

December 2025

Dear Friends,

We didn't plan it this way, but in the past 12 months we went to distant places both south and north. Our Christmas card last year was printed in November because for much of December we were in southern Chilean Patagonia. We flew to the city of Punta Arenas, on the Strait of Magellan. Our visit included a one-week wildlife tour, followed by a one-week wildflower tour.

The high point of the wildlife tour was seeing two mother pumas, each with a cub. We saw many guanacos, one of several camel species in South America. Birding was rewarding, too, including king penguins on Tierra del Fuego and numerous water birds, raptors, and colorful smaller birds. Punta Arenas is so far south that December was like the peak of spring with many wildflowers in bloom. Our three-person tour group included a woman from the U.S. who is a field botanist; she contributed much to our journey.

In November we joined Graham's Australian cousins Anne and Bill for a trip to Churchill on Hudson Bay in Canada to see polar bears. During two days on the tundra we saw 25 bears. We flew to Churchill via Winnipeg and returned to Winnipeg by train — Churchill has no road connection. The 48-hour train trip (1,700 km, 1,000 mi) was educational. It went through several climatic regions, such as the boreal forest, mostly at just 50 km/hr (30 mph) with numerous stops for local people. The stop at Thompson was 2½ hours around lunch time. So Mary called an Indian restaurant in the town and they delivered a great meal to the train. In Winnipeg we saw an ice hockey game for the first time.

In January, and again in August, Mary and her sister Martha spent a few weeks at a Spanish language immersion school in Oaxaca, Mexico. This year Graham began taking Spanish lessons on Zoom. In October we made a one-week road trip to northern California and in November had a pleasant Thanksgiving with Mary's family in Oregon.

During the catastrophic fire in January that destroyed most of nearby Altadena, we were evacuated for three days. Fortunately the fire did not reach our neighborhood. We are grateful that friends who lost property in the fire are all safe.

Best wishes for the the Christmas season and for a gracious and joyous year ahead.

Mary.

Graham

Mary and Graham Bothwell
Pasadena, CA, U.S.A.



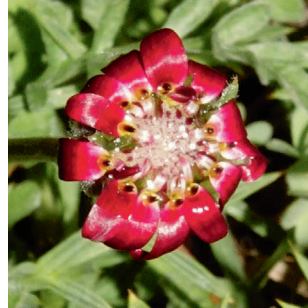
Yellow orchid



Darwin's slipper



Streaked maiden



Purple leucheria



Porcelain orchid



Firebush

Some of the many wildflowers we saw in
Chilean Patagonia, December 2024



Inukshuk (Inuit stone landmark)
in Churchill, Canada, November 2025

*Best wishes for
Christmas and
the New Year*



Torres del Paine National Park
southern Chilean Patagonia, December 2024

Chilean Patagonia, December, 2024



Spectacular mountains of Torres del Paine N.P.



Puma mother with cub, Torres del Paine N.P.



Icebergs in glacial lake



Terminus of Grey Glacier



Guanacos, a camelid



Black necked swans with 2 cygnets



King penguins, Tierra del Fuego

Churchill, Canada. November 2025



Churchill, with Churchill River flowing into Hudson Bay



"Crawler," a vehicle for the tundra



Sun over frozen lake



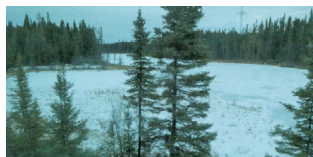
Polar bear mother with cub, on a frozen lake



Polar bear walks close by



Two young males sparring



Frozen rivers and boreal forest



Frozen rivers and boreal forest



Indian food on the train

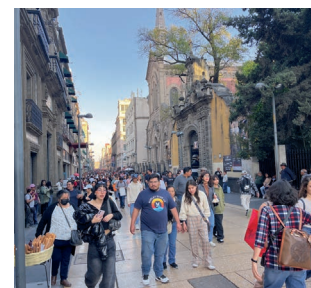
En route to Churchill, Canada, November 2025



Museum for Human Rights and a hockey game, Winnipeg



Mary in Mexico, January and August 2025

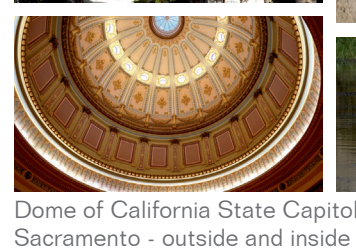


Pedestrians in Mexico City



Alebrije street art, Oaxaca

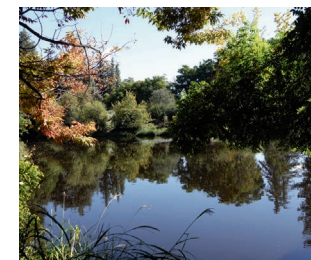
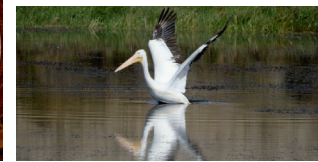
Closer to home, along the West Coast



Dome of California State Capitol, Sacramento - outside and inside



At Pt. Reyes: Bull elk and white pelican



U.C. Davis Arboretum



Hike along Rogue River