

Spring 2018 – Wednesday 2:15-4:15 – Loomis Village, South Hadley

Wish You Were Here! Vacations Then & Now

Participants in this seminar will research historical vacation sites, and share reminiscences of their favorite vacations, either as children or adults.

In this seminar we will explore the history of vacations, looking at all kinds from antiquity onwards. Each participant will choose one notable place to research, from resorts, spas, beaches, mountains, lakes, famous cities, national parks and other natural wonders. We will share a presentation of up to twenty minutes on our chosen topic. Participants may choose to refer to historians who wrote about their chosen site, authors who evoked it in fiction or poetry, and artists who illustrated it.

Having shared our research, we will then delve into memories, spending ten minutes describing our favorite vacation ever – maybe the same place visited each year on a family trip. Or was your best vacation one of a kind – like your first trip overseas? Was the journey the most memorable part of the trip for you? Each of us will share our very best trip – with all the details we can remember! Photos and postcards will enhance the presentation where possible.

Vacation site examples include New York, Niagara, Newport, Saratoga Springs, Cape Cod, Maine, Route 66, the Adirondacks, the Catskills, the Caribbean, London, Bath, Rome, Pompeii, Florence, Paris, Athens, the Riviera, the Alps, and African safaris. How about some of the great old hotels – the Waldorf Astoria, the Parker House, the Greenbrier? And, most important, *your* favorite place!

We'll share happy memories – and even some surprising or funny or alarming ones!

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Suggested Topics

Driving Cross-country: the Eisenhower Interstate Highway system/ Route 66 and its Kin: the Roadtrip before the interstates

New York at Play: Coney Island/Catskills/Adirondacks/Hamptons

Newport “Cottages” & other vacation houses

Bostonians Relax: Cape Cod/Cape Ann/South Shore/Maine

Natural Wonders: National Parks/Lakes/Mountains

Honeymoon Haven: Niagara Falls/Caribbean Beaches

Spas and Springs: Saratoga/Bath/Spa/Yellowstone

The Grand Tour of Europe: Great Cities and Art/Paris/Rome/Florence/Venice

Hiking the Appalachian Trail

The Railroads and their Great Hotels

Beaches: New England/Florida/Hawaii/Caribbean

Camping then and now

From Sea Voyages to Cruise Ships

Winter Sports

Safaris

Vacation Architecture: "Cottages", camps, cabins, Motels, resorts

Catching the Super Bowl/World Series/U.S. Open/Masters

Pilgrimages: Chaucerian and today

Casinos: Las Vegas/Reno/Lake Tahoe

Ancient Roman Travelers: Pompeii/Herculaneum

The Suez Canal and the re-discovery of Egypt/ South American Antiquities

Early Women Travelers