

First-time travelers happy with trip, and home

By BILL HESS
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When Elizabeth Pete and Sophie Lincoln stepped off the plane in Anchorage, they were surprised to see the TV cameras. Their journey from Florida to Alaska had been a long one. Their travels that day had lasted 13 hours. "It was sure nice to get back to Alaska and to see our relatives waiting for us," Pete said. The cameras were sure a surprise, however.

Elizabeth Pete and Sophie Lincoln. Remember? They are the two women from Copper Center who recently left Alaska for their first-ever journey Outside. For 83-year-old Lincoln, the prospect for the trip had been especially exciting. The invitation had come from her adopted daughter and she expected to see a grandson whom she had not visited since he was an infant.

Family ties are important to Lincoln. Of her eight natural children, only one remains alive today.

"Boy, it was really, really good out there!" Pete spoke shortly after the two had worked their way past the television people. "We visited many brothers and sisters in the Lord."

"Yes," agreed Lincoln. "It was all Christian people we see."

Before going to Florida, the women stopped off to visit a friend in Dallas, Texas, who in turn drove them to Oklahoma where Sophie's

grandson lives with his mother, a Lower 48 Indian.

"It's not much to see, Texas," remembered Pete. "Just flat!"

"We see lots of cattle," Lincoln added.

"If you get hungry, go down there," Pete agreed. "Lots of cattle."

When they arrived in Oklahoma, the two were very glad to see 11-year-old Stanley Lincoln, the grandson. "He was sure glad to see us," Lincoln added, as she reached into a bag she was carrying. She pulled out a potted plant, whose leaves sagged from travel fatigue.

"She got the plant from her daughter-in-law and her grandson," explained Pete.

"I carry it all the way to Florida!" Lincoln said softly, studying the withered greenery in her hands. "It broke on top." Hopefully, the love and care which surely awaited the plant in Copper Center would restore its vitality.

After the Oklahoma visit, it was on to Florida. "Nice place," Lincoln praised. "Clean. Lots of lawn. Lots of trees. We go down to the beach."

"We don't know how to swim," Pete interjected. "We just run around in the water, sit by beach, and have a good time."

Even though the women live in one of the coldest areas of the country, going to one of the warmest did not

prove uncomfortable to them. "It was warm enough," Pete admitted, "but they got the fan on. There is a little fan in the car, a fan in the house, a fan everywhere! So it's not too bad. We have a cool drink all the time."

Faye Crandall is the adopted daughter of Lincoln's that the two had journeyed to Florida to visit. Crandall was a Christian missionary in the Copper Center area for several years, and that was how they had gotten together.

Crandall took them to a passion play at a place called

Sunken Gardens, near St. Petersburg. It told of the death and resurrection of Jesus. "That's so beautiful! So life-like! We seen how Jesus was on the cross, and how he rise again," Pete exclaimed.

Crandall also drove the women to South Carolina for more visiting. They were there on Easter Sunday, and attended services at four different churches, something the two found to be very enjoyable.

Yet, for all the glory of Outside, it was good to come

back home. "It seems like there's nothing to do Outside," Pete explained why she would rather live in Alaska than in the Lower 48.

"We read," Lincoln interjected, noting that they did keep busy. "We read the Bible every day! Never rest."

Before leaving, the Copper Center women had expressed some apprehension about just what snakes and bugs might be prowling around in the South. But, they reported no unpleasant encounters with either reptilian or insect life.



Elizabeth Pete and Sophie Lincoln upon return

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