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Summer Travels & Performances

Many of us take time for getaways in the summer, when kids and grandkids are out of school, family gatherings are planned around national holidays, and alumni associations hold reunions. This year I feel so fortunate that for my husband and me, ALL these special events have been happening. Riding these events in and around professional deadlines and engagements makes it especially challenging, but so worthwhile. Color bars add my calendar in overlapping stripes, making it a jigsaw puzzle, or a work of art, depending on how I look at it.



I hope you have time for both productivity and peace this summer, and of course I hope your plans include some special summer reads. What summer would be complete without a few fantastic books?

Here are some of my recent travels and upcoming events for Summer 2018. Hope you can join me either in person, or virtually, via blog posts, recordings of audiobooks or music, or through the pages of one of my books. Enjoy!

Up Next - August Performances - Becoming Julia Morgan

Up next will be performances of a very special play in Oakland, California.



As you may know, I was part of a marvelous production last autumn about the remarkable architect Julia Morgan. Since then, our director Linda Wilson and I have been approached by several other organizations that also own Julia Morgan buildings, about presenting the play at their facilities.

Our next production will be *Chapel of the Chimes in Oakland*, California, a hauntingly beautiful site, the entire middle portion of which Julia designed over a period of 25 years, while she was also overseeing construction of the Hearst Castle. Julia was the second of three architects on this project, and her unmistakable hand is visible in the grace, functionality and even whimsy of what would otherwise be a sobering location.

The absolutely amazing team of people who working with there are so excited, and so professional, that it's a joy to work with them. In addition to selling regular tickets, they'll be offering special "packages" that will include my talk on Sacred Geometry, a tour of the extraordinary property, a book signing, and a VIP reception. Wow! This will be a very special experience for all who attend!

If you know of a Julia Morgan location you think might like to present the show, let me know! We have a wonderful PowerPoint presentation that shows the highlights of the show and is really fun to watch.

TICKETS ARE NOW ON SALE!

• **What** - Staged Readings in Julia Morgan Chapel, VIP Receptions, Sacred Geometry Talk, Book Signings

• **When** - **THREE** performances -- Friday, August 3rd 7 pm; Saturday August 4th 2pm; Sunday August 5th 7 pm

• **Where** - *Chapel of the Chimes in Oakland, California*

• **PURCHASE TICKETS**

July - Press Articles about Becoming Julia Morgan

We're getting quite a bit of buzz about the show itself, the special venue, and the entire experience we're creating for our audiences!



California Magazine will shortly publish a marvelous article by Moris Seapp, I'll share that one next newsletter.

Meanwhile here is a sampling of the news outlets running a good overview article!

• [Boston Herald](#)

• [California Newswatch](#)

• [Long Beach Press Telegram](#)

• [KQED Colorado Springs](#)

• [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#)

• [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#)

• [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)

• [San Diego Union Tribune](#)

• [Toronto Chronicle Journal](#)

"Otters" Book - New Awards for a Great Summer Read

In case you haven't yet heard about "When Otters Play", here's the latest otters' shout out!



This Novella has now won two awards! It won the Realist Award for Women's Lit at the International Book Awards, and it won for Regional Fiction at the Los Angeles Book Festival Book Awards! It's always humbled and grateful for book awards, which are so encouraging to writers.

The book is still at its SALE price this summer, so **When Otters Play** is just 99 cents on Amazon for your Kindle. This engaging story features a sea otter mom and her pup -- possibly the cutest creatures in the ocean. When I visited the Monterey Bay Aquarium and worked with their director of the Sea Otter Rescue program, I fell in love with these creatures, and wanted to take one of the pups home. Instead, I put him right at the heart of the story, where he gets to enchant my readers as much as he enchanted me.

Give yourself a treat and read something great, or give this captivating little book as a gift.

July - Highway 1 Reopens in Big Sur

Breaking News - This morning, Thursday July 19th, the iconic Highway 1, closed by a massive landslide 14 months ago, has reopened!



At the northern end of California's Central Coast is the beautiful Big Sur region. The landslide at Mud Creek in 2017 heaped six million tons of rock and dirt on about a quarter mile section of the coastal highway. The highway had already been closed at that spot for months, and at other points, after unusually heavy winter and spring rains caused landslides.

Highway 1, also known as the Pacific Coast Highway, is the main artery running through Big Sur, a picturesque stretch and major tourist attraction. "The dream of traveling Highway 1 from San Francisco to San Diego is a reality again," Susana Cruz, a spokesperson with Caltrans said.

June Reunion - ASU

Some of you know that I grew up in Tokyo and attended the American School in Japan. Yes the curriculum there is American, but students from 40 countries attended when I did, and now the school hosts 47 nationalities in its student body.



To say it's a special place doesn't begin to describe it. I used to think I had romanticized how great it was, but visits during the past few years proved it really as terrific as I had remembered. I taught a theatre workshop there in 2015, and in 2015 I spent part of a semester there, teaching my STAR (Student Theatre And Radio) Curriculum and creating four new radio dramas with students.

Well, this summer a cluster of classes held a fantastic reunion in San Diego, and all of us enjoyed reconnecting at a beautiful resort beside gorgeous sandy beaches swaying palms. (Though it was chilly during California's typical central "June Gloom".) Most inspiring was the small group of speakers asked to focus on how our international education influenced us, and how it helps us make a difference in the world now.

One school mate is a former Los Angeles judge, one of the few women on the bench; two are successful entrepreneurs and businesswomen; one is a spiritual leader; one is a physician doing international projects; and I spoke about the arts.

Dr. Wise Young (Yes, that's his real name. . . you can imagine how we teased him back in the day) does stem-cell research and is running trials in several countries, focused on recovery from spinal cord injury. What he shared about enrolling neurosurgeons in several countries by understanding their cultural values was inspiring, stunning and brilliant. He founded the Keck Center for Collaborative Neuroscience: The Spinal Cord Injury Project, which is located at Rutgers University in New Jersey. To find out more, visit [Dr. Wise Young](#).

Our talks are posted here - [Talks Given by Schoolmates at the ASU Golden Reunion 2018](#)

And if you're heading to Tokyo, you might like to visit [ASU](#) yourself!

June Reunion - Davidson, North Carolina

My husband Larry Norleet received his undergraduate degree from the wonderful Liberal Arts institution [Davidson College](#) in North Carolina. Many things are impressive about this beautiful school. What has impressed me most in recent years is that they're the only U.S. higher education school to host the Royal Shakespeare Company! But then, I'm biased toward the arts.



For Larry and his classmates and schoolmates, it was a transformative experience to be there, and he loved connecting with so many of his accomplished friends, hearing about their careers and families.

There were impressive speakers at his reunion too, and a sense of evoking and remembering how college became that pivot-point between childhood and adulthood, how learning to shoulder life's huge responsibilities and decisions worked so much better because of diligent study, expensive subject matter, devoted teachers, influential mentors.

We also have family and friends in North Carolina, and had a wonderful time visiting them. It'd be hard to find a more beautiful campus, nor a more charming town, than Davidson.

June - Utah Writing Retreat & Flute School

Native American Flute surely produces some of the most hauntingly beautiful music in the world. It's been a favorite of mine for many years, but only as a listener. My husband Larry, who played clarinet years ago, has played Native flute occasionally but now, with more time, is studying seriously. [The Summer Solstice Flute School](#) had been calling to him, and this year we made the trip to a lovely town high in the mountains of Utah.



While he took classes, I carved out a private Writing Retreat and spent some much-needed hours in solitude to bang out some chapters for my *Hilford-Haven* series. While I wrote, I could hear groups of flautists playing serene melodies, or rehearsing for their evening performances, sounds that blended with birdsong, gurgling brooks, and wind through the tall trees. When these chapters turn up in future books, I know they'll be better than they could have been, infused with the beauty of both nature and music.

Every artist needs a getaway sometimes, and every person needs some quiet time. This was a great reminder of the rich treasures to be found through stilling the noises of daily life enough to hear the messages of the heart.

June - Chaco Canyon

We're visiting as many National Parks as we can, and [Chaco Canyon National Historical Park](#) had long been on our list. Accessible only by long washboard roads, and offering only camping accommodations, this is an incredible place.



This part of our travel was both geographical and chronological, as we journeyed back in time to what was a Center of an Ancient World between 800 and 1100. During those approximately 290 years, a society flourished in the Northwest corner of New Mexico. The people left examples of their stunning architecture, their advanced understanding of astronomy, their thriving trade with Central and South America, and much more. Parts of their stories are told in the pictographs etched on the staggering rock walls that formed the backbone of their lands.

Among the many fascinating displays at this extraordinary National Park is one that shows the many tribes that each can trace roots to Chaco Canyon, with a distinct name for this ancestral place in each of their languages. And among the many things we learned was the important information that these are not "ruins", they are dwellings. Though historians cannot yet prove what caused the people to leave this location -- drought, lack of wood for fuel, crop failure are among the theories -- descendants who are elders in the Hopi, Navajo, Ute, Zuni, and other tribes feel their ancestors fulfilled their purpose. We certainly found this place richly imbued with Spirit, and left there greatly enriched.

June - Mesa Verde

Next our travels took us to [Mesa Verde National Park](#), where we'd been before. But this time family members joined us, which made it more fun than ever.



Mesa Verde, Spanish for green table, offers a spectacular look into the lives of the Ancestral Pueblo people who made it their home for over 700 years, from AD 600 to 1300. Today the park protects nearly 5,000 known archeological sites, including 600 cliff dwellings. These sites are some of the most notable and best preserved in the United States.

We had a spectacular hike on the life Edge Trail, an amazing tour of dwellings, and stayed at the Far View Lodge, which we highly recommend.

July - Elephants Love Cowboys Too

I'm thrilled to announce the July 4th launch of [Elephants Love Cowboys Too](#) by Carole Morris Sandrup, a non-fiction picture-book for children about her father, "Cowboy Bob", who adopted an orphaned African elephant.

Our families have been friends for decades, and it was a delight to work with Carole to create this special little book, along with a great Haven Books team including Rebecca Finke and Kelly Johnson, and illustrator Richard L. Marks. All proceeds go toward autism research and treatment. Especially if you know any young readers, or those who enjoy reading to them -- take a look at [www.CowboysAndElephants.com](#).

July - Family Visits & Work

Our July 4th holiday was great as always because family members joined us. Our fireworks got raised out! And we are NOT complaining, because we're so grateful to get rain, always needed in the West.

Between very special family visits I sandwiched in some very exciting work for clients. Mitch Margo's fantastic book [Black Hearts White Minds](#) audio book will launch soon. Charles Clark's terrific [Titanium CoreShift](#) will also launch shortly. And we're nearly finished with post-production on the [Becoming Julia Morgan](#) audio book. All will be available on Audible.

Meanwhile I'm writing the next novelette, the next novella, and the next novel, so things are heating up in *Hilford-Haven*!

October - InScribe

A very favorite annual event right down the street from my place in L.A., is the bustling, effervescent [InScribe Author Con & Book Festival](#), and I'm excited and honored to be in this year's line-up.

InScribe Con and Book Festival offers first class workshops, fun, interactive panels, balls and parties where everyone can dress up (or not) and spend time with their favorite celebrities in the writing world, luncheons and one-on-one opportunities with both authors and industry professionals.

Most sessions are still TBA, but there are plans afoot to give presentations withiah great Anne Perry, and with the wonderful Royce Anderson.

• **What** - [InScribe Author Con & Book Festival](#)

• **When** - [October 4-5-6](#)

• **Where** - [Burbank Marriott Convention Center](#)

• **Tickets** - [www.InScribe.com](#)

October - Watermill in New York

The iconic Jerome Robbins ballet "Watermill", for which I'm one of the original musicians, is coming back for another revival! I play lots, working with a small ensemble of fantastic musicians who also specialize in Julian instruments.

Though through the decades we've always performed at the New York State Theatre at Lincoln Center, the home of the ballet company, this time we'll be performing at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, which will be an honor, and a new challenge.

• **What** - [Watermill, a modern ballet](#)

• **When** - [October 24, 25, 26, 27th](#)

• **Where** - [Brooklyn Academy of Music](#)

• **Tickets** - [BAM website](#)

My Heart is Grateful . . .

. . . for the theme of REUNION this summer! Reuniting with family, with schoolmates, with dear friends, has been so enriching. I'm grateful to all the school friends who spent time organizing and arranging these major events! Very sad I could not attend my Chase School reunion in Connecticut, as our schedule was so full. Thrilled I got to attend both my ASU and Larry's Davidson gatherings.

Reuniting with my fellow cast members in "Becoming Julia Morgan" will be a thrill, an honor, and a wonderful challenge! Working with our director Linda Wilson, is always fantastic, as in working with my frequent co-star Christopher Law. Looking forward to working again with David Rosenblatt and Don Murry, and to welcoming aboard Alith Dermody and Zachary Johnson.

I'm very thrilled to be reunited with my *Hilford-Haven* characters, as three new pieces take shape. I will be [What the Soul Suspects](#), an eerie Novella for Halloween. Next will be [When Angels Part](#), a beautiful and surprising Novella for the Holidays. And early next year, the Novel, [Why Hearts Keep Secrets](#). As you can see, I'll be busy!

. . . and for reuniting with you, my readers, those who've been with me for several years, and those who are just joining the *Hilford-Haven* saga.

As always, love and gratitude, **from my heart to yours!**