

## June 2008: Family Vacation - South and Midwest

### 6. Creation Museum

**Monday June 30: Covington, Kentucky: Or thereabouts.** At Cincinnati, on the Kentucky side of the Ohio River. It takes some looking to find. I suppose if this adventure is successful, they will have some advertizing money for billboards and such.

Arriving, we find the parking lot full of cars with plates from all over. We go in and stand in line to get tickets. They have guides in the lobby walking about answering questions and giving advice, pretty good arrangement.

We get our tickets, including a pass to the 1:30 Planetarium show, so we got plenty of time to look around. The initial crush of guests we came in with are going into the main exhibits, so we decide to look around outside first.



They've done outside pretty nice, with a pond and topiary dinosaurs. And some bridges, like this pontoon bridge.

This area is done up like a bog for carnivorous plants. I saw worts and ladyslippers and the like. In the gift shop inside they had some Venus Flytraps (like I got as a boy, but couldn't figure out how to keep it alive, probably these gift plants are destined for the same fate). I didn't see any Flytraps here. I think Flytraps and similar plants come from the Carolinas, where it is warmer than the Cincinnati area.





**Another bridge. There is also some picnic or party areas in here, and vending machines, so large groups (school tours?) are accommodated.**

**There is also a petting zoo. My kids have been through so many petting zoos and Zoos and County Fairs and such that they just rolled their eyes when I suggested we look in, but once in, they got into it - Sicilian donkeys, llamas, a camel, the usual Nubian goats (still perennially pregnant), and - these two babies, a Zorse and a Zonkey. Cross-breeds between equine animals usually considered to be different species. The idea is, most species are variations on a basic type, and it takes a lot more time than we've seen for species to diverge to the point that they are no longer cross-fertile.**



**Zonkey - Cross between a zebra and a donkey. The little Zorse kept trying to nurse on the Zonkey, who didn't appreciate it and chased her away.**



**Zorse - Cross between a zebra and a horse, cowering in the shed after being rebuked by her cellmate.**

**Just as we left the petting zoo, it started raining, but I was prepared with our Disney rain ponchos! So we walked back around the pond and went back inside for lunch. Pretty good food, and we entertained ourselves by looking at our fellow guests, guessing whether they were homeschoolers or just Mennonites. I didn't think the little girl with the pink-dyed tips and the little boy with the orange mohawk would be homeschoolers, but they were in the company of a family that we thought were. Friends, maybe (although homeschoolers tend not to have that kind of friend).**

After lunch we went to our Planetarium show. Or film, really. Really quite good, about relative sizes and distances. Some excellent points were made by the video:

- The ideas of stellar evolution (what I know as the Hertzsprung-Russell sequence) and stellar formation, taking millions of years, is entirely speculative and not supported by anything observed in the present galaxy.
- The presence of blue supergiants is a terrific problem for the theory of an ancient universe. At their rate of consumption (good science), they should have burned out long ago; there shouldn't *be* any left. But there they are.

Toward the end of the show, the model of the universe as computed from the direction and distances of charted galaxies in the known universe was displayed: five or six planar structures, radiating "down", not "out". Intuitively contradicts a notion of a "Big Bang" with a uniform distribution of matter. I'll have to try and find out if this model is recognized by "real" astronomers, rather than just those crackpots who hold degrees from major public universities.

Finally we tour the museum proper. It starts with some displays of unusual plants and animals, and how their characteristics could be as easily or better explained by normal genetic variation rather than evolution. Like this Old-World Chameleon.



This was an interesting exhibit. Two professional paleontologists examining a fossil, and explaining how the scientific facts - size, weight, chemical composition, embedding stone, etc. - would combine with their non-scientific presuppositions - Biblical creation or doctrinaire materialism - to yield different interpretations of origin and age and circumstances of formation.

Lots of good info about dinosaurs. Nothing about believing about them being millions or thousands of years old gets in the way of appreciating these now extinct (or *are* they?) animals.







This is the start of a sequence of displays that I thought was a bit out of place for the mission of this Museum. Whether or not the Bible has been reliably preserved and is inerrant (even in the original manuscripts) really doesn't touch the question of events in antiquity, or whether evolution or intelligent design is a better scientific explanation. But here they are anyways -

Isaiah, Moses, Paul, Martin Luther, Johann Gutenberg, etc.

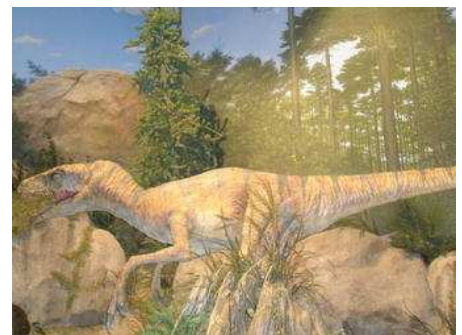
Creation: Adam naming the *kinds* of animals (and not each or the many species we see in our day).



Including this penguin! Tux would be proud!

(No, he isn't kissing that toucan. Those species are NOT cross-fertile!)

There were dinosaurs throughout. After the end of the museum tour proper, there were standalone exhibits, including a really good one for dinosaurs, with and without their imagined skin. I note that the little boys we saw were especially taken with dinosaurs, and would clomp around and snarl - just like Calvin.





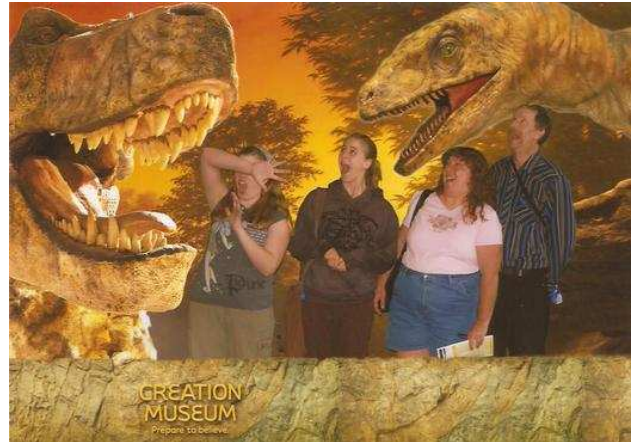
One of the most important concepts of Biblical Creationism is how the world we see is *NOT* the world that was created, but the world that was reconfigured by the Worldwide Flood. Here's Noah supervising the construction and dealing with the world-wide mockings. Here also are speculations on how the ark may have been constructed (wooden pegs, interlocking

planks, etc.) and its seagoing characteristics. The next room explored the source of the floodwaters (subterranean aquifers rather than merely rain, with attendant terrible tsunamis rather than merely a gentle rising of the waters) and the effects of the ebbing of the floods in canyon making (similar to the canyon system at Mount Saint Helens, formed in a matter of weeks), coal beds, burying fossils, laying sediment layers, etc.

Some other things we saw here:

- A film connecting worldwide legends of dragons with dinosaurs that survived the flood on the Ark and didn't go totally extinct until the present time... and maybe still not...
- A multimedia show of how indoctrination and propaganda work to form opinions and questions in the minds of young people, and how asking the right kind of questions can help. A good accompaniment to having seen Ben Stein's "Expelled" film recently. Called "Men in White" (they were angels - with an edge). There was a Flood scene, and the multimedia part involved spraying water at you from the seat in front of you. Charity complains that every time she is in these multimedia shows (like the Disney and Muppet 3D shows at Disney World), she always gets squirted in the eye.
- An exhibit linking Darwinism with the racist theories of the Nazis and Stalin, and the resulting horrors, whereas if humans were in fact created, then we are one species - there really *are* no races, and no innate inferiority or superiority of any ethnic group.

**(They also have a family portrait thing. We get one. The photographer thought Faith's contribution "made the shot"!)**



**So it turns out that, if we had gotten there any later than we did, we would not have seen *all* the Museum. As it was, there were other things going on that we skipped, like lectures from Answers in Genesis scientists and speakers about various topics. They were selling Two-Day Passes (and annual memberships), which would make for a more leisurely visit - but we don't have time for leisure on *this* vacation!**

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**On to Ohio: See Part 7**