

Trip to Austria and Germany

Space Center Rotary's entourage to Austria and Germany enjoyed 6 robust fellowships among the beautiful scenery, mountains, snow, and one picturesque village after another. Everyday provided novel gastronomic opportunities. The "natives" certainly believe in eating well. Innsbruck is nestled in a valley alongside the Inn River, with mountains rising sharply on all sides from the very edge of town. It is easy to see why Innsbruck was an Olympic choice. We had a comfortable hotel and the city offered a variety of restaurants. I believe my favorite was the Goldenar Adler (Golden Eagle) with its ambience, good food, and German music (part of which I recorded during dinner). Among the other sights in Innsbruck were the Little Golden Roof, the Hofkirche (church), the museum and the palace, as well as the narrow streets with the ornate buildings from earlier times mingled with the simpler designs of recent construction.

Innsbruck provided the skiers many choices. Our athletic president Bob Wren probably was the best performer. Jim Hargrove said that the skiing was great--he only had a couple of "good" falls--and only limped a little! Some of the slopes looked to me to be well beyond "advanced", more like "impossible", but Bob Wren says they were exciting.

Innsbruck offered many side trip opportunities, including Venice (by train), Salzburg, sleigh riding, and a wine and shopping tour to the Italian border. But a special treat was the all day trip into Bavaria to the German castle "Neuschwanstein". We negotiated MANY flights of winding stairs to a magnificent set of rooms in the upper part of the castle. This followed a long, uphill walk in the snow to get to the base of the castle. But it was worth it. On the return trip we stopped in Oberammergau, the site of the familiar periodic Passion Play and a woodcarving center, especially for cuckoo clocks.

During all of this some members got to attend a Rotary meeting in Innsbruck. Marge and I stayed an extra time in Munich and while there got to watch/hear the mechanical figures and chimes of the famous Glockenspiel in the tower of the city hall, have lunch at Hofbrauhaus (claimed to be the world's largest beer garden), and visit two art museums, along with enjoying some very pleasant German dishes.

Despite bouts with the flu, throughout the trip Pat and Jim Hargrove were very attentive to the needs of the entire party, and they deserve our thanks.