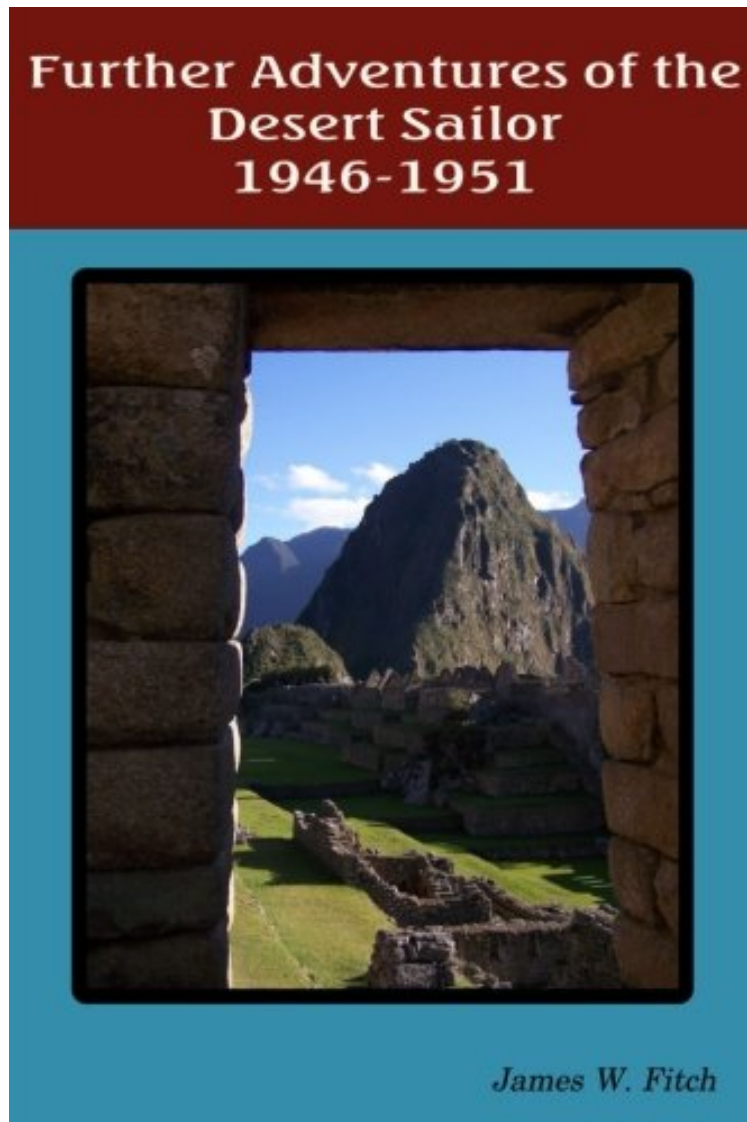


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Further Adventures of the Desert Sailor 1950-1951

Mr. James W. Fitch

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Mr. James W. Fitch : Further Adventures of the Desert Sailor 1950-1951 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Further Adventures of the Desert Sailor 1950-1951:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. full of humor and good will. I felt like I went along with ...By MThis book is informative, full of humor and good will. I felt like I went along with them in all their adventures in South America.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Very entertaining and enlighteningBy dick kowalskiJim has a knack for words and his travels as a young man with his bride through South America are chronicled well. I

enjoyed his tale of a trip that must have been a great adventure. Thanks Jim for sharing. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Looking back: touring Latin America in the 1950s. By Weed Gardener. Travel abroad is becoming more and more like travel to the next town. From Britain to Beijing, there are the same fast-food joints, internet cafes, glossy magazines and high-speed transportation. But what was it like to travel around South America in the 1950s? This book is a day-by-day account of such an adventure, by a talented and often very funny author with an instinct for ferreting out the most interesting people in a given locale. In 2003, I wrote a review of Jim Fitch's front-lines memoir, *Desert Sailor*, of life as a sailor in the Pacific Fleet during World War II. His new book, *Further Adventures of the Desert Sailor, 1950-1951*, is so called because it picks up where *Desert Sailor* left off. But it's really about his travels in South America. When Fitch returned home from war, he took his GI bill and followed the advice of one of his teachers: Uncle Sam was paying, so why not try for the best. For Fitch, that meant Harvard. Not only was he accepted at Harvard, he was such an outstanding student that after his freshman year, he was given a full academic scholarship. On graduating in 1950, he was awarded a Sheldon Prize Fellowship. The only requirement for the \$2,400 award was that he spend it on an academic year's travel outside the United States and report back twice during his travels. Fitch chose South America as his destination. There was one hitch. Frugally managed, the award was enough for a single man. But Fitch was about to get married. He didn't think it was fair to abandon his beloved for a year right after the wedding. With his considerable gift of gab, Fitch persuaded the Harvard Corporation to allow Claire to travel with him if they could manage on the above-mentioned stipend. *Further Adventures* is an easy read, filled with Fitch's uproarious takes on self-important small town bureaucratic paper shuffling (papaleo), unexpected transportation glitches, cultural misunderstandings and questionable food. But on the whole, the Fitches found the people unexpectedly friendly, the cuisine and accommodations reasonably priced. The story is much enhanced by Fitch's talent for finding the most interesting people everywhere he went and for his keen insight into the subtle rewards of a different culture. The book is a tribute to Fitch's wife of 55 years, Claire Thompson Fitch, who passed away in 2005. Indeed, Claire is essential to the story as she faces obstacles with tact, humor and resourcefulness, deftly punctures her husband's tendency toward longwindedness, and provides the feminine touch when it is desperately needed. Their leisurely and mostly land-based travel in various official and unofficial vehicles takes them down the west coast through Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Chile, and back through Argentina and Brazil, making up the itinerary as they went. You are very much a part of the journey as you travel with them page by page. Your purchase of this book will support a good cause: all proceeds go to Fisher House Foundation, which provides housing to military families close to a loved one during hospitalization for an illness, disease or injury. For more information, see fisherhouse.org.

Some readers complained about the abrupt end of *Desert Sailor* on the San Francisco waterfront in 1946 so the WW II sailor published a sequel that takes him and his bride through a new and much more enjoyable series of peacetime adventures. After his honorable discharge from the navy Fitch went to Harvard College as a GI Bill student. He fell for a pretty Irish Radcliffe girl in a Spanish class. In his senior year he won a Sheldon Travel Fellowship, graduated on a Thursday in June 1950 and married Claire Thompson the following Sunday. Three months later they were in South America. Follow their "Extreme Economy Class" travels, in which they covered 13,000 miles by rail, jitney, bus, truck, ferry, steamship and bulk grain carrier, through Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina and Brazil. Note from the Author: Buyers of this book become contributors to a noble cause. I donate all royalty income to Fisher House Foundation. This charitable entity provides free lodging to needy families at 64 hotels, to date, near military hospitals from sea to shining sea. This makes it possible for our wounded warriors to be visited by their loved ones. It's my way of showing gratitude for the current generation of warriors who serve, protect and bleed for all of us. fisherhouse.org