 9 including a special luncheon in the dining area hosted by the Submarine Force Commander, Rear Admiral Carlos Zarate. We were told many La Pedrera sailors would be in attendance. And then the moment came for “our trip of a lifetime.”

2 MARCH 2009 – TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON, DC

Fran and I woke up to find 10 inches of snow on the ground in Forest, Virginia, the most we had seen since moving there three years ago. We had a 200 mile drive to Dulles Airport for a 0830 flight on Taca Airlines on March 3 to Lima via El Salvador. The Virginia Highway Patrol urged everyone to stay off the road. Unless you had chains or a four wheel drive you were warned not to travel. I was in a panic mode. Airports in New York and Boston were already closed. I had no idea on Dulles. With only a 10 hour delay we would miss the Nasca tour.

There was no way my Mercedes was going to get through the snow, so it was an easy choice to pack our gear in Fran’s four wheel drive Nissan pickup. We left at 0800 and an hour later we reached downtown Lynchburg only 10 miles away. Our exit ramp was uphill and vehicles without chains or four wheel drive were stuck, sliding, and blocking the road. Finally an opening occurred, and we slipped by the stalled vehicles. Crawling along our major four lane divided highway at 20 miles per hour, we reached Charlottesville where the snow was somewhat reduced and melting. We were still 100 miles away.

At 1500 we finally reached our hotel. We were encouraged to see flights landing and taking off from Dulles. A call to Taca Airlines said the runways were clear with no problems. We were warned to be at the airport at least three hours early in the morning.

3 MARCH 2009 – TRAVEL TO LIMA

Up at 0430 we arrived at Dulles at 0515 for our 0830 flight. The line to check luggage and get boarding passes was already over 75 people. An hour later we reached the ticket counter. It was a long walk to the gate, and it was nice to see the plane there. Airborne on time, Taca served a wonderful hot breakfast, and on the cart were several bottles of scotch, vodka, and rum. Others forward of us gobbled up the scotch, and I was most content to finish breakfast with Absolute vodka. What ever happened to our American airlines? This already had the makings of a great travel experience.

Four hours later, we changed planes in El Salvador, which was nice and easy. We flew past a large volcano near the Airport and from souvenirs reasoned this must be a major landmark of the Country. The Airport was narrow but very long with 20 gates. There were few people. The surprising thing was at least 40 shops selling the same duty free liquors and souvenirs. However, once we had again cleared the security check point, none of these stores were available. So beforehand, we had great Cuban sandwiches and wine for lunch, and were soon onboard for the final four hour leg to Jorge Chavez International Airport in Lima. There was another nice lunch from Taca and all the Absolute vodka one needed.

Arriving in Lima on time, we quickly passed Immigration, and then went to the baggage claim before entering Customs. My suitcase was the first off the aircraft. However, now and with two-year old memories of no luggage in Madrid, Spain for three days, there was no sign of Fran's suitcase. We waited for 30 minutes and were about to go to Claims when her bag, the last one off loaded, finally arrived.

After a thank you prayer was said, we quickly cleared Customs and entered the arrival area. It was 2000 and nearly an hour since landing. We were supposed to be met with a driver bearing a Gate 1 sign or our names. If not there, one was subjected to the local taxis which are unregulated in Lima, and a serious source of problems. Entering the arrival area, and of course, because of the delay in receiving Fran's luggage, I was worried there would be no one there from Gate 1. We were half way through the mass of 200 persons holding up signs when we saw one held high with the words "YESKE ZIMMERMAN." Yes, Virginia, there was a God out there. We waved, and he waved back. Approaching, he grabbed our luggage, and we followed him.

No sooner outside the Airport, we are approached by an English speaking guy in charge of the Gate 1 arrivals. He escorts us to a nice car, and off we go for a 15 kilometer trip to our hotel. The driver spoke only a little English and with me speaking a bit more Spanish, we were able to communicate reasonably well. It was a nice leisurely trip to Miraflores and the Hotel Embajadores. The driver took the slow coastal route and pointed out every building and item of interest. It was enjoyable with the dominant feature being the huge lighted cross perched on a mountain miles away. We reached our hotel about 2130 and give the driver a tip although the transfer was prepaid. The Hotel looked fine from the outside as did the lobby. We were ushered into our room by the bellboy, and I tipped him. He must have liked that, because he reached into his pocket and gave me a ticket for two free Pisco Sours, the national drink of Peru, at the bar below. That was appreciated because the room was not that good. Three star and private bath, but small and the advertized air conditioning and security safe were not there. I thought of complaining, but suggested to Fran we go with the flow and go down for our Pisco Sours.

At the small bar, we were alone. Oscar the bartender made a spectacle of the manufacture. He first took two large shot glasses of Pisco, a grape brandy and quite potent, and placed them in a shaker. To that he added egg whites, sugar, and lemon juice, and with ice he covered it and shook it to death. We had been warned to not drink any tap water in Peru and also to avoid ice as it would probably be tap water. I mentioned that to Oscar, and he gave me a wry grin and said nothing. After shaking it, straining and keeping the ice in the shaker, he poured the foamy concoction into two glasses. We were about to pick them up when he stopped us and added one drop of bitters to the foam. It was finally ready and excellent.

We are tired and have a busy trip tomorrow to Nasca with Joe, Stella, Bill, Cal, and Vincent. With none of our travelers in the lobby, we head up to our room which is a good 80 degrees. We have the window wide open, and then I spot this two foot tall electrical object looking like a heater. I pushed a button and it seemed to move air like a fan and oscillate. It helped until the temperature reached the 60s in the early morning. But the darn thing had a timer on it that only went for two hours, so I had to crank it up every time it shut off. There was also a bit of noise outside, but we did get a reasonable sleep. Breakfast would not be served until 0630. So with a 0600 departure from the hotel, we were going to miss coffee and whatever.

4 MARCH 2009 – TRAVEL TO NASCA

Down at the hotel lobby about 0540, I looked over to the dining area and was surprised to see it open. Walking over, there was Joe and Stella having a full breakfast. He had told the Hotel management of our early departure, and they had cooperated. Joe had done well. There were a variety of juices, pastries, bread, eggs, cold meats, cheese, and coffee that had to be watered down it was so strong. But diluted it was just fine. A few minutes later we were joined by Bill, Cal, and Vincent. None of us had seen each other for 10 months and it was a warm welcome.

The van was on time, and we left the hotel at 0605 for the six hour 200 mile drive. We were already on the outskirts of Lima with its 9 million population, and were soon on the Pan American Highway, the only road going south. It actually starts in Alaska and goes to Chile covering a 14,000 miles distance. A bit of traffic but the road was fine, albeit only one lane each way. But our driver and most tourist vans believe there are three lanes. The trucks move a bit to one side on the shoulder and the center line, dividing the two lanes, becomes a third lane, and we clip along at 50 miles per hour. The countryside is mostly barren dry land, but every so often there are green fields of vegetables (pimientos, avocados, and asparagus) and apple and pecan trees that have been irrigated from the fast flowing muddy water coming from the Andes. And everything was done by hand. In our weeks travel we would see only



Photo by: Jack Merrill

Stella and Joe Murdoch at breakfast in Lima, Peru.

one tractor. Mountains were in the distance to the east where gold and copper are mined. We stop at one green field that is just cactus, and each has many worm-like parasites called *Cochinea*. Our guide cuts one open, and here is the brilliant red they use in dyes. There are a few small villages and lots of shanty towns consisting of huts with dirt floors. Many have no roofs because they don't get any rain. We notice every so often along the road a cross with a two foot high or so stone shrine. These mark where Peruvians were killed on the highway. In one spot, there are over 20 shrines.

It is very dry and dusty. This is because the Peru or Humboldt Current flows north along the coast. Thus, in the Southern Hemisphere, the current's mass transport will be to the west. So the surface waters along shore move west creating a void of water ashore which must be replaced and compensated for. So very cold water comes to the surface along shore in a phenomena called "upwelling." The water is so cold there is no evaporation in this area west of the Andes, and accordingly no clouds or rain. Once the east moving air reaches the Andes it is uplifted, and then heavy rain falls to the east in the Amazon, as one would expect in a jungle environment.

Many of the shanty town adobe shacks are in ruins, and we are reminded of the 7.9 Richter scale earthquakes that hit this area in August 2007. The epicenter was the city of Pisco which was 90 percent destroyed. There are not enough funds to repair all the damage. We do not actually drive through Pisco which is 10 kilometers west of the Highway. At Ica, we change vans and driver at a plush hotel. Here there is also major evidence of the earthquakes. In total, over 500 persons



Photo by: Lanny Yeske

Mounment to those killed on the highway.

were killed and 100,000 were left homeless. More than 130 alone died in a Pisco church during mass. Ica also has huge several hundred foot high sand dunes that the locals climb and use for sand skiing. It also has 80 wineries and only 2 percent unemployment.

We have reached the area of the Nasca Lines which is an amazing barren and flat area full of rocks of all kind and shape, and adjacent to large mountains. Because it is so dry there are dust devils everywhere that actually keep the Nasca Lines somewhat clean. The Line area covers over 200 square miles in size. So what are they?

The area is believed to have been inhab-



Building damaged during the 2007 earthquake in Pisco, Peru.



Photo by: Lanny Yeske

ited for 10,000 years. The Lines are about 2,000 years old and built from 400 BC to 600 AD. For thousands of years the small rocks atop the soil were weathered, oxidized, and turned black. Now enter the Nasca Indians over 2,000 years ago who discovered when the black rock, resting on sand, when turned over was white underneath. So they constructed by hand, and by means still not certain today, these huge white pictographs of a spider, monkey, hummingbird, long narrow trapezoids resembling runways, other lines extending for miles, and even an astronaut. Some of these are miles in size and each is done in a continuous loop such that none of the lines in a particular drawing cross each other. Their accuracy is amazing. The astronaut is on the side of a mountain and appears to be waving at you. The monkey is huge and very detailed. However, for some unknown reason his huge tail curls in the wrong direction. The hummingbird is awesome and sits on a mountain top mesa with a very long narrow trapezoid resembling an alien landing strip.

The Lines cannot be seen from ground level. In 1927 when an aircraft first flew over the area through the area, they did not know of the lines and cut through some of the figures. We first stop at an observation tower perhaps 50 feet tall and built by Maria Rieche, a German scientist who studied the Lines for over 50 years, and is a legend in the area. She was such a dominant figure that no one could visit the lines without her permission, and if they did so they were arrested. She died in 1998. Climbing the tower, you can see part of the “Hands” and “Tree” as well as a mile long narrow trapezoid resembling a landing strip. You do not see much more, but the tower is definitely worth the stop. This is our first encounter with Peruvians trying to sell us things, and in this case it is egg or baseball size stones with different Nasca Line drawings on them. The Peruvians are not beg-



Photo by: Lanny Yeske



Nasca Lines

Photo by: Lanny Yeske

ging for anything; they are just trying to sell you some of their work for \$3 a rock. They are persistent until you give them an emphatic “No Gracias,” and then they look very sad but do leave you alone. We also learned that you do not say “Maybe Later” as they will be there when later comes. Bargaining is the rule of the day, but the people are so poor that one should not take it to the limit.

Our next stop, just a few miles short of Nasca City, is the Maria Reiche Museum and her tomb. These stops are being coordinated by cell phone with the Nasca Airport and our flight schedule to ensure we see everything and have no major delays like having to wait an hour or two for an aircraft. The Museum shows in detail how she studied these lines trying to determine their meaning and origin. There are several possibilities. She believed they signify an astronomical calendar. Others say the lines join for the summer and winter solstice and indicate when crops should be planted and where underground water sources exist. Others do not rule out there being made by aliens. Maria’s grave is here, plus the van she drove, and her personal possessions which were few. She lived a frugal life, and it is said she ate the same meal three times a day for her 50 years in Nasca consisting of mostly potatoes and fruit. She lived free at the Hotel Nasca Lines. We also note in some of the photographs of Maria that on one hand she only has four fingers due to an earlier accident in which one was completely severed. It is amazing that some of the Nasca Line figures such as the “Hands” have only four fingers.

In the Museum is a 2000 year old mummy which our “Lady of the Lines” apparently found. It was a common practice. They usually placed the body in large earthen jars, but many of the bones had to be broken and the body placed in a fetal position for this to be done. This mummy had over 50 one inch black ink markings from the shoulder to the hand. These were done by the archeologists for identification purposes. What a bunch of jerks to do that.

We are now in Nasca which means “the land of pain and suffering.” Human sacrifices occurred here. At the Airport, we are assigned to two aircraft. Bill, Cal, and Vincent go in the first one. Bill has somehow been selected to sit in the Co-Pilot’s seat and thinks he is going to help fly



Maria Rieche Museum

Photo by: Lanny Yeske

this six passenger Cessna. However, there are no controls in his seat. In the other aircraft, Joe and I are assigned seats behind the pilot and a government observer. Fran and Stella are in the rear seats. These were assigned by the Pilot and not us. Airborne, I have a ventilation duct blowing directly on me and it is comfortable. Not so for Joe, Stella, and Fran. In fact, Fran and Stella are apparently burning up back there, but we do not know this until the flight is over. I also notice the door between Stella and me is not locked and open, so some air is entering. I am not worried about it opening due to the speed of the Cessna, although there is a vibration.

It is a 35 minute flight over the major lines and figures. My tour book said there are over 10,000 lines and 300 figures. I don't know our elevation, but it was probably 2,000 feet and the lines are spectacular. Bill on his flight saw on the altimeter they were flying 300 to 500 feet off the ground. We had to be much

higher, but distances are deceiving. The images and lines seemed perfect from the air. The plane would dip and place its right wing just above the object of interest so that you could get a good view and photo. Then the pilot would reverse the aircraft to do the same thing for the passengers on the left side. It was one heck of a ride. Some came through it better than others, and we all had barf bags. It was also windy and the aircraft moved accordingly.

The Lines are considered by some to be one of the Seven Wonders of the World, but unlike Machu Picchu they have not been so designated. It was well worth the trip, but of course we were only half way done. Lunch in Nasca was next and then the six hour drive back to Lima. Thank goodness we did not have lunch before the flight.

In Nasca, there was a nice cantina style restaurant. I started with Cusquena, a very good Peruvian beer, and Loma Saltillo, a beef and vegetable dish over rice that was excellent. I heard Bill say to Vince don't ask what kind of beef it is. Another Cusquena and then a delicious ice cream desert. There was even a four piece band playing Peruvian music and it was pleasant. Of course, they came around offering a CD of their music, and I bought one for \$10.



2000-year-old mummy

Photo by: Lanny Yeske

Come to find out this is a common occurrence in Peru and these roving bands go to the nicer restaurants and play for free only hoping to sell their CDs. Fran and I bought five of them.

Now it is the ride home. We are supposed to return at 1900 but we do not arrive until 2230. Not much sleeping in the van. Vincent gives me a complete lecture on his new toy, an iPod, which seems to dance for him. If you are working and all of that, it is probably essential. For me, retired and mostly tired, I liked it but am not sure I needed one.

We missed a Gate 1 presentation by our Tour Director Rocio at 1800 in our Hotel so we have no idea on the schedule for tomorrow and our flight to Cusco. At the Hotel, I find that most of our group has checked in. Jack is there, and I call his room. It takes several rings and our Vice President growls at me that our luggage needs to be outside our room at 0615 and we leave for the Airport at 0700. Thanking him, I am about to leave the Hotel lobby and notice a Gate 1 sign posted on a bulletin board giving all the details for tomorrow. Sorry, Jack. We are dog tired and after a quick shower hit the rack.



Photo by: Ivan Joslin

The Merrills and the Clubbs relax in hotel lobby in Lima, Peru.

5 MARCH 2009 – TRAVEL TO CUSCO



Photo by: Jack Merrill

Arlene and Larry Weinfurter show off their room key.

The alarm hits us at 0530. So far, these early morning roll calls are not much fun. Our room fan, I learn embarrassingly from our group, has a switch that will let it run all night without having to get up every two hours. And others like Vince accidentally turned off his iPod alarm clock. Cal had to come to the rescue and one could hear the word “Dummy” throughout the Hotel. In the Lobby, Larry and Arlene are proudly displaying their room key “406.” Everything goes smoothly with our luggage and travel to the Airport. Let me give some well deserved praise to Gate 1. They took our luggage from outside our Hotel room in Lima, and we never saw it again until it was placed inside our hotel room in Cusco. It was the same on the return to Lima. Gate 1 did a lot of work in that



“Trekks” arrive in Cusco, Peru.

Photo by: Jack Merrill

regard, and I have never had any other tour company do that service. It was a wonderful no hassle experience.

At 0900 from sea level, in just 55 minutes we cross the Andes, and land at Cusco. Here the elevation is 11,000 feet where we will spend three days. This has been a subject of concern in our group for several months, but we know the options and remedies.

Cusco is the ancient capital of the Inca Empire which stretched throughout most of South America. With 350,000 population and over 3,000 architectural sites, it is breathtaking and rests on a plateau with the Andes around it. A band welcomed us at the Airport, and we were soon at our Hotel Mabey Palacio Imperial. We were escorted to a dining area and offered Coca Tea to drink or Coca leaves to chew. This has about 1 percent cocaine, but is not dangerous. I drank some tea and then chewed 12 leaves. Not as good as Juicy Fruit gum, but it helped to stave off the altitude sickness. Our tour leader suggested we drink two glasses of Coca Tea in the morning, one in the early afternoon, and one early evening. And this is all, or we would not



Photo by: Jack Merrill

Musical group greets the “Trekks” in airport in Cusco, Peru.

sleep at night.

We had a light lunch and were off touring Cusco. This was a city of gold and built by Pachacutec in the 1400s. He also designed and built Machu Picchu and many of the cities we will later visit. In the Main Monument to the Incas is the Temple of the Sun, the top edges of the walls were covered in gold, but the Spaniards stripped it and melted it down. There was so much gold it took months to complete the task. Then it was all sent to Spain. The gold was not native to Cusco but was brought in from the rivers in the

Amazon region. The complex also includes the Spanish Church of Santo Domingo where many huge 500 year old paintings are outside under covered porches. The Spanish used Inca stones from Sacsayhuaman, discussed later, as their foundation. The existing walls are still perfect and fit together so tightly that a needle cannot be inserted between these huge blocks. The blocks are also interlocked to preclude earthquake damage, and the Incas did an incredible job with only chisels and hammers 500 years ago. Not only are the blocks of different shapes to absorb the shock, but the interlocking includes a large cylindrical or square hole in one block with the fitting next to it with a protruding cylinder or square to fit inside. Many of the blocks are not just six sided but some have 14 sides. It is like a giant set of irregular Lego's. Amazing!

Vincent somehow became detached from the group, and wound up back on the street where all hell broke loose. He said he was surrounded by Peruvians trying to sell their wares.



Photo by: Ivan Joslin

There were very many pieces of art hanging in the Sun Temple



Photo by: Ivan Joslin

Rich Clubb, Carlos and Cal admire the Temple of the Sun.

Many were dressed in their traditional Inca garments and had llamas with them. The idea is for you to have a photograph taken with them, and then you tip them. So Vincent is in the middle of all of this, when all of a sudden the police with a paddy wagon are all over the area. There is some yelling. The police first catch two of the llamas now being held in a death grip by their owners who don't want to loose them. However, the police prevail, grab the llamas, and throw them into the back of the truck. It has something to do with animals not allowed in this area. The locals know this but



Photo by: Jack Merrill

Natives posing with Sandra whose llamas were later confiscated by the police.

take their chances. Our guide said that the llamas would be taken to the countryside and be released. They would not see their former owners again.

Next it's the Cusco Cathedral which consists of three separate yet joined Cathedrals. The first we visit was built in the 1700s, the second in 1600s, and the third in the 1500s. They are all very ornate with lots of gold and silver. And while the Spaniards took gold and silver from most everywhere, they knew how important the Cathedrals were to the Indians and left the gold and silver that adorns them. Despite

the lack of a writing system and an alphabet, they were able to develop excellent engineering and mathematical systems to construct buildings, earthquake proof, and perfectly structured. A large painting of the Last Supper shows the apostles eating cuy (guinea pig) and chi cha (fermented maize beer) to be discussed later. There is so much to see and so little time. There is the famous painting and large statute of "El Negrito" which is a brown-skinned figure of Christ on the cross which was first paraded in Cusco in 1650 to ward off earthquakes. It is called the "Lord of the Earthquakes" and parading occurs annually on Easter Monday in a major festival.

Leaving the area we were now climbing to a ridge at 13,000 feet. The Incas laid out Cusco in the shape of a giant puma. On a map of the area, using the rivers and various ridges between the mountains, there is a very clear shape of a puma. At the Cathedral and Main Plaza we were at the heart and "guts" of the puma, which is called "Cuscois Koricancha." Now we are several miles away, and at the head of the puma, at a major archeological sight named Sacsayhuaman, which the locals call "Sexy Mama" or "Sexy Woman." Leaving the bus, we walked through a plain of at least 100 acres with huge granite stones in place on each side that extended for several hundred yards, which are known as the teeth of the puma. Some of these stones are 11 feet in height and weigh 300 tons. It is an incredible engineering masterpiece and the site is usually considered a fortress but more likely a religious temple. Pizarro fought the Incas



Photo by: Jack Merrill

Sign at the entrance of Saqsaywaman archeological site.

here in 1536 and thousands perished. Some stones are arranged to show the huge body of a llama. We did not see the eye of the puma which is another historic site in the area. I think that was due to lack of time as our Gate 1 tour was always jam packed with events, and we were always behind schedule. We were getting our money's worth.

Carlos, our guide, explained that everything the Incas did had purpose in their religion and community. They were totally people oriented, but not for themselves. They were given the necessities of

life in food, water, housing, medicines, and other essentials by their rulers. In return, each was required to give back to the community three months of labor each year. This explains how the Incas could build so much in such a short time. In return, you and your family were provided for. Even with all the wealth in gold they had surrounding them, it wasn't about the gold. But the arrival of the Spaniards changed all of that. And not for the better.

Leaving there, we visited an upscale alpaca store. Here we were educated on the different kinds of alpaca methods and threads used to make clothing, and learned that baby alpaca is the softest and purest. When shopping we were told to be aware of llama being used instead. It may look and feel the same, but when wet it will shrink badly and also smell. The clothing in this store was nice, reasonably priced, and one could bargain.

It was now 1900. We were tired, but our guide Rocio recommended a restaurant at the Plaza de Armas near the Cathedral. So, 11 of us ventured to Paititi, named after a mysterious Inca city lost in the Peruvian Amazon, where a taxi for four cost \$1. Wherever we went most items were priced in dollars and soles, and we never had a problem using dollars. There was no need to

exchange for soles although most of us did. A table for 12 was set up and we were given complimentary Pisco Sours. They were so good we ordered several more. Don, Bill, and others ordered the Alpaca dinner, which I sampled. It was very lean, but I did not care for it. I stayed with the Loma Saltillo that I had earlier in Nasca. It was good.

However the highlight was Nancy bravely ordering cuy (guinea pig). It was roasted and about 12 inches in length and three inches in



Photo by: Jack Merrill

Amazing construction of Sacsayhuaman.



Photo by: Lanny Yeske

Trekkers at dinner at Paititi.



Nancy Clubb and her “pet” Cuy.

Photo by: Lanny Yeske

diameter. And it was all there including head, eyes, ears, teeth, and feet. The entrails had been removed, but important parts like the heart and liver were still there for her enjoyment. Nancy went right for it, and several tasted it. Not me! I guess it was a lot like pork, and good. Nancy had a way of imitating a ferreting guinea pig, and she kept us in stitches with the laughter sometimes hysterical. We were also serenaded by a Peruvian four piece band playing local songs, and of course bought one of their CDs. We had a great time. It must have been

2130 when we sought a taxi to our hotel. I knew the name of it but did not have its address. It took forever, including checking the phone book, before we finally got the taxi drivers to understand where it was. It had been another long tiring day. The hotel, which was better than the one in Lima, at least had air conditioning and a room safe. But like the one in Lima, there are restrictions on the use of toilet paper. Nothing like paper goes down the stool. I guess their plumbing pipes are smaller in diameter than ours, so used toilet paper goes into a trash can. We found that also to be true at the El Salvador and Lima Airports. And in Lima, toilet paper was not even provided. While there were receptacles, one learned to carry your own.

It has been a long day and the altitude has its first effects on our delegation. Joe has a tough time breathing, sees a doctor, and is told to be on the first airplane in the morning to return to Lima and sea level. Jack had a cold before even reaching Peru and now needs to partake of 1/2 liter of oxygen for 5 minutes on two occasions back at the hotel.

6 MARCH 2009 TRAVEL TO MACHU PICCHU

The schedule remains a killer, but we had signed up for all optional tours and today was going to be the journey to Machu Picchu. Vincent had reacted to “Dummy” from Cal the morning before, and had four alarms set plus a 0500 wake up call. Gratefully there was coffee and breakfast on the sixth floor. Again it’s juice, a good variety of fruits, breads, cold meat, cheese, avocados, and cereal. The only



Overlooking the City of Cusco, Peru.

Photo by: Jack Merrill

problem is again the coffee. It is thick like chocolate syrup. One only covers the bottom of your cup with it. Filling the rest with hot water, it is okay. Stella has gotten Joe on the airplane to Lima and joins us back at the hotel for the travel to Machu Picchu.

Our hotel is close to the train station, and I had thought we would leave from there for the three hour train ride. Wrong! We are on the bus at 0615 for an hour drive to Ollantaytambo and its train station. From there it is 60 miles to Machu Picchu but it will take three hours through the mountains. We are on the Vistadome which I would call

first class. The other options were the Backpacker train which would be a cattle car, and the Hiram Bingham (discoverer of Machu Picchu) which would be super deluxe and cost three times more than Vistadome. Breakfast was served on the train and also entertainment to be discussed later. We are traveling along the Urubamba River and are deep in the Sacred Valley of the Incas. The river has rapids like nothing I have ever seen before. It seemed impossible to white water raft here, but tourist brochures have it advertised. The Class Five rapids never seem to stop, and the views are breathtaking. We are at 7,000 feet elevation and can often see snow covered Andes Peaks at 21,000 feet. Upon arrival at Aguas Caliente, we are offered insect repellent by our tour leader which we accept. And I still have a bite that has not healed totally in three months.

Vincent recalls the Emperor of the Incan Empire, who lived in Cusco, built Machu Picchu



Photo by: Ivan Joslin

Ivan, Cal, Vincent and Bill partake of some coca tea.



Photo by: Jack Merrill

Boarding the train for Machu Picchu.

as a retreat home for himself and other higher-ups. It only lasted for 100 years and was then abandoned. No one is certain why, but it could have been disease, wars with nearby tribes, drought, or the Spanish presence in Cusco. In any case, Machu Picchu ceased to exist. It, like the Temple of the Sun in Cusco, had the same construction techniques and symbolisms of the sun, moon, and land, honoring and worshiping Mother Earth. It was never discovered by the Spaniards. So is the only Inca site to survive 400 years of looting and destruction, and it looks



Photo by: Jack Merrill

Scenery from the train to Machu Picchu.

much the same as when built. Mostly only the thatched roofs are gone and no crops (corn or coca) are being grown on the green terraces. There are over 3,000 stone steps in the complex, and I think we climbed most of them.

Machu Picchu was buried in the jungle until Hiram Bingham from Yale University stumbled upon it in 1911. He thought it the lost city of Vilcabamba, but after 50 years was proved wrong. Vincent calls it an amazing place for many reasons. First is the remoteness and its position in the saddle of two mountains dripping with Inca theme cultures.

The main position had to do with the three temples to the Mother Earth, the sun, and the moon, with the main elements facing east. All of the terraced gardens for growing crops are lined up to take full advantage of the sun. Not only here but at the other Inca sites as well. Their major feast and greatest celebration was the winter solstice on June 21, when the sun was furthest away, and the wish was for the sun to return to the mountain with the changing of the season. All of this and the breathtaking presence of just being at the top of this peak, with all the other peaks looming near and far, was almost too much to comprehend.

I had much of the same feeling. Having been to 60 foreign countries, nothing, including the Egyptian Pyramids, compared to Machu Picchu. It is the most spectacular man made structure I have ever seen and certainly deserves its position as one of the Seven Wonders of the World. We have a good hour of brilliant sunshine upon arrival, and then, as anticipated and warned about, the weather abruptly changed, and we were in heavy rain with umbrellas and ponchos. Then it was on and off with the rain for our final two hours on site. The Urubamba River circles three sides of Machu Picchu. The only way in is by train, unless you want to walk the Inca Trail which takes four days from Ollantaytambo.

In one part of Machu Picchu, we viewed a large interesting area under construction 500 years ago and abruptly abandoned. Some windows and cornices were completed and others not. One wall had caved in and not repaired. Everything else was perfect. Strange!



Photo by: Jack Merrill

Urubamba River valley.



Photo by: Jack Merrill

Machu Picchu.

Anyway, our adventurous and younger Vincent wanted a picture from a higher vantage point, so he left the group. Our guide told him where and how to get to the point where he would be up and above the ruins to get the best pictures. This was the Guard House with hundreds of slippery steps upward. Vincent was also told of a short cut down to reach the bus on time. However, he encountered six llamas on the trail blocking his way. He now becomes a llama herder and gets them off the path.

Unfortunately, he does not get the desired photos due to the rain showers. He does stop at the Temple of the Moon, and notes that many of the Inca rock formations mirror the mountains behind them. Amazing work was done by these people. Vincent gets on a different bus from us, arrives in Aguas Calientes, and grabs a pizza and coke. He also had time to get his LLBean boots shined by two young native brothers. They were good and Vincent thought they could be private shoe shiners at the White House. The rest of us partake



Photo by: Jack Merrill

Machu Picchu terraces.



Photo by: Jack Merrill
Entertainment on train on return to Cusco. This guy showed up in several locations.

of a buffet lunch recommended by our guide. It is poor in quality, expensive, and the only bad advice from Gate 1.

Back on the Vistadome, we are served tea with light snacks. Some defer for Pisco Sours. Others partake of Inka Kola, a soft drink not unlike our cream soda. Then it was entertainment time. Our three car stewards started doing native dances in Peruvian costumes including a Spirit with a stuffed llama, and then a fashion show in the aisle to sell more alpaca clothing. It was great fun, and they pulled two from our group to join in the show. It was 2000 when we arrived in Cusco.

Some went for dinner, but Fran and I crashed. The good news was a sleep-in until 0800 and bus departure at 0900 for another full day tour.

7 MARCH 2009

TRAVEL TO URUBAMBA/THE SACRED VALLEY OF THE INCAS

Today will be a hundred mile journey into the Sacred Valley of the Incas and at one point we will be at 14,000 feet elevation. Breakfast is the same. No variety, but no complaints.

This morning, like other mornings, there are six to ten Peruvians outside the hotel door, waiting for us to exit and ply us with their wares. These are mostly the “maybe later” group. Their prices are good with Baby Alpaca sweaters selling for \$10 each. I see a nice one that I really like, but I am viewing it from the window inside the bus. I told the guy I would buy it when we returned later, but alas he was not there. Thank goodness Fran bought four sweaters as I did not buy any. Now one of our guys gets on the bus and has apparently been hassled by one of the younger women outside, and then I see her talking to our guide Carlos.

What is this! I leave the bus and ask Carlos what is going on. She is standing close by, and Carlos



Locals trying to make a living.

Photo by: Jack Merrill

says she received a \$50 traveler's check from someone on the tour, and while signed, there was no passport number. Accordingly, she could not get a bank to cash it, and she was very concerned. I looked at the check and saw Dr. Terry Kopansky's name, and while he was not in our submarine group, he was normally with us, and we had gotten along famously. He lived in Nashville and was Executive Director for Mur-Ci Homes which catered to the underprivileged. I figured I should come to her rescue and went back into the Hotel and told the desk clerk of the

problem. I asked if he would give me Terry's passport number which he did. I then gave it to the young woman whose face was all aglow, and she hugged me. It was a wonderful moment. When I saw Terry an hour later, I told him of the incident, and he was most appreciative. We are still corresponding, and he will have an input to this writing later.

Just before departure, Cal decides our overall tour director Senorita Rocio should become an honorary submariner, and we all concur. Strange that it took 10 minutes for him to pin those dolphins on her blouse. After our return to the States, I questioned Cal on this. His response was "I may be old, but they say if there is snow on the mountain, there must be fire in the valley." This former Ensign still does not understand Master Chief Petty Officers, but that is supposed to be normal in submarines.



Photo by: Jack Merrill

Sacred Valley of the Incas.



Photo by: Jack Merrill

Fran and Lanny Yeske pose with local Inca girl and her pet puppy and llamas.

Only a short distance from our hotel, Carlos stops the bus and a graduate student from the University named Qosqo Riqchary boards. They are personal friends, and she is selling a DVD she has made on Peru travels at \$10 to fund her education. Carlos strongly endorses it and most of us buy it. Viewing it back in the U.S. nearly two months later it really is a wonderful memento of Peru and covers our entire travel. It also has many other locations we missed, and we will leave those for another journey. If interested go to hellocusco@hotmail.com.

By 0915 we approached a



Sign at llama farm.

Photo by: Jack Merrill

roadside scenic view of the valley with many terraces. Of course, there are two young very cute girls dressed in their best Peruvian clothes. They also have two llamas and two dogs. We are out in no where, but these kids know the best place to encounter tourists. We all do photos with them and buy many items they are selling. The kids are a good \$100 richer within 10 minutes. Fran even buys a set of thirty packages of different seeds and plants including Coca leaves which are illegal to bring back. I look at her in wonderment.

Five minutes later our next stop is a llama farm that also includes alpaca and vicuna. We walk among the animals and give

them stalks of alfalfa for feed that have been provided by the locals. Vincent tells Cal not to upset the llamas, or they will spit at him. Besides the animals, they have demonstrations on shearing, spinning yarn, dying the thread, and then weaving the materials into shawls, scarves, wall tapestries, blankets, etc. These people can do it all and with a spirit and matter of factness about them. The mothers and children are born salespersons. The children start at a very young age peddling their goods. Then all of their wares are available for sale in the store before one leaves the farm.

After passing through a peak at 14,000 feet, we then descend to Pisac at 9,000 feet. One can see hundreds of terraces going up to the very tops of the adjacent mountains where the Inca city was originally located. However, the Spanish relocated the city to the base of the mountain where they could exert easier control. Our bus is just narrow enough to drive into the town and arrive at the open air market. With 40 minutes to shop, we find a ton of bargains. The vendors are persistent but not pushy. There is so much stuff at reasonable prices, but still negotiable. Just walk away and the price drops. You can get what you want for the price you want, but in the end as you get to the bus the children are still there with whistles,



Photo by: Jack Merrill

Llama being fed by "Trekker" at farm.

finger puppets, and colorful wrist bands. Three woven finger puppets for a dollar are too good to pass up. The market is used by the locals on weekends to trade corn, fruit, vegetables, potatoes and other items.

Our Cusco tour director Carlos is excellent in explaining the Peruvian culture. Some item of interest are the Quechan hats worn by the women which have different meanings. If it is a high hat it signifies a mixed nationality of Inca and Spaniard, called locally a “mestizo.” Dark hats are for older women and colorful ones for younger lasses. One flower means married and two

flowers means single. Carlos also explains that Cusco is a poor town with no rich people. Their primary industry is tourism, but most of the tourist taxes go to Lima. If anyone gets rich in Cusco, they either move to Lima or to Miami, Florida. There are eagles and hawks in the area, but most of the condors have now disappeared. It is too cold for snakes.

From here we travel in the valley toward our lunch destination in the City of Urabamba. The Alhambra is a beautiful hacienda-style restaurant with an outdoors dining area. This luncheon to the consensus of all is the best food we've had. Dining is under a large thatch roofed gazebo. The service is exceptional. There are llamas in pens and large parrots in the trees. The landscape and the climate keep the environment green. There are lots of farms, and we view oxen



Photo by: Jack Merrill

Local Inca baby playing patiently while parents work on the llama farm.



Photo by: Jack Merrill

Our Gate 1 guide, Carlo, dives for his dolphins. A gesture of appreciation for a job well done.

plowing and preparing for another growing season. The climate is such that they have three growing seasons. Vincent calls them dry, rainy, and in between. The mountains are green from top to bottom with sheer drop offs straight up rising thousands of feet from the valley floor.

Apparently Carlos has a goal today to immerse us into the local culture. Our next stop is a local watering hole, a Chicarea named AJKA WASI or INKA BAR, where he explains how the locals ferment the corn brew (Chi Cha), and when ready a red flag hangs on a pole so that the locals know when to come. In olden days they used human sali-



Photo by: Jack Merrill

The Frog Game may show up again at the Branson reunion.

va to mix with it to aid in the fermenting of the corn. Not certain of what we are getting today, but I am not one for caring at this stage. Our Chi Cha is free although tips are accepted. For the locals, a 12 ounce glass costs 1 Sol or 33 cents U.S. One is about all you should have and two will likely have you speaking Inca Quechan in a hurry. It comes either plain, or with strawberry flavoring, mostly for the ladies. At the end of the day, the Chi Cha begins to sour, and what ever remains is thrown away, and they start fresh in the morning.

While there we have another honorary submarine dolphin pining ceremony with our guide Carlos, orchestrated by Cal. In a full glass with the Chi Cha and the dolphins at the bottom of it, Carlos has to drink it without swallowing the dolphin pin and with the glass empty and in the air, the dolphins had better emerge between his teeth. Carlos makes it. Now Cal pins them to his shirt, and then sadistically raps the dolphins hard with his hand. It is a good thing the dolphins have covers or the pins would be imbedded in his chest at least 2 inch and drawing blood. Everyone has a good laugh. There is some talk of continuing our

tradition by throwing him into the Urabamba River, however it is flowing so fast we may never get him back.

They also have several Inca SAPO (Frog) games outside the bar area. Basically, one throws a large coin object at this non-electrical game from 10 feet away, and tries to hole the coin into the mouth of the frog or into one of ten holes on top. If done right, the coin goes through the hole and lands in a drawer below where a score has been assigned. Cal grabs the coins first and makes a few throws at the frog. He is pretty wild and there are many choice comments like "You look like and throw like an old Indian." None of us do very well at it, and it would have been fun to see how good the locals were.

Of course there is a gift shop.



Photo by: Ivan Joslin

ChiCha. The glass on the left is a strawberry brew and the other is corn. This definitely would be an acquired taste.

I noticed in the Chi Cha brewing area a Khipu mounted in a frame hanging on the wall. A Khipu is the ancient Inca method of accounting and consists of 30 or more long strings with various size knots (1 to 9) on each string. The order varies and so do the string colors. It allows one to count in 10s, 100s, and 1000s and an accountant keeps a record of your transactions. I now have one framed in Virginia as 10 soles got you one. Cal and Bill got attached to the Inca Frog game. They not only took detailed photographs, but purchased all of the equipment each needed to build one of them and plan to have both on display at our 2010 reunion.

Urubamba is also the starting point of the Inca Trail, a four day journey to Machu Picchu. We see many of the guides washing tents and equipment in the river. Outside the city, Cal spots several farmers plowing a field with three groups of two oxen yoked together. They are pulling a large shaped wooden stick that acts like a very crude plow.

Now it is on to Ollantaytambo, another ancient Inca City. Enroute we see green flags on poles indicating the coca is ready and blue flags on poles that bread is ready. This all goes back to the days when the Inca's were illiterate. The Inca buildings and stone formations are just as perfect as we have seen elsewhere.

We enter a small court yard shared by four families, who each live in one room on the first level or the second level around the courtyard where there is only one entry/exit. Here we will see how a local family lives. The first item you notice are the guinea pigs on the dirt floor in the living area of the home. We are not talking a few guinea pigs, and my photo showed 55 of them. They are all settled in the feeding area and do not move around too much. There are more than a few droppings. Sizes range from a new born at 3 inches to an adult at 12 inches. Many suppers for Nancy! The next



Photo by: Ivan Joslin

Cuy (Guinea Pig) run around the home of local family.



Photo by: Ivan Joslin

Here he is again! Sitting on the altar at the local Inca family home.



Photo by: Ivan Joslin
Fran Zimmerman listens intently as Carlos explains the local refrigeration system.

item is the dried fish and meat hanging in the middle of the room. The whole house is perhaps 300 square feet. There are three beds on one end jammed together with a ladder leading to a loft which I presumed was another sleeping area. There is a crude fireplace for cooking in an adjacent corner of the room. Next to the cooking area is the religious altar. Above the altar and in a hole in the wall were the skulls of three ancestors. On the altar table was a small doll with a cigarette in its mouth and fake money for health and wealth. Around the dolls neck was a tiny car and television set made from plastic. These are what

the family wanted in the future and prayed for. There are also three large llama fetuses hanging from the wall. I do not recall their meaning.

This family consists of a mother, father, and two children. The mother and children attended to the daily chores of the home and the father as most fathers, was a farmer working in the fields. The children were very friendly. The young boy had a deck of cards that because he shuffled the deck so much were about to tear in half. Needless to say Vincent gave him a new deck he kept in his back pack. The mother had a manual pedal operated Singer sewing machine in the middle of the room near the guinea pigs. There was also a large stack of blankets and tapestries she had woven. They were brilliant in color. Intricately done and about 4 foot by 6 foot in size, she was selling them for 40 dollars. No telling how much time was required to make one. I bought one and so did several others in our group. I was continuing to bargain and would only give her \$35 which she declined with a very sad face. Neither of us would give. Finally, upon leaving the house, her young son handed me a plastic bag with the tapestry inside. I said \$35 questioningly, and he said yes. I looked over at the mother. She continued to look sad and said \$35 was okay. What a rat I was. I gave her the \$35. And



A variety of fabrics were for sale.

Photo by: Ivan Josline