

Chicago – May/June 2012

This Gathering was entitled 'Art, Amish and Architecture'. This alone was very appealing, but Mary (the organiser) really has a knack for organisation, as she showed us much more than that.

We strolled through the streets of Chicago, looking at Art Nouveau and Art Déco buildings, we went to four different States (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin), we went to many more restaurants to taste ethnic foods (German, Italian, Mexican, Polish, Jewish, Chinese, Greek, soul food - you name it, you have it).

We visited many different museums with emphasis on various themes (African American, Chicago Art Institute, Milwaukee Art Museum, Amish Museum, etc).

Indeed, like and Amish quilt, this gathering was a perfect match of sport and culture, leisure time (very little, thank you Mary!!), socialising (meeting friends of Mary's friends) and discovery, stone and nature, North and South, East and West (more than 30 participants from 12 different countries. And Mary was smiling all the time, even though she - repeatedly - had to count us on the bus, and even when she was interrupted during her breakfast. As it was mentioned at the farewell dinner, she continuously showed gracious goodness.

So, thank you very much for being such a professional hostess (the planning even including excellent, hot weather and uninterrupted blue skies). Thank you to all the participants of this gathering who made this trip a very special experience and last, but not least, thank you 5W.

Dominique, France

