

## TRIP

“I don’t see many cars” said Valerie peering out the window of the airplane as we descended towards Pearson Airport on Saturday March 8<sup>th</sup>. We didn’t know how serious the storm was until we called for our limo and were advised that many flights had been cancelled. Sure enough Ken was there waiting for us from Parkhurst Inc in Belleville.

As we set out, the effect of the storm was readily apparent especially when we saw the entrance to the 401 was closed. Nevertheless five (5) hours later we pulled in to our driveway and wished Ken well as he headed for home. We had left Cairo, Egypt about thirty (30) hours before and were dead tired but filled with the satisfaction that we had one of our most if not the most memorable vacations ever.

I’m not going to bore you with a step by step recounting of our adventures but will undoubtedly, in the future, make references to things we saw, learned, did and above all enjoyed.

I will mention a few things to put the whole trip in perspective. We went with a group created by the sponsoring company, Graig Travel from Toronto and I have nothing but praise for the way it was organized and conducted with most everything covered. The group included people from Alberta to Nova Scotia with the Dean of Theology from Trinity as the leader accompanied by his wife. Despite the diversity of the make-up of the group they were always a pleasure to travel with.

The two low points were traveling over and coming home but that was not only the length of the flight but the total lack of caring for the passengers from the crew of Alitalia. Fortunately, for us, on our flights within Egypt, we traveled by private charter planes which provided excellent service.

I must mention Cairo, a city of 20 million people with, according to our Egyptian guide 3 million transient workers entering and leaving the city each day from the surrounding areas. The traffic never ceases, so much so that I took a picture from our hotel balcony at midnight just to be able to show to any doubting Thomas.

With this ceaseless traffic plus individual activity and the sheer volume of residents the air was much polluted. I used to think Toronto was bad but in comparison it seems almost pristine.

Fortunately our stay in Cairo was limited and we flew to Abu Simbal near the southern border of Egypt then to Aswan, the site of the high dam which created Lake Nasser, the largest man-made lake which extends into Sudan and Lake Victoria, the headwaters of the Nile which flow north into the Mediterranean.

We spent three (3) nights on a cruise ship on the Nile making our way to Luxor and visiting many interesting spots on

the way – mostly Temples. We flew then to Sinai and the gorgeous resort on the Red Sea at Sharm el Sheikh for much needed rest and sunbathing and then back to Cairo for the two days all of which were filled with activities such as visiting the Cairo museum and the market places.

I must mention Aymen, our Egyptian guide. He was/is a most handsome man of 35 who graduated from university with a degree in Egyptology. He was fluent in French and English, Arabic and Egyptian Hieroglyphics – he could actually read the information off the walls of the temples! Valerie noted that he not only spoke our language but understood our sense of humor as well which is not often the case with local guides. He traveled with us throughout the whole of the itinerary and his knowledge and humor made a good trip into an excellent and informative tour.

One adventure I must mention as I know several of the Mirror readers who will be curious. Our first venture on day one was to visit the pyramids in Cairo. We were asked how many of us wanted to ride a camel. Well, Valerie and I thought it would be like going to the fair here where one rides a donkey in an enclosed ring. So Valerie and I signed up and there were seventeen (17) others in the group who said that they would also like to try it.

We walked from the coach through a residential area to the stables which had many camels, saddled and harnessed and sitting down outside. They mounted us one by one virtually manhandling us onto the sitting camels and then said, sit back and hold on as they motioned the camels to rise. They was much squealing and hanging onto the pommels as the animal rose up – you know camels are pretty big when you are on top of them! They tied the camels together in string of two or three and the strings were led by the handlers – Valerie’s handler was all of nine years old. We then set off on what turned out to be an hour’s trip to the pyramids. Valerie said it was a good thing that she knew how to ride a horse – it helped a bit.

*Continued on page 19*

### Letters to the editor are welcome.

**Express an opinion, publicize an event, submit an obituary, in memoriam, letter of thanks, etc.**

**Our mailing address is South Marysburgh Mirror, Milford, ON, K0K 2P0 or by e-mail,**

**smmirror@sympatico.ca.**

**Letters must contain the author's name, address and telephone number.**

**The Mirror reserves the right to edit, condense or reject any letter.**