# A Mathematician's Travel Memories

Michael Holcomb
*University of Pikeville*

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## Cover Page Footnote

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mholcomb@pc.edu

I opened up my photo album late last week.
Page one it did feature Australia's Tennant Creek.
Next page I saw two mines, one silver, one copper.
How much of these metals would fit in one hopper?
Atomic number of copper, oh did I seek,
And silver and gold in Australia's Tennant Creek.
Copper is twenty-nine, gold is seventy-nine,
Silver is forty-seven; all primes, that's so fine.
Page three had Puerto Rico memories in store.
The Arecibo Telescope, hard to ignore:
One thousand feet across with cross sections that are
Parab'las that bounce radio waves from afar.
In sinusoidal waves, how far from trough to peak?
I pondered then where was Australia's Tennant Creek,
Nearly antipodal to Puerto Rico's land.
Vectors from Earth's center to each I have in hand;
Measure between vectors near one eighty degrees.
Later I saw pictures of lands where I did freeze:
Fond memories of the Faeroes away from crowds.
There were few gaps I saw where sunshine peeked through clouds.
And random like a sparse matrix; put ones for sun,
And put zeroes for clouds; that sparse matrix was fun.
Ah, one last memory at Kennedy Airport
That has no photo 'cause on film I was so short
When this rock star and entourage passed by so near.
Oh, dear!
But in hindsight I respected their privacy.
And then I guess they did respect mine; now I see
The entourage was a closed set; I was a point.
Privacy's like an open set; two sets disjoint
That are open containing these two sets; this place
Is like a regular topological space.
So then I closed my photo album late last week
Glancing one last time at Australia's Tennant Creek.

Postscript: This poem is written in iambic hexameter except for one line that is a single iamb. Although the author has not visited any of the places in this poem, the author sees mathematical connections, sometimes seemingly out of nowhere, in nature and man-made structures in many different travels.