

A life of travel

friends&neighbours

by Leah Blain



Lucy Moffat has a glass trophy on display in her living room with a globe on top. It was given to her from Wells Gray Tours, celebrating the fact she has travelled to the seven continents of the world.

"They also gave me a gift certificate toward my next trip," she says smiling. Lucy plans to spend it on the 2016 Wells Gray trip to Dubai and Singapore.



She has over a dozen large photo albums that document her travels. She has close-up photos of African lions, to the splendours of Europe and the Orient, to majestic Antarctic icebergs.

"We were in an open jeep," she says, going through the photos of Africa. "That lion just finished eating a buffalo—see, that's what's left (pointing to a picture of skeletal remains); that's why we could get that close."

Being a world traveller wasn't really in her mind growing up in Vancouver. Born on January 24, 1936, Lucy was one of two daughters. At the age of 16, she went to work at BC Tel as a switchboard operator, eventually becoming an information operator and doing some bookkeeping work for the company.

In 1955 she married 'the boy next door,' Bruce Moffat. A few years later they moved to Burnaby in hopes of starting a family. Because they couldn't have children, they eventually adopted a girl, Cathy, and a boy, Bill. Bruce had his own company, S&P Distributors, that distributed all the Vancouver Sun and Province newspapers throughout Vancouver.

"We delivered all the papers that didn't go to the houses. We had 15 trucks and 37 men."

In 1974 they moved to their summer cottage in Sorrento. Although she loves the Shuswap now, Lucy said the move was difficult for her at the time: "I was a Vancouver girl. All Sorrento had at that time was a general store with a post office and two gas stations."

One summer they decided to see their country. It was cramped quarters for four people.

"We drove across Canada, from Sorrento to St. John's

Newfoundland in a green camper van," she says, laughing at the memory. She and Bruce travelled a little around the States and up to Alaska. Then their trip to New Zealand in 1983 ended tragically.

"Bruce was in a left-handed men's golf tournament. He died in his bed of a massive heart attack. I was traumatized, it just about did me in. I was 47 and he was eight days off his 50th birthday."

The next year Lucy was invited by Jewish friends to join them on a Greek cruise and then to stay on a kibbutz in Israel for a month. She had a wonderful time seeing the world and meeting new people. A few years later, she was invited to go with her friends to Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and back to Israel. She went back a few more times, sometimes extending their tours to other countries including Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

In the meantime she met another man, Delbert Davis, an American ex-serviceman who was living in Canada. She traveled with him, going to his reunions and meeting lots of people, and spending winters in California.

"I golfed almost every day," she says, smiling. They spent 10 happy years in each other's company and in 1997 decided to go their separate ways.

Lucy noticed the advertisement for Wells Gray tours and in 2000 decided to try it.

"I joined Wells Gray and did the Panama Canal and went up to Nicaragua."

She found going through the canal fascinating, and stayed on deck the whole time taking pictures.

The next year she took her son, Bill, on a Mexican cruise and then did a Mediterranean cruise with Holland America with a group of friends.



In Africa, Lucy took a picture of a lounging lion who had just eaten a buffalo.

In 2002 she went on a Wells Gray tour of China, and the next year went to New Zealand, Tasmania and Australia. In 2004 she went with Wells Gray to the Galapagos Islands and Machu Picchu.

"In 2005 I did South America and Antarctica with Holland America. It was cold – look at what I'm wearing," she says, pointing to a picture of herself in a thick winter coat.

"We didn't land because the big ships can't do that." She has inside her photo album a certificate signed by



On her trip to the Galapagos Islands, Lucy saw Blue Footed Boobies, (above) and penguins (below).

the ship's captain, reading:

A voyage to Antarctica – Jan 13-15, 2005. In the seafaring tradition of Captain James Cook, and the spirit of adventure found in the likes of Shackleton, Scott, and Amundsen, Lucy Moffat did journey across the Southern Ocean to the white continent of Antarctica at the far reaches of our planet Earth under the skies of the mighty Aurora Australis.

As Lucy pulls out her albums, setting them in various stacks, she is trying to remember what she did in 2006, then she remembers it was the trip to Rome. "I loved it," she says enthusiastically.

In 2007 she took a more local tour, Washington State, Oregon, and Victoria, B.C. The African safari was in 2008.

In 2009 Lucy went to Hawaii with her sister. The next year she was again with Wells Gray, traveling around Europe: Germany, Switzerland, and Austria.

"In 2011 I didn't go anywhere, I was recovering from Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma cancer and I spent six months in chemo."

She was, of course, ready to make up for her year off by taking two trips the next year. She took a Wells Gray tour to France and also did the French Riviera, as well as going to Cuba.

"In 2012 Wells Gray celebrated their 40th anniversary, and we did an Alaska Cruise on Holland America."

The next year she took the tour to Austria, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary. Last year she stayed on this side of world, flying to Ottawa and then taking a train to Quebec. The tour then went to Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Boston and New York. This past

February she went to the Southern Caribbean.

Needless to say, she loves Wells Gray Tours. They all know her well, and she considers them old friends. She can't pick a favourite place or trip, because she says they're all so different and wonderful in their own way.

Travel has been an important part of her life and has clearly kept her very young.

"I've met lots of nice people and every place is interesting, but it's hard to find a place better than this," she says, looking at her view over Shuswap Lake.