

Day 9: 15th October, Thursday ~ Olympic Ski Jump, Cruise Lake Placid.

From our room we have a nice view across Mirror Lake. The mountains in the distance are brushed with a thin coating of snow, making them gray. The clouds are low.

After the buffet breakfast, Winni announces some changes in our schedule. We file outside for the group picture. On a slope with the hotel as backdrop we pose. Our photographers Husky wants to be included.



Because it is unusually cold, around 40°F, our cruise has been moved to noon.

The winter Olympics were held at Lake Placid in 1932 and again in 1980. Paul drives us through town. Winni points out a High School. In front a running track which was flooded and frozen for the speed skating events. "This is the only school in the USA to ever have a liquor license." Apparently the news casters and sport commentators were housed here. We pass the arena where the USA hockey team beat Russia for the gold.

The site of the opening ceremonies is just an open field, not very impressive. "Where is the Olympic village?" "A minimum security prison was built with federal funds and used to house the contestants before being turned over for use as a prison."

[1980 Opening Ceremonies.](#)





The ski jump, still in use, is much more striking. Supported by two immense towers, 90 and 120 meters high. The tallest houses changing rooms and an elevator which takes us to a series of viewing platforms.

We watch in awe. US Olympic hopefuls are practicing. About a dozen young men take turns. I'm surprised, there is no snow on the run, instead each jumper places his skis in a metal track and takes off. The landing is on a grassy slope covered with a plastic surface.



Gold & Silver....



120m Tower.



No stopping now.

The coach shouts "Go!" A jumper runs the track, the clock registers 86mph. Launch, skis pointed out in a V, arms behind and a smooth landing. We watch and film a dozen jumps, then an awkward landing. The coach mutters "He won't make it."

Close by, similar teams are practicing *aerials*. "This is crazy." The track is a U, launching the jumper vertically in the air to perform loops, summersaults and twists. In competition, the landing is in snow, but lacking that, they land in a 39°F swimming pool.

Seventeen year old Peter Frenette, an Olympic hopeful, steps on the bus to answer questions about ski jumping.

A nice V.





Touchdown!



Brrr!

A short drive brings us to the John Brown Farm, memorialized in the words of the song "John Brown's body lies a-moldering in the grave." The farmhouse is a simple wooden structure, restored and preserved as a NY State Historic Site.

John Brown, a life long abolitionist, led a raid on the U.S. Arsenal at Harper's Ferry. The objective, to obtain arms for a slave freedom campaign. He was caught, hanged in 1859, and buried close to the house along with two sons killed in the raid.



John Brown's Farm..



We drive between Mirror Lake to our left and Lake Placid to our right, heading for our cruise. It is cold. Only fifteen of our party want to go. The boat, a wide shallow bottom tour boat, can seat about thirty, so plenty of space. The sides are enclosed with clear plastic, so we are sheltered from the wind.

Lake Placid is about 5 mi by 2 mi. Sixty percent of the properties are only accessible by boat. Most are summer homes for the wealthy. A flying flag indicates the owner is in residence.



Captain.



Queen.

The homes are beautiful, framed by the fall colors. At higher elevations the snow has torn the leaves from the trees.

"This is not as cold as I expected."

The lake has been stocked with many varieties of trout, bass and perch. In winter the lake freezes with two feet of ice, but ice fishing is not permitted.

The west side, donated to NY State, is designated *wild* so there is no road and no development.

Services, power, telephone and cable TV, are brought in under water, along the bank.

Our guide asks if we know what the huge nest is. I guess eagle. "No, its Osprey. They are so aggressive and territorial, that eagles are kept out."



We approach a steep rocky outcrop. The horizontal scars indicate this is a glacial lake. At 250ft this is the deepest point.

After lunch in the Northern Exposure, we look in a few shops and wander back to Mirror Lake Inn.

Six of us enjoy dinner together. Don & Norma from Newport Mews, Anne & Birney from Danville CA.



Lake Placid Cruise.



Lunch in the Northern Exposure.



Lake Placid shops.



Mirror Lake Inn.

