

## Preface

Travelers differ. At one extreme are random travelers who see what they accidentally bump into. At the other extreme are the lock-step travelers who follow a banner (or a red umbrella) and look when and where a voice tells them to look. In between these extremes are the guide-book travelers who identify the whereabouts of those sites that interest them and they plan their sightseeing accordingly.

If a traveler's interests are captivated by the arts, guide books can be very helpful. For example, the table of contents of a current guide book for travelers going to Germany has sections on architecture, art, literature, music and cinema. The index gives page references for famous writers, musicians, and artists. Yet, while Germany was a dominate force in physical science during the 19th and into the 20th centuries and while the names and photos of prominent German physical scientists who worked in this period are sprinkled through the pages of textbooks, only one scientist is mentioned by name: Albert Einstein is identified as the most famous citizen of Ulm.

The Physical Tourist is a regular feature of the journal *Physics in Perspective*. This journal, while it is a scholarly journal, features articles designed to be read by non-specialists; that is, technical jargon is deliberately avoided and ordinary words are employed. Readers report that they read it "cover-to-cover." In the "Physical Tourist" section, scientific sites in major cities (not nations) are highlighted. Since the number of general-interest sites vary from one city to the next, some entries are short while others are long. Detailed directions are given that enable tourists to go to sites and, once there, appreciate the significance of what they are seeing.

As an example, let us consider the city of Berlin. Dieter Hoffmann, a research scholar in the History of Science at the Max Planck Institute in Berlin and a Professor at Humboldt University (formerly the University of Berlin), has written a guide to Berlin. It is detailed; it is delightful. Walk along Am Kupfergraben number 7 (which the author tells the reader is just opposite the famous Pergamon Museum) and there is the Magnus Haus which was one of the most important schools of physics of the 19th century. Since 1990, this site has been the location of the German Physical Society. "Ring the doorbell" says the author, and inside you will find information on the history of this site and its place in the physics in Berlin. One block away lived the philosopher G. W. Hegel. A few steps away is the entrance to Berlin University (on Unter den Linden) where Max Planck founded the quantum theory. Plaques inform tourists where Einstein lived and where he gave one of his early talks on the General Theory of Relativity. Across from Humboldt University is the August-Bebel-Platz where the Nazis burned Einstein's books and many other books on May 10, 1933. And there is more.

Radioactivity was discovered in Paris. Ginette Gablot, who was Curator of the Institut du Radium and the Joliot-Curies Archives, guides a tour that begins at the Muséum

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National d'Histoire Naturelle (le Muséum) where Henri Becquerel, the discoverer of radioactivity, worked. Across the garden is Georges Cuvier's house on which is a plaque that identifies the house as the place where Becquerel made his discovery. Located near the Muséum is 16 rue Cuvier where Pierre Curie was born. Enter 12 rue Cuvier. This building, currently part of the Université Pierre et Marie Curie, was the first annex of the Sorbonne. Go to the lecture hall (between classes) and down a hallway to a courtyard housing the pavilion in which radium was discovered. Pierre Curie gave lectures here and, after his death, Marie got her first true lab. Again, there is more.

Vienna is the city of music and without doubt any tourist visiting this Austrian city will have travel guides that identify sites connected with Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, Strauss, Mahler, Schönberg, and others. It is unlikely, however, that any travel guide will call attention to Christian Doppler who first understood why a train whistle changes pitch as it passes by. Nor will available guides take the tourist to plaques identifying the school that Lise Meitner and Erwin Schrödinger attended, to the residence of Sigmund Freud, to the house where Einstein lived, or to the burial place of Ludwig Boltzmann. A tourist is guided to a courtyard at the University of Vienna where plaques and busts celebrate the university's outstanding scholars Josef Loschmidt, Boltzmann, Josef Petzval, Schrödinger, Doppler, Johann Radon, Freud, Friedrich Hasenöhl, and Franz Exner.

The description of scientific sites in the cities of Berlin, Paris, and Vienna are just three examples of the many articles from "The Physical Tourist" that have appeared in the journal *Physics in Perspective*. The collection in this book offers many interesting science-related sites to supplement and expand the more traditional focus of current travel guides. These science sites will enrich your travel experience and give you more to talk about when you return home.

August 2008

John S. Rigden  
Roger H. Stuewer

The Physical Tourist

A Science Guide for the Traveler

Rigden, J.S.; Stuewer, R.H. (Eds.)

2009, VIII, 251 p., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-7643-8932-1

A product of Birkhäuser Basel