

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA RETIREES ASSOCIATION (7/1/21 - 6/30/22) UMRA
ARMCHAIR TRAVELER PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT JULY 27, 2022
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There were three Armchair Traveler Programs offered during 2021-22, all via Zoom. We had 25-30 people attending each session and the feedback was extremely positive. Programs were offered on Tuesday mornings from 10-11:30 a.m. Two speakers presented their pictures and comments for approximately 30 minutes each and then we had 15 minutes per speaker for discussion and questions/answers. My thanks to each of our wonderful presenters. I sent out email announcements a month and a week before each program. Kris Mortensen included a short article about each program in the UMRA Newsletter. Thank you, Kris! I plan to offer three Armchair Traveler Programs in 2022-23. Here is a brief description of each program from 2021-22.

September 22, 2021

Charles Muscoplat, professor and dean emeritus of the College of Agricultural, Food, and Environmental Sciences, presented “Personal journey to WWII concentration and death camps in Poland, and Jewish historical sites in Budapest and Prague.” After starting their 2018 journey in Amsterdam’s Keukenhof Botanical Garden, Chuck and Sue Muscoplat went to Warsaw, where they toured various WWII memorials, including the Umschlagplatz Monument, the former loading yard where trains carried hundreds of thousands of Jews to their deaths at Treblinka. Next, they visited Auschwitz-Birkenau, where more than 1.1 million were killed. They then went to Budapest and toured pre-WWII Jewish history. Lastly, they stopped in Prague to learn about the pre-WWII history of Jews in the Czech Republic. While most of Muscoplat’s family came to the U.S. before WWI, many stayed behind and suffered the consequences. I, Lynn C. Anderson, former administrator in the College of Liberal Arts and the Learning Abroad Center, presented “Sweden and Norway: monuments, mountains, and memories.” I have visited relatives in Sweden and Norway numerous times since 1975; my most recent sojourn was in spring 2019. I shared pictures and information about the incredible landscapes, amazing buildings and art, and fascinating history—plus a few goofy pictures of relatives.

January 26, 2022

Our travel guides were Gene Allen and Kathryn Hanna. Gene Allen’s presentation featured some of Australia’s flora, fauna, favorite tourist sites, and basics about the country’s geological and human history. Hanna’s presentation featured three Inuit communities on Baffin Island with active art programs in the Nunavut territory of northern Canada. Allen, a professor emeritus of animal science, retired in 2009 after 43 years at the U that included teaching and working as a dean, provost, and associate vice president of international programs. His experiences include four U of M Global Seminars on human and environmental interactions in Australia. Hanna was a faculty member in the Department of Biology Teaching and Learning and associate dean in the College of Biological Sciences. She also taught for 20 years at the University of Minnesota, Waseca. I will email a Zoom invite to all UMRA members ab

April 27, 2022

Frank Busta retired as professor of food microbiology and director of the National Center for Food Protection and Defense. Jean Kinsey retired as professor of applied economics and director

of The Food Industry Center. They described their presentation as follows: “Istanbul was the launchpad for our 2013 journey through Turkey’s eastern sacred lands and ancient civilizations. Istanbul bridges the east and west sides of the Bosphorus waterway and provides a lens through which to view the ancient empires that once ruled this world. Flying from Istanbul directly to the city of Van in the Kurdish region of eastern Turkey, we visited its famous Van Kedisi cat house. Mount Ararat and the Iranian border were close by as we traveled to the ancient Armenian capital of Ani. Much of this journey followed or crossed the Silk Road, explored the history of the Hittites and Urartians, and experienced the culture of the whirling dervishes and the thrill of flying over homes carved into the mountains in Cappadocia. We went from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, from Mount Nemrut to Adana and to Tarsus, the home of Mark Antony and Cleopatra and the birthplace of Saint Paul. Shortly after our journey, increased conflict on the Syrian border made this trip way too dangerous, and since then, Turkey has changed dramatically.”