

Tuesday, May 10, 2011 Fly from Rota Navy Base, across Atlantic to Dover, Delaware.

Wednesday, May 11, 2011

BACK IN UNITED STATES

At the Dover AFB I called Hertz to rent a car. There may be cheaper car rentals but the man will pick us up at the base gate. I can see the gate from our housing. It is a one minute walk to the gate. We were picked up and we went to the rental office. Five minutes there and we were on our way.

Looking at the map I made a decision. I really didn't want to go thru Annapolis and hit that traffic around Washington, DC. I have never been down the Maryland peninsula and I thought we would go that way. There isn't an interstate, but US 13 looked like a four lane highway. And.... We would skip Washington and Richmond.

The man who picked us up at the base gate said he always took US 301 to bypass Washington. I didn't have a map with me so didn't give it a thought. After getting home I looked at the map. US 301 would have been faster, maybe a lot faster.

US 13, down towards Richmond, Virginia is mostly four lane and a 55 mile an hour speed limit. There are a lot of towns to go through so we didn't exactly make good time. Driving through Norfolk wasn't as bad as I expected. It was the only traffic the whole day.

Time was an issue. A one way car rental from Dover, Delaware to Charleston, South Carolina is not cheap. I wanted to make the trip in one day, 630 miles. We made it to Charleston before dark. I had phoned from Dover to make reservations at the same place on base we stayed at before we left for Spain.

We picked up the van at long term parking and left the rental car at the Base Exchange. I would get up and be at the Base Exchange before 9am when they opened.

Thursday, May 12, 2011

HOME from CHARLSTON

When I dropped the rental car keys off at the Base Exchange this morning I met a retiree who was just back from a Space-A flight to and from Germany.

He and his wife were going to try and get a flight from Charleston to Jacksonville Naval Air Station the next day. Tomorrow there was supposed to be a flight from Jacksonville to San Diego, California. Doug and his wife were from Southern California.

I thought for a minute then told him I had an idea. I would have to check with Jan, but maybe we could give them a ride to Jacksonville NAS. We had to go through Jacksonville anyway.

Half hour later and we were on our way. Giving Doug and Lei a ride was a good idea.

That 630 mile drive yesterday had just about worn me out. We hadn't gotten much sleep the last week what with the time change.

I told Doug our tentative plan of flying to San Diego in September, renting a car and driving up north and through Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming. That way I would have been in all 50 states.

Doug told me there were frequent flights from Jacksonville to North Island NAS (San Diego). I knew that. What I didn't know was that there were frequent flights from North Island to Whidbey Island, Washington. That is northwest of Seattle.

That got my interest. After that long, long drive yesterday, cutting down that 4,000 mile drive in September looked appealing. When I got home the revised drive starting from Whidbey Island would be 2,500 miles.

We dropped Doug and Lei at the passenger terminal on the Navy Base, then headed home.

We got home about 7pm. Another long day.

Tom