

friendship force
INTERNATIONAL



Join us Sunday, April 6, 2025 for a special presentation by **FFGS member, Ilene** at the Covenant Shores Fellowship Hall. Her presentation is on the **Portuguese Coastal portion of the famous Camino de Santiago**. This 70 mile path took 7 days, ending in Santiago, Spain. Ilene, Don, and Ilene's sister hiked this route in August 2023 to celebrate Ilene's 80th birthday.. There are seven main routes which all come together in Santiago. Ilene's sister walked the full 500 mile route in 2020.

The Friendship Force of Greater Seattle Newsletter #59

March 15, 2025

FFGS Board Meeting
Wed **March 19**, noon – 2 pm
Shoreline Library

General Meeting:
April 6, 2025 2 – 4 pm
Covenant Shores
Camano de Santiago:
Portuguese Coastal Route

Cuba Global Outbound
April 13-19, 2024
9 FFGS members going

Richmond, VA Outbound
Judi – coordinator
Rescheduled for 2026!

Alajuela, Costa Rica Inbound
Joyce & Sue – co-coordinators
July 3 – 10, 2025

Manitoba, Canada Outbound
Pura – coordinator
August 9 – 16, 2025

Winnipeg, Canada Inbound
Elaine - coordinator
Sept 30 – October 7, 2025

President's Letter:

Welcome back to everyone who went to New Zealand! It was a wonderful trip - the folks in Hamilton were great hosts and New Zealand is a country of amazing sights. Check out the pictures included in this newsletter. Having the Portland/ Vancouver and Montana members join us added friendship and laughter to an already amazing trip.

In April nine of our members are joining a global Friendship Force journey to Cuba. This looks like it will be a great educational experience.

Our next hosting opportunity will be July 3rd – 10th. Please make sure to check in with Joyce to see how you can participate. If you can't host that week, consider hosting a dinner or being a day host. Many hands make light work and more fun. Also, please note that the Richmond, Virginia Outbound Journey has been postponed until 2026 due to scheduling difficulties.

I am looking forward to seeing you all on April 6th! Spring is coming even if the weather doesn't look like it.

- - - **Judi, FFGS President**

Travel [trah-val] noun

The only thing you can buy that makes you richer...

2025 Inbounds and Outbounds – Pack your bags!

Inbound Journeys: (Joyce, Sue, & Elaine would love volunteers to help!)

Alajuela, Costa Rica to Victoria/Vancouver Island, and FF Greater Seattle

Coordinators: Joyce and Sue; July 3 – 10, 2025

Winnipeg, Canada to FF Greater Seattle and FF Columbia Cascade

Coordinator: Elaine; dates Sept. 30 – Oct. 7, 2025

Outbound Journeys:

Nine FFGS members are going on a Cuba Global Journey April 12 – 19, 2024

FF Greater Seattle to **Manitoba, Canada** –Coordinator: Pura; August 5 – 12, 2025

Postponed until 2026: FF GS to Richmond, Virginia – Coordinator: Judi

Travel tips (in pictures): FFGS members share their tips!



Optimize wait time with a book...



Snap a photo of your luggage
In case it gets lost...



Hand washing not dry? Try ironing!
(no photo of underwear – works, too)



Karen packs down jacket in pillow
Judi has zip off leg travel pants



Joe has waist & neck money belts,
French press coffee cup, down throw



Joyce has phone dry bag, folding
cup, power bank, collapsible bowl



Elaine has a soft, puffy jacket.



Eleanor: folding scissors, plastic knife,
clothes line, soap for hand laundry



luggage scale, phone backup battery,
outlet adapter with USB and USB-C

Here are some items others have brought, but should be left at home!
[The Weirdest Items Found at TSA Airport Security](#) (click for article)
Human sized teddy bear, firearm concealed inside a raw chicken, live eels,
illegal drugs in crab boil seasoning, samurai swords, pet snake, and moose
excrement! (The passenger explained he collected moose droppings to give
to politicians whose policies he disagreed with.) TSA deemed the moose
droppings nonthreatening, and the passenger was sent along with his bag.

February 2, 2025 General Meeting: Travel!

For our February general meeting, FFGS members brought their favorite travel snacks as well as important travel treasures to take with you to ensure a better trip! (see p. 2!) Then, we spent 45 minutes watching Rick Steve’s December 14, 2024 interview,

[Rick Steves on his Life, Travel, and Cancer \(Dec 14, 2024\)](#)

If you have not yet watched the interview, you should! Click on the link above. And, for those of you who would like more from Rick on his latest book, here is another interview that you should watch.

["Travel Is a Political Act:" Rick Steves on the "Hippie Trail" | Amanpour and Company](#)



Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial news: Kintsukuroi

Date & Time: Thursday, March 27, 2025 | 6:30 PM

Location: Lynwood Theater, Bainbridge Island

Details: Join us for the Pacific Northwest premiere screening of Kintsukuroi and support the Bainbridge Island Exclusion Memorial Visitor Center. Special Q&A with filmmaker Kerwin Berk. Watch the trailer ▶.

Reserve Your Seat

Tickets for seniors are only \$15 each.

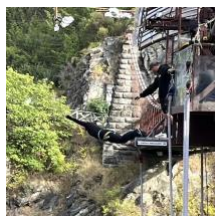
Perhaps others would be interested in attending this showing?

Kintsukuroi depicts the internment of 120,000 Japanese Americans by President Roosevelt during WWII, following two families from the Western prison camps to European battlefields as they endure injustice yet maintain dignity amidst ordeal.

With a stroke of his pen President Roosevelt destroyed the lives of 120,000 Japanese Americans at the onset of World War II. From the windswept prison camps of the American West to the battlefields of Europe, *KINTSUKUROI* follows the lives of two of those families who lost everything except their dignity



Bungee jumping near Queenstown – it started here!



Agrodome



Steepest Street



Train cool

In 2022, the [Pew Research Center](#) found that just 44% of adults older than 65 owned a tablet or computer, compared to 61% of those between the ages of 30 & 49. (Post journey tour – more photos)

Pre – Hamilton Tour (Mark, Denise, Joe, Joyce)



Kerosene Creek



Whitianga Beach – serenity



Hot Water Beach on the coast



Kerosene Creek (105 degrees)



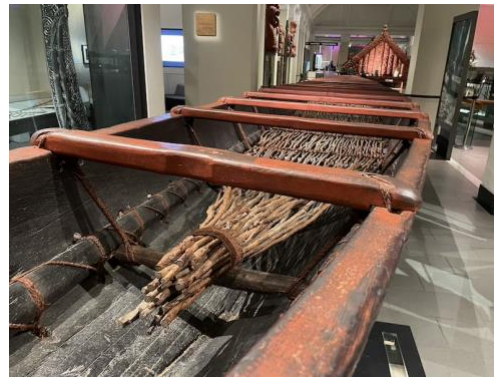
Cathedral Cove



Milford Sound



Kuirau Park, Rotorua



82 ft Māori War Canoe (1836)



Redwood Forest, near Rotorua



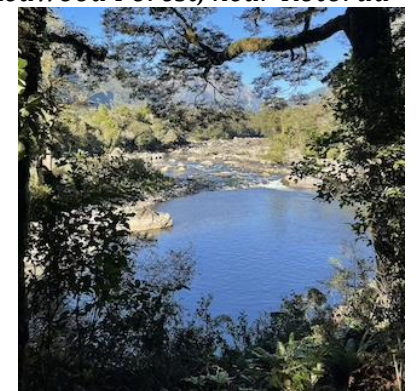
Fiordland National Park



Hiking trail to Cathedral Cove



Milford Sound Waterfall



Hiking the Milford Track



New Zealand Pidgeon.



Weka



Antipodes Island Parakeet



Pukeko – Swamp Hen



Hiking on Ben Lomond trail above Queenstown



Auckland from the Sky Tower



Auckland War Memorial Museum



Waimangu Volcanic Valley, Rotorua



Fiordland National Park.



Happy Valentine's Day from Milford Sound

North and South Island Tour!



Sheep Herding Demonstration



Feeding sheep at the Agrodome



Judi with a Kiwi statue



Christchurch Victoria Clock Tower



Māori carving



Mt Cook, Southern Alps



Wilmot Pass: 218' Waterfall



2nd Anniversary, Mary & Jerry



Weta Workshop Troll



Martha at Weta Workshop



Clay Cliffs in Quailburn



World's steepest St, Dunedin



Moeraki Boulders



Waimangu Volcanic Walk



East Coast of South Island Mike & Aggie on Footbridge Waimangu Volcanic Walk



Agrodome Farm Tour, Rotorua

Agrodome Farm Tour, Rotorua



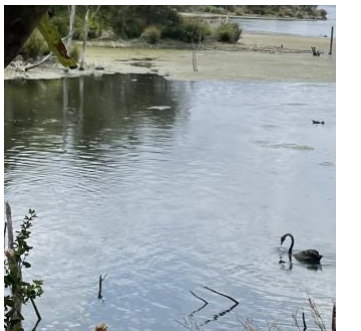
Bonnie & Georgie, Hobbiton Moeraki Boulders.

Waimangu Volcanic Walk Shaun the Sheep, Agrodome



Te Pā Tū Maori Show and Dinner, Rotorua

Doubtful Sound



Llama at Agrodome Farm Waimangu Volcanic Walk Coast south of Blenheim Black Swan, Lake Rotomahana

Hamilton Outbound Pictures!

Thank you to Bob and Karen for all of their hard work putting this outbound journey together. It was a dream! It was fun to reconnect with Virginia (from Montana) who traveled with us to Thailand in February 2017. We also enjoyed traveling with 6 FF Columbia Cascade club members!

Hamilton Gardens (one of the top 3 things to do in New Zealand...)



Hamilton Gardens is a hidden gem in the heart of the Waikato region. It is made up of 18 enclosed gardens, including Ancient Egyptian, Chinese Scholars, Māori, Italian Renaissance, American Modernist, Victorian Rose, Indian, Medieval, etc.

Jean Carbon's silk dying Studio



NZ has 42 species of cicadas



Trek to J Carbon's studio



View of Raglan from J Carbon's studio



Jean demonstrating process



Hand dyed and steam creased scarves



Silk lampshade



Surfing in Raglan



Fish & chips boat cruise from Raglan to Tasmanian Sea



Limestone cliffs



More limestone Cliffs – cruise from Raglan



On the cruise





Tea Mata Bridal Veil Falls.



Sunset Symphony on Rhododendron Lawn with local performing dance groups



Waitomo Glowworm Caves



Entrance – no photography



Boat returning after our tour



Happy Hour and Raelyn's art shed



Keith Lang Wood Turning



Barry & Jenny host pizza night.



Pizza with a view!



Cambridge's World Champion Stud farm



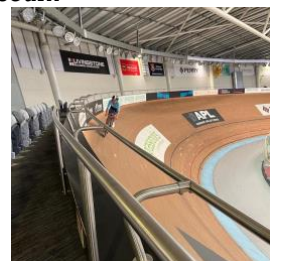
Ross Bros Car Museum



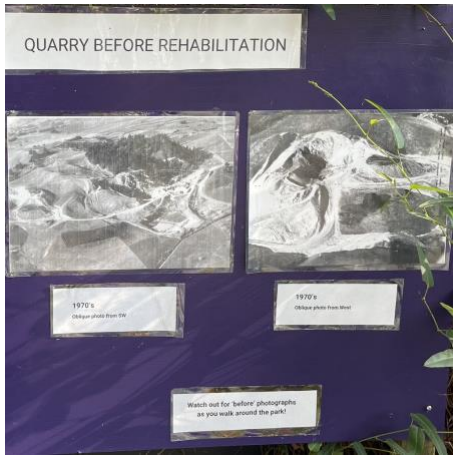
1998 - Largest loader in the world



We aren't lost...



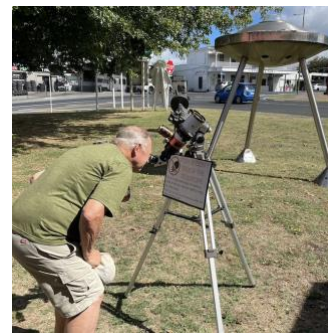
Cambridge Velodrome



Waitakaruru Sculpture Park and Arboretum created from an old stone quarry



Farewell Dinner



900 – pound dolphin jumps onto boat – click the link to watch!

A 900-pound dolphin jumped in the back of a fisherman's boat. Three fishermen did not get the calm day out on the waters around New Zealand's North Island that they were bargaining for. Dean Harrison, who owns the almost 16-foot boat, says all of their fishing rods were broken and the boat's bow was damaged when the dolphin crashed aboard. Miraculously, the dolphin was not hurt.

I'm really glad that our FFGS members on their tour did not encounter flying dolphins!



Need a Hug?



American Gothic made with 20,000 gourmet jelly beans. This was made in Auckland taking 150 hours and using 32 different colors.

Friendship Force Pledge

As a member of the Friendship Force
 I recognize that I can make a difference
 I recognize that I have a mission
 That mission is to be a friend of the people of the world.
 As I embark on this adventure,
 I know that others will be watching me
 I know that through my example
 to my fellow citizens
 And the people of other nations
 The cause of friendship, love,
 and peace will be furthered
 I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Video and Book Recommendations from our Milford Sound Nature Walk

Relevant videos:

[The absolutely hilarious viral video of Sirocco the kākāpō, New Zealand's official Spokesbird for Conservation:](#)

[The Homer Tunnel kea circus readjusting the traffic cones:](#)

Here's a fascinating 3-part short documentary series on the kiwi of Fiordland, *Fiordland Kiwi Diaries*. Follow the Department of Conservation rangers working to protect kiwi from invasive predators in remote Fiordland. We are lucky to have inspiring people like Tim and his team here in the National Park, and I've been lucky to assist them with their project over in Shy Lake in the past. Many of the things we say in the nature walk are inspired by conversations I've had with them. Enjoy the watch!

- Episode 1
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgVM3Y_3400
- Episode 2
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8mbfjyz4w0>
- Episode 3
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DQILKrjDUYc>

[Short documentary about the Airport Wall climb, just across the Cleddau River](#)

Books:

- [George Gibbs' Ghosts of Gondwana](#) is a bit of a heavier read for you who enjoy knowing all the possible details and fun facts about the natural history of Aotearoa. I love my copy and enjoy opening it on random pages and relearning things as I go:

- [Robin Wall Kimmerer's Braiding Sweetgrass](#) is a gorgeous and wholesome read that combines indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge, and the teaching of plants. One of my favorite books out there! Not written in New Zealand or by a Kiwi author, but I see many similarities with the local culture

Enjoy this great list of videos and books to check out!

Did You Know? - - - Vegemite versus Marmite



Both Marmite and Vegemite are based on brewer’s yeast, are high in B-vitamins. Marmite is based on oats, rye, and barley yeast extract while Vegemite is based on wheat and barley yeast extract. Contrary to rumor, Marmite doesn’t contain any animal products, both are vegan. Although healthy for you both Vegemite and Marmite would be considered “*acquired tastes.*”

Marmite

Marmite entered the UK market in 1902; however, the recipe has links to other foods that go back to the 17th century. Marmite includes added vegetable juice and different additives that contribute to its distinct flavor and texture. It has a sticky, syrupy consistency, similar to molasses. Considering taste, Marmite’s tagline is “*You either love it or hate it.*”

Marmite contains vitamin B12, Vegemite doesn't. Vitamin B3 values are higher in Marmite, but Vegemite contains a bit more B1, B2 and Folic Acid.

Vegemite

Vegemite was created in 1923 in Melbourne and was inspired by a wartime shortage of Marmite shipments to Australia. It’s been identified as one of Australia’s and New Zealand’s most popular foods as well as a staple of the Aussie identity. Vegemite has a thicker texture and a stronger taste than Marmite, is spreadable with a paste-like texture similar to peanut butter.

So, how do you eat Vegemite?

Per Hugh Jackman, the best way to enjoy Vegemite is on a slice of toasted white bread. Coat with butter followed by a thin layer of Vegemite. If you like the taste pile on the Vegemite.

Bon Appetite!!!

More North/South Island, NZ Tour Pictures!



Bungy Jumping Bridge – Queenstown



Arrowtown Clouds



Moeraki Boulders (Geodes)



Lake Tekapo Moa petting

Local Places worth exploring: South Seattle's magic median

Have you explored South Seattle's magic median?

On Beacon Avenue South, visitors can park in some roadway lots to golf or shop. But that's just one quirk of this 4-mile strip lined with trees and a winding trail.

- 1 Start of magic median
- 2 Jefferson Community Center
- 3 More parking and a walkway
- 4 Beacon Food Forest
- 5 VA Medical Center
- 6 Start of parking inside median
- 7 Chief Sealth Trail start
- 8 Maa Nyei Lai Ndeic P-Patch Community Gardens
- 9 End of parking inside median
- 10 Chief Sealth Trail end
- 11 End of magic median
- 12 Benefit Playground



Source: Esri (Mark Nowlin / The Seattle Times)

Mike Lindblom: The Seattle Times

*Whenever a sunbreak smiles upon Beacon Hill, it's easy to ignore the roar of Interstate 5 below and jets overhead because this neighborhood's got something unique in Seattle: a thoroughfare outfitted with **4 miles of trail**, fit for a stroll.*

A century ago, when the city created Beacon Avenue South, builders left a vacant space nearly five lanes wide between the single north- and southbound lanes, so they wouldn't interfere with Seattle's original water supply, which flowed down the middle through a wooden pipe.

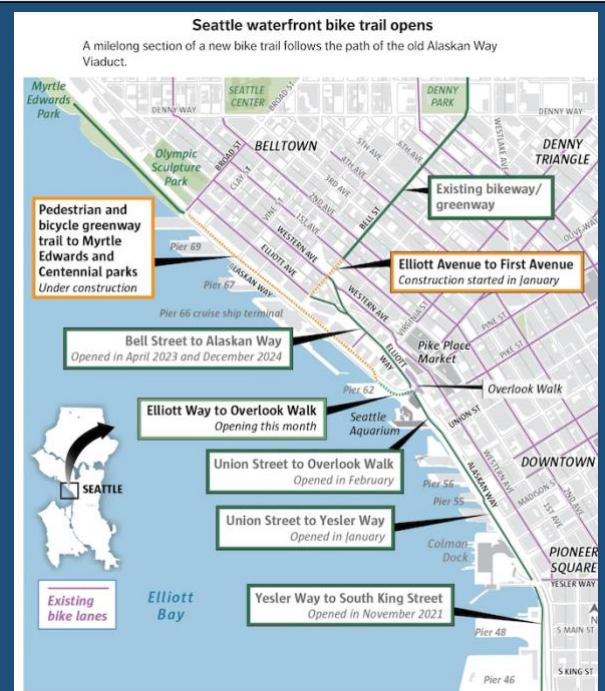
This empty median would later provide a short-lived streetcar corridor, then revert to a mess of gravel, mud and debris. That phase ended in the early 1980s, when the city joined neighborhood advocates to plan and construct an asphalt trail, rows of maples and pines, and a few small, furnished parking lots at churches and grocery markets, an oasis that retains the form we enjoy today.

Seattle Waterfront Bike Trail Opens:

A milelong section of a new bike trail follows the path of the old Alaskan Way Viaduct
Nicholas Deshais – Seattle Times staff reporter

In place of the demolished viaduct, which was taken down beginning in 2019, is a widened pedestrian promenade, an elevated waterfront park called Overlook Walk, a quieter yet still busy surface-level street and, basically, a new relationship between this old city and its historic waterfront.

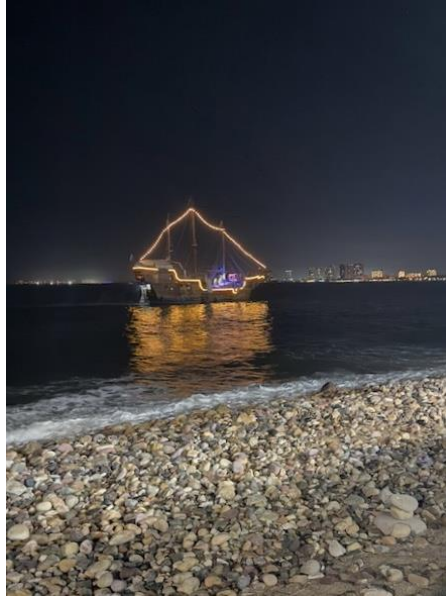
Where ran the highway (which now tunnels underground) stretch of safe, protected, two-way bike lanes, which officially opened Saturday, complete with green paint, bike traffic signals that detect when someone rolls up and a traffic-free way to traverse the city.



Sources: Esri, Seattle Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects (Reporting by Nick Deshais, map by Mark Nowlin)

Puerto Vallarta (Pura's recent FFI Global trip)

Puerto Vallarta is a resort town on Mexico's Pacific coast, in Jalisco state. It is known for its beaches, water sports and nightlife scene. Its cobblestone center is home to the ornate Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe church, boutique shops and a range of restaurants and bars.



Besides buying a new home in Olympia & selling their home in West Seattle, Carol has taken up painting! Here are a few beautiful examples!

REWIND - - - Memories of Journeys Past: **Hamilton**



Welcome Brunch



Chihuly Glass Museum



Chihuly Conservatory



UW Arboretum Japanese Garden.



Kerry Park View



Bloedel Reserve on Bainbridge Island



Museum of Flight Picnic



Pickle Ball at Farewell Event



Farewell Dinner and Presentation

FFGS Hosts



Bob



Dave/Judi



Doug/Sharon



Denise/Mark



Pura



Karen



Ilene/Don



Eleanor/Keith



Joyce/Joe



Bart/Roberta

Hamilton Ambassadors



Norma



Ainslie



Jaye



Wendy



Suane



Jenny/Barry



Pam



Jeanette



Joy



Maureen



Sue



Jude



Dorothy



Margaret



Raewyn



Ian

Here are pictures from the 2023 Inbound Journey from Hamilton, NZ. It was wonderful to see our New Zealand friends again!