

## A Dream Come True

“Better to see something once than to hear about it a thousand times.” - An Asian proverb. This statement is true for me regarding the Saint Louis Arch. My whole life, because I was born in Missouri, I remember the Saint Louis Arch stood out to me in pictures, paintings, and presentations. Because I was (and am) an avid reader, I read anything and everything I could on this monument, wishing I could ride up one of its elevators and peer down on the world below. Finally, I received my chance. My homeschool group scheduled a field trip to go to the museum below the Arch, ride an elevator to the top, and peer down on the world below. I was - to put it simply - excited. So, when the day finally came, I prepped my little silver camera and jumped in the van, ready to experience the Arch. After we parked the car, we walked over to the Arch by the river. The tall structure loomed above me and all I thought was, *What was I thinking?* (I have acrophobia.)

Mustering up my courage, I marched into the quadrant below the Arch to begin our trip, thinking the whole time about what a crazy thought I had to actually want to go up the Arch. After learning interesting things in the museum (like the construction of the Arch), our group purchased tickets to ride up an elevator to the top. When I noticed the size of the elevators, I was like, *No! No! No!* (Yes, claustrophobia is a weakness of mine as well.) But, my mom already bought the tickets, so I took a deep breath, sat on the hard, plastic seat, and cringed as the door slammed shut. *No way out now.*

After a long, two minute ride to the top, I jumped out of that elevator car as fast as I could, waiting for the trip to be over. I inched my way to the viewing windows. I thought my breakfast was going to make a second appearance as I felt the structure sway slightly in the breeze, but I sucked in a breath and looked out the windows. What I saw immediately made my fears float away. I snapped pictures of the churning river, the courthouse, and the general area with my digital camera, enjoying my time. I was disappointed when my mom waved me over to the elevator, signalling the end of our time at the top.

From this trip, I learned more than just history or science or how to use a new setting on my camera. I learned how to face my fears. Also, I made a dream of mine come true, so that made the trip all the more special.