



TUCSON

WINTER OF 2017 / 2018

Hi Everyone,

After a hectic year of unplanned chores, efforts, and bumps in our lives, I am finally able to work on a backlog of Flying Pig Adventures. The first one, ironically enough, is our adventures in Tucson last winter... ironic because that is where I am posting this issue from.

I'll be publishing the next three that are backlogged over the winter while here in Tucson:

- our adventure from Tucson back to Poulsbo last spring
- our adventure by boat from the Black Sea to the North Sea via the Danube/Main/Rhine rivers this last summer
- and our adventure from Poulsbo back to Tucson this last fall

In addition, I am going to start publishing Print-On-Demand books of some of my photography portfolios. The first one I am working on is my stylized bird portraits. Some of those photographs are in this issue.

PLEASE READ THIS NEXT PARAGRAPH IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE TO RECEIVE NOTICE OF NEW FLYING PIG ADVENTURES AND NEWS ABOUT WENDY'S AND MY ARTISTIC EFFORTS.

Over the years I've used various methods of letting you know when new Flying Pig Adventures have been published, the last few years by social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. While social media has generally been free in terms of direct monetary costs and I do enjoy reading about and communicating with my Facebook friends, it is becoming more and more clear that using social media has its own indirect costs, and those costs are becoming more and more evident both in the feeds of information we get from the social medias we participate in as well as the frequent headline news about them, (generally not good news either). While I've still not decided exactly and/or how much social media I want to continue to use personally and/or use in order to send my travelogues to you, I do plan to reduce, (if not end), my participation on these more common 'free' social media sites.

There is a concept that applies to these 'free' social media sites, APPs, and such and that is... If you didn't pay for the product (in this case Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.), YOU ARE the product...

To that end, I am going to try to send each of those that want to see my travelogues and other things, notices and links via a personal eMail, so please send me your eMail address to insure you continue to receive them.



This winter we decided to stay for two months on the west side of Tucson, opposite the east side of Tucson from where we normally stay. It was a bit further from the center of the city, but a much bigger RV park with more activities.

One of the reasons we wanted to stay here was the proximity to the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum which we enjoy going to so much. The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum is a world-renowned zoo, natural history museum and botanical garden, all in one place. Exhibits re-create the natural landscape of the Sonoran Desert Region with more than 300 animal species and 1,200 kinds of plants along almost 2 miles of paths traversing 21 acres of beautiful desert. For more information visit this link: desertmuseum.org

Over the winter I was able to do a lot of photography there.



GREAT HORNED OWL TAKEN DURING ONE OF THE DAILY FREE-FLIGHT DEMONSTRATIONS AT THE MUSEUM.



**THERE ARE HUMMINGBIRDS IN AN AVIARY AS WELL AS IN THE WILD. LEFT TO RIGHT:
ANNAS (FROM AVIARY), ALLEN'S (WILD, BLOWN IN FROM CALIFORNIA BY A STORM), BROAD-BILLED (FROM AVIARY)**





ANIMALS FROM THE ZOO PORTION OF THE MUSEUM.



BOBCAT



MOUNTAIN LION



OCELOT





Other images from the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum

PHOTO OP'S AT THE FREE-FLIGHT
DEMONSTRATION.





**LANDSCAPE PAINTING
SUNSET AT THE MUSEUM**



SPRING FLOWERS AT THE MUSEUM

**ANOTHER DAY AT THE MUSEUM WITH FRIENDS
AND FLYING PIG ADVENTURES CHARTER
MEMBERS EVI, TIM & WENDY**





That is all from the museum this year...



More bird photographs from in and around Tucson this winter...





One of the negatives of the RV park we stayed at on the west side of Tucson is its location in relationship to the nearby airport which also serves the Air National Guard and international training center for F16 pilots from around the world. While it was interesting to see the planes up so close, that novelty was relatively short lived for me after a few days of photographing them. The novelty was much shorter lived for Wendy. Most conversation stops abruptly and frequently across the entire park. At night it calmed down some.



At the other RV park on the east side of Tucson, where we stay at most of the time, the Fairchild Republic A-10 Thunderbolt II, (commonly referred to the A10 Warthog) from nearby Davis-Monthan Air Force Base is a common site, but they are at a much higher altitude and do not require conversation to stop.

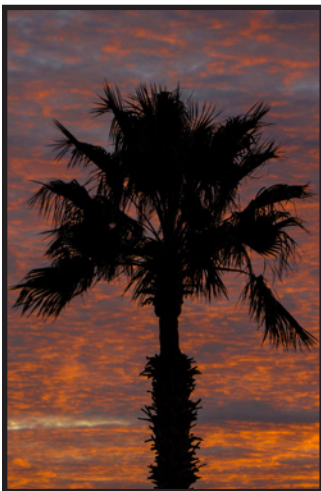




We saw plenty of signs like this throughout Tucson, but in some areas there were more than in others.



Great sunsets were common and soon we began a nightly sunset watch and alert system if one of us was not watching.





This year we found an even better bread baker here, Barrio Bread. While he doesn't bake all the items we get at the French bakery, La Baguette Parisienne, which is right next to our normal RV park. We like Barrio Breads the best... so far. We heard that people drive all the way down from Phoenix just to get his bread. That seems like a stretch to us. For us, breads are at their best only for a day or two after baked, so to drive all the way down for two days supply would not seem practical. Anyway, the Barrio Breads story is interesting and fun to follow, lots of nation-wide press and a really friendly place, albeit hectic with long lines out the door sometimes. More info here: barriobread.com





Some architectural works...







We even made new friends this year... actually we had run across Ken & Martha in their MoHo several years ago at a rest area in Northern California. While we did not meet or talk to them personally, I had noticed that they had a cryptic web site address on the back of their MoHo and a vanity plate on their toad (vehicle that MoHo people tow is nicknamed a 'toad'), that indicated their MoHo was underpowered. Anyway, I took a photograph of the rear of their MoHo with the web site address with the intentions of checking out just what it was about.

So... it is several years later now and we were exploring the Owens Valley on the way down again this year (all covered in the last issue of the Flying Pig Adventures). In our Jeep, we were way up in the White Mountains at the end of a long 4x4 gravel road at over 10,000' elevation when we came across a car pulled off to the side and that had a familiar vanity plate. Why it was familiar I did not connect readily, but they were stopped along side the road and as most back country travelers do, we stopped long enough to ask if everything was okay. They rolled down their window, allowing my road dust into their life and replied they were fine, no problems... so Wendy & I motored on. It was a very brief encounter with only a few words spoken.



Later on, maybe a day or later, while we were anchored in Bishop, California we went to check out another RV park we had heard about and there was that MoHo with that cryptic web site address on the back. Seemed familiar, but again, I did not put it together with that encounter years ago at that rest area in Northern California.

So... (again)... a month or so pass and we are now in an RV park in Tucson. We had been there some days with no one next to us, when an big MoHo came lumbering in and anchored. It turns out it was this same MoHo and couple we had been running into off and on. It's easy to tell because of the logos / web site addresses and vanity plate on the toad.

It turns out Ken and Martha have many of the same interests as Wendy and I and we became friends over the months we were in Tucson. Ken actually turned me onto some new interests (at no small cost). Ken has a great interest in all sorts of technology, is an avid researcher of the same and a great resource for someone like myself. With both Ken and Don Merry such avid researchers, I am slowly building one significant research group. There were few days that UPS or FedEx were not making a delivery of some of new bit of technology to the RV Navigator MoHo.

Both Ken & Martha are avid bloggers, their links are below:

www.RVNavigator.com and www.mytripjournal.com/wiseman



One of our adventures with Ken & Martha was to an old mining / ghost town, Ruby...



**DRIVER,
PHOTOGRAPHER &
DRONE PILOT KEN
WISEMAN EXPLORING
RUBY, AZ WITH
CAMERA AND DRONE.**

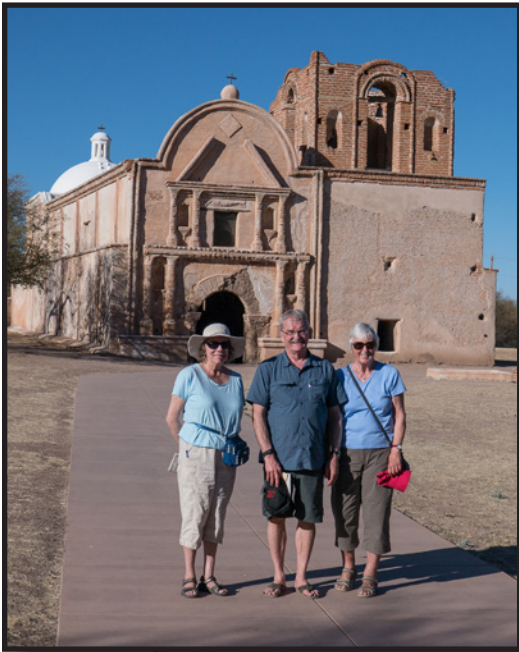






With our friends Tim & Evi Halpin, we took a day trip south of Tucson to the Tumacácori National Historical Park.

Tumacácori National Historical Park is located in the upper Santa Cruz River Valley in Santa Cruz County, southern Arizona. The park consists of 360 acres in three separate units. The park protects the ruins of three Spanish mission communities, two of which are National Historic Landmark sites. It also contains the landmark 1937 Tumacácori Museum building, also a National Historic Landmark.









Under the shade of a palm tree, my new friend, neighbor and technology tutor Ken demonstrated his latest drone (a DJI Spark) for me. A very small drone, but with lots of technology built into it to make it safe, easy and fun to fly. It has a built in camera system and does both still and video photography.

Not long after Ken's brief introduction and instruction, I had my own. My first solo flights were in an area adjacent to the RV park that had lots of open space for erroneous flight maneuvers.

The bottom image on this page is a view of the Tucson RV park we were anchored for the first part of the winter... on the southwest side of town.

One evening we took a short drive south with Ken and Martha to San Xavier Del Bac Mission to fly our drones. The top image on the next page is from that evening and one of my first drone images that turned out well.





San Xavier Del Bac Mission

The Mission was created to serve the needs of the local community here, the village of Wa:k (San Xavier District) on the Tohono O'odham reservation, as it still does today.





On a trip south of Tucson to the Patagonia area with our friends Tim & Evi Halpin, we came across this rare car, a Kaiser Darrin. We got to chat with the owner about the uniqueness of the car. I was not able to get a good photograph of it, but the doors slide up into the front fender rather than swing open as most cars do.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia:

The Kaiser Darrin, also known as the Kaiser Darrin 161 or in short as the Darrin, was an American sports car designed by Howard "Dutch" Darrin and built by Kaiser Motors for the 1954 model year. The Kaiser Darrin was one of its designer's final achievements and was noted for being the first American car equipped with a fiberglass body and doors that slid on tracks into the front fender wells. The car was named both for Henry J. Kaiser, head of Kaiser Motors, and Darrin.

The Darrin was conceived as part of a movement in Detroit to compete head-to-head with European roadsters being imported. While the Darrin was designed attractively, it was also underpowered and, while a good performer overall, did not measure up to foreign vehicles such as the Nash-Healey or Triumph TR2. The Darrin's high price tag, lack of consumer confidence in Kaiser's viability and practical challenges with the car's design resulted in low sales.

Only 435 production Darrins and six prototypes were built. Crumbling corporate finances, pending loss of assembly facilities and a freak snowstorm that reportedly ruined 50 of the cars all conspired to terminate the program. Darrin bought those 50 vehicles and whatever others Kaiser had left in storage and sold those from his Hollywood, California showroom. Many of the cars' engines were retrofitted with superchargers and multiple carburation to improve performance. Six were re-engined with Cadillac Eldorado V-8 units; one of these was reportedly raced.

On a quick Internet search, I found these to be recently priced from \$150,000 to \$250,000.

Here is a link to Wikipedia for more information if you like: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaiser_Darrin





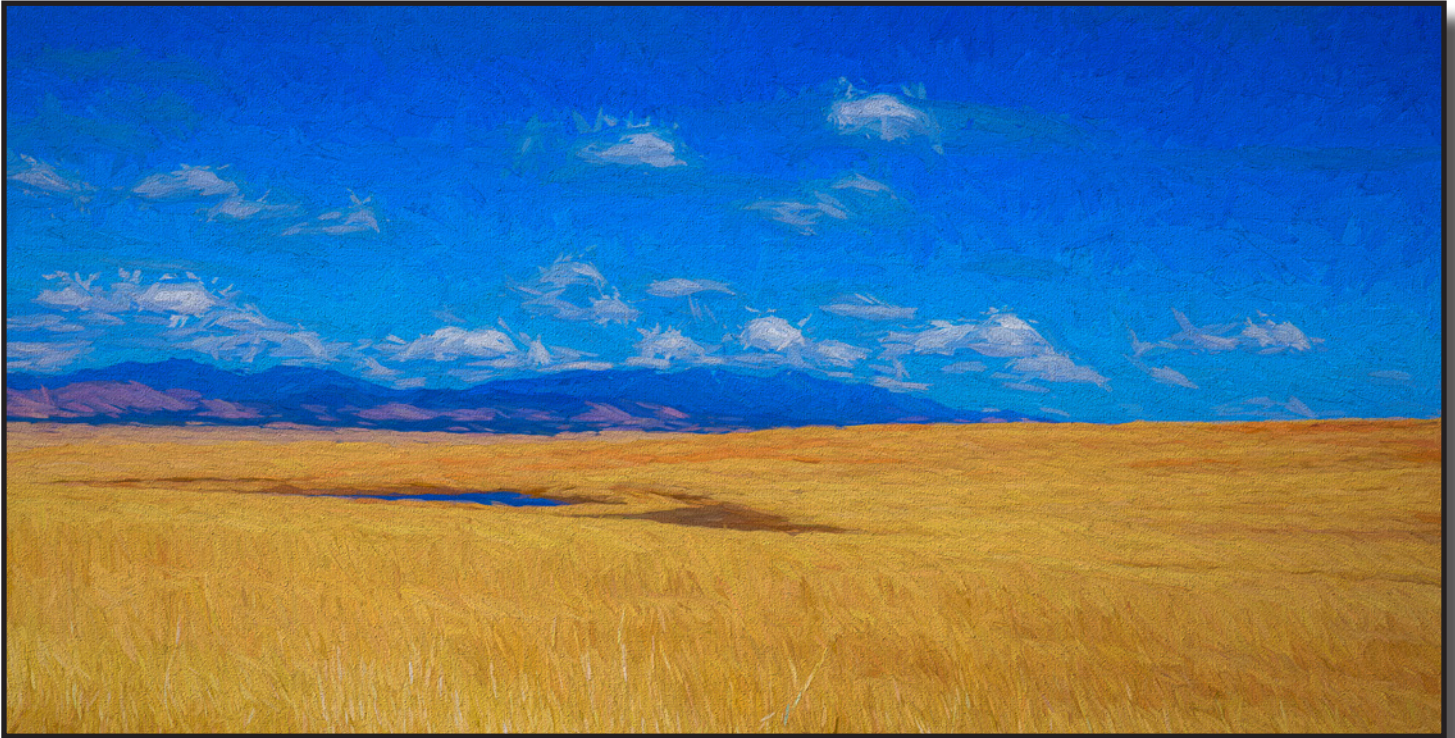
Wendy and I almost always make multiple trips to the Pima Air & Space Museum each winter. There is a lot to see and every year there are different planes to see. This year they had at least two new huge buildings for us to explore.

This year, Wendy's favorite '*plane of the day*' was the Douglas B-23 Dragon below.

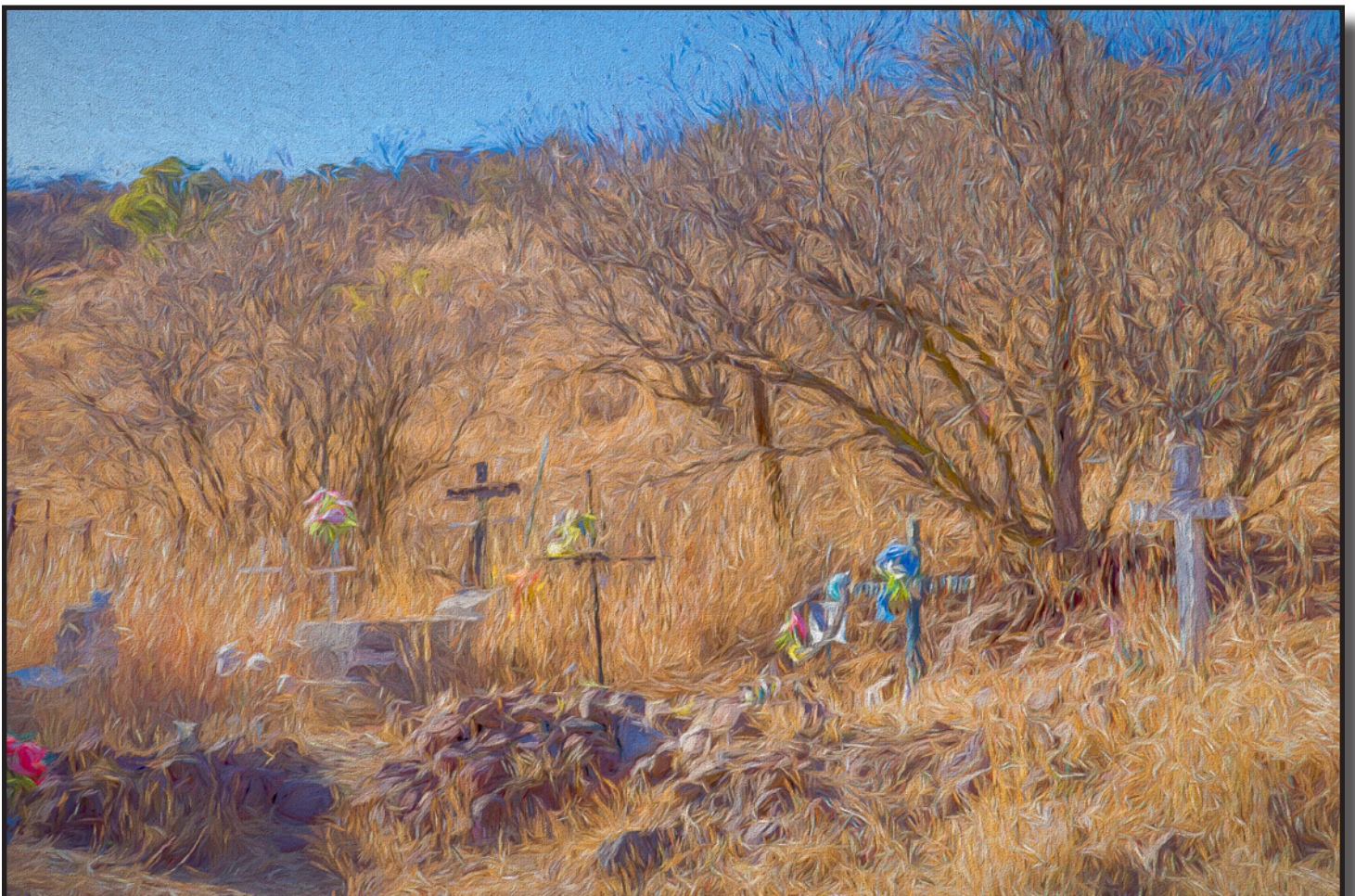


The B-36J below has a special connection to my friend Wally Hefner. You will have to stop by our Poolsbo Situation Room, (Cups), some morning and ask him about it.





SCENES FROM AN ADVENTURE WITH TIM & EVI HALPIN INTO LANDSCAPE EAST OF PATAGONIA, AZ.





With our friends Tim & Evi Halpin, on the trip we took to the Tumacacori National Historical Park, we stopped and visited the famous Santa Cruz Chili & Spice factory and store across the street. From their web site:

Santa Cruz Chili & Spice Company is both a manufacturer and retailer of fine chili products. At our Spice Center in Tumacacori, Arizona we sell, along with Santa Cruz Products, a wide variety of gourmet Southwestern foods, cookbooks and a large selection of spices and herbs. We also have a quaint Western Museum documenting the rich history of the area.

This is the home of the Santa Cruz Chili & Spice Company. The business is small. It is family-owned. It is a source of pride. The chili products reflect the unique mixture of Mexican and Western cultures that are so much a part of the Santa Cruz Valley. The flavors are pure and authentic. They represent the valley's rich heritage. You are invited to experience a part of the heritage; to share in its traditions. Bienvenidos.

As advertised and as reviewed, they had a few spices. If you want to learn more here is a link to their web site:

<http://www.santacruzchili.com/>



THE BACK ROOM WHERE THE SPICE MAGIC AND MIXING HAPPENS



We tagged along with our new friends Ken and Martha to a place in Tucson we had yet to go to, the Cox Butterfly & Orchid Pavilion. It is located within the Tucson Botanical Gardens, to which we have been to before... just not to the Cox Butterfly & Orchid Pavilion. Tropical butterflies from around the world are featured in the Cox Butterfly & Orchid Pavilion, but my photography efforts did not produce any butterfly images I was happy with. I did get a couple of orchid images I was happy with, but they were much less mobile and more accommodating.



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