

June 6, 2006

At long last! After planning this trip for 3 years, we are finally going to Ireland. We are also taking advantage of the trip to visit Tim and Annakena in Sweden.

I actually made the flight reservations in April, and that is when the trip started to seem real!

We started planning the trip in earnest after making the plane reservations, but I did not get

around to starting a journal
until now. There is so much
to plan! I actually started
a little late even though the
trip is still more than 2 months
away. I don't know others I
know are able to travel to Europe
at the drop of a hat! I've spent
a great deal of time trying to figure
out where we should go, where we
should stay, whether to rent a
car, what type of car, how
long we should keep it, etc.
etc. etc. I haven't even
started planning for the Sweden

leg of the trip yet!

Gradually, I've nailed down the rental car, a hotel for our 1st night in Dublin and our last 3 nights in Dublin, and a hotel for our 3 nights in Letterkenny.

Part of the problem was that I was driving myself crazy trying to plan the perfect trip, but to keep it spontaneous! We have found lots of interesting things to do and we know we can't do them all. I was also trying trying to get just the right mix

of hotels and B+B's; car, train and possibly bus travel, to see the important sights, go off the beaten track, and try to go to some of the places our families may have originated. I also got information on ballooning, Rotary meetings, geocaching and festivals. Hmm, perhaps

I was too ambitious? Janie finally talked me down and suggested that we pick just a few bases of operation.

After all, it only takes a few hours to get from one part

of Ireland to another. We divided up the country into roughly 4 areas. After our 1st night in Dublin, we'll go to the Northwest section, County Donegal. We'll stay in Letterkenny and use it as a base from which to attend Fleadh Cheoil events and explore this most northern part of the ~~the~~ Republic of Ireland (we don't expect to go into Northern Ireland.)

Next we will go down to the Galway area, where we can explore the central west coast, possibly

Central Ireland, and the Aran IS.
Then we'll go to the Southwest
from which we can reach the
whole southern end of the country.
And finally we'll return to Dublin
for a few days.

Letterkenny is the largest town
in Co. Donegal. . .

August 17, 2006

. . . well, I ran out of time
in June and never got back to the
journal. That might have had
something to do with our having
to work very hard to get
ready for the Pretty Dam Good

Race. We spent a ~~pretty~~ busy
2 mos planning and working on
all the final details. Finally we
held the race on August 12,
just 5 days before leaving for
Europe! How we ever did it
and got ready for this trip is
a mystery!

Now we are actually on the
plane on the way to Dallas, our
first stop on a 24-hour + mara-
thon to get to Stockholm where
we will visit Tim and Annaleua.

A week before our trip, a
terrorist plot to blow up air-

planes bound for the US from London was uncovered, and airport security was clamped down very tight. This foiled our plans to carry on all of our luggage and avoid checking bags. Immediately after the incident, the airports were chaotic, but by the time we left things had calmed down. Our trip through security and boarding went very smoothly! Our only glitch was a last minute change in departure gates, meaning a long hike from the end of

One concourse all the way over to the north terminal. Jamie was amazing! we were both commenting on how hard it would have been for her a couple of years ago to hike through the airport, but it was no trouble today. We have a 3½ hour flight to Dallas and a 2-hour layover before our long leg from Dallas to London. Jamie's turn now...

Enjoyed a breakfast cookie and water. What has this world come to

we could have gotten
red potatoes, scramble
eggs and tender sausage
but we would have had
to pay \$5.00. Flight is
comfortable as we are
sitting in thick seats
Saw Mt St Helens from
the air for the first
time...

- Arrived in Texas - "Dallas"
decided to check on flight
before we spent our
two hour lay over having
a nice quite lunch.

Low and Behold we discovered that my bag had been ticketed to Dallas and had been unloaded from the plane! We then spent the next two hours traveling around this huge airport - Claiming my bag - going back through security - (mean lady at check in threatened to make ~~us~~ us check all our bags nice man at first location had said we would be fine w/our carry ons.

She wanted to know his name! Finally let us through saying we would never get the bags on - we did!

London flight was very good - nice seating - lots of room - good movies, TV and GPS info. - could watch flight progress. Lots of food - got socks, blanket and toothbrush. Dad and I had a great time - This is like PDGR - trying to find where to go and what to do.

Aug 18-

Arrived in London.

- Got my first Passport stamp.
Watched Dad trying to buy
a bottle of water from vending
machine - 1. figure out money
2. have to go ask someone
3. several tries before being
successful at getting
bottle. (to brush his
teeth because water in
restrooms is warm)
4. Its sparkling water
after all that!
Another PDGR moment!

Well the seats on the flight from Dallas to London weren't that great if you are the large economy size! I'm sure glad we went in economy because I was wedged into my seat. Still it seemed like the flight went by fast and it was interesting to see the sunrise as we approached Europe. I was able to see a little of the Irish coast as I looked out the window through the clouds. That was exciting!

Back in Dallas, we had ~~one~~

More incident. Our name was called over the loudspeaker - "Last call for passenger Gallacher at risk of losing seat" Apparently the guy who caught our luggage problem had forgotten to record something in the computer. The plane wasn't that full so I doubt that seating would have been a problem.

Then as we went through the gate the ticket checker stopped us to check something else. We didn't figure that one out. Finally, we had to go through

a second TSA screening before
boarding - everyone did.

Arrived in Sweden
and found Tim right
away. Left airport and
went to the house.
It took about 45 mins.
Annalena, Lee and Joll
were there and we
had a late dinner,
(quick, salad etc)
we to our cabin. after.
Very nice. Large kitchen
and two large bedrooms

Large bath w/ shower,
most amazing is the
fireplace in one room.
This said fireplace is
about 100 years old. Cabin
also around 100 years old,
kept in ~~excellent~~
condition, very comfortable

The flight to England, described
earlier was made a little less
comfortable by my sore shoulder,
but I think it will work itself
out. The drive to the farm
from the airport was pretty. The
landscape reminds me of rural

Western Washington, eg Whidbey IS.
or the area between Olympia and
Aberdeen. Shortly before arriving
at the farm, Tim pointed out
their local church, dating from
the 1300's. I really like the
cabin. We have a TV, which
we haven't really watched. (There
are shows in English with Swedish
subtitles though), a coffee pot
and a microwave. The bed is
comfortable. There is a wood
stove in the kitchen (along with
an electric stove).

Aug 19

Up early and walked to Tim's place about 7/4 mile away. Its very woodsy here on the farm. Farm dates back to about 1600's - was a village since about 1300's. Weather is nice and we enjoyed the walk.

Had mush, cheese and "Toast" flat bread for breakfast. "Very good"

Went to Stockholm for the day -

Saw so many things,
old buildings, palace,
street entertainment,
ferry ride, amusement
park, hot air balloons.

Tim and Annalena
eat often and a lot, so
we sample foods along
the way. Had dinner
of a ship that serve
as a hostel also. People
are very friendly and
nice. Had a great day
home very late. (Dad
discovered broken tooth

today and he has a
sore shoulder,

We really enjoyed Stockholm.
It is a beautiful city built
on a kind of sound and a
giant lake (like one of the
Great Lakes). The effect is that
Stockholm is a water city. ~~Time~~
said they have tried to promote it
as the "Venice of the West." We
plan to go on a boat tour later,
but we did take a passenger
ferry between two areas today.
We ~~got~~ covered a lot of ground!
I looked at the map of the

area we covered on foot and I was surprised. Both of us held up pretty well, although I was not feeling my best because of the sore shoulder and stiff neck.

I think I may have a pinched nerve because my right thumb is numb. I did not expect to be the one with medical issues on this trip! I particularly enjoyed the older section of town during our walk - very narrow streets and ornate buildings. We'll see more later in the week.

Aug 20

Up early again - going to auction w/ Tim & Ann. Got to auction about 9:15 - looked all around Tim found dish to bid on - we found clock. - Left went to grocery store and came back close to our bidding time. Tim got his dish at a margin / we bid 400 crowns but not enough for the clock.

Left & picked up A &
Lee and went to Uppsala
Beautiful City, another
palace. Saw University
Back home - A's brother
Beane and wife Sonja
came by. Had salmon
salad and potatoes for
dinner - sat around
fire pit, nice evening,
home around 10:30.

We had a very pleasant day as Janice described. I enjoyed meeting Annaleen's family and the auction was fun. It was a little strange though, not being able to tell what the bidding was! While at the auction I tried a Swedish hot dog. It's a long, thin hot dog on a short bun - it sticks out on both ends.

It makes a good quick snack.

At the auction we bid on a nice clock, but it went for higher than we were willing to pay.

Uppsala

I saw another interesting clock that looked home-made with wood gears and copper-clad counterweights. I was kind of interested but didn't bid and it went for about \$5.

My neck is still bothering me and the numb thumb is a nuisance. The tooth is not bothering me although I intend to go to the dentist.

Uppsala is a beautiful place and the university and castle were impressive. While there we saw some runes dating

from the 1100's and watched
some people playing a game
similar to Bocce ball, ~~only~~
using steel balls. We plan
to go back to Uppsala when
things are open to look at it in
more detail.

We have not been able to
get the cell phone to work.
I have been able to email
Jason, although the time
difference causes a delay in
responses. Tomorrow, I plan
to deal with the cell phone,
the tooth and maybe the

Shoulder. Annaleena will be going
back to work (Tim was able to
take time off) and it will
be a good day to tie up
loose ends. I'd like to take
care of these things while we
are somewhere with local help.

8/21 Monday

A successful day! We went a little later to Timis and had breakfast, then worked on straightening out the phone situation. Nextel had not activated our account for use outside of the US. The problem was corrected and we confirmed that the phone worked by waking Leslie up at 2:30 AM! She was happy to hear from us though.

We also made arrangements for me to go to the dentist and I got my tooth fixed, so that is no longer a worry. Later

in the day we took a walking
tour of the farm, including
a look inside a circa 1600's
cottage. We also met our land-
lady and paid for the cabin -
2500K, or approximately \$357 for
the week.

Tim and Annalena have a nice big
garden, which Tim showed us,
and we also got a look at the
bed and breakfast building near
the farmer's house.

I was really proud of Jenice
today. She said she wanted
a full Swedish experience and

was open to try new things.

So she didn't refuse when Annalena told us she was cooking reindeer for dinner. Janie (she will never eat it again!) tried it and liked it. Way to go!

Dinner was fairly late and we were tired so we came back to the cabin about 10 pm.

I made cinnamon rolls with Lee today. We had a nice time and enjoyed talking together. It was special.

Aug 22, 2006

Tuesday

Had a quite morning before getting to Timb around 9:00. Had breakfast quickly and left w/ Tim, Annalena and Lee. Annalena was going to the doctor. We dropped her off and left for Stockholm. We took the hop on - hop off taxi ferry around lake - too much to go into here but had a great, interesting and enjoyable time. Miss ferry back and had to

take different boat -
met Tim's friend Patrick,
saw Tim's office. Patrick
talk to us about Ireland
at Pub. Finally home
did some laundry.
Dad will try to see doctor
tomorrow about his
shoulder.

The hop on/off boat was really
interesting, although we didn't do
much hopping on or hopping off.
When we did hop off, we went to
a place called Skansa, which is
kind of a combination of

Williamsburg VA and a zoo! There are many old buildings moved from different parts of Sweden or replicated at Skansen, so that you can see how people lived at different times and in different areas.

They also had costumed people working in the shops or in the houses.

This was a fascinating experience!

Also, there was a small zoo with moose, bears, wolves, a fox, etc.

Animals native to Sweden. We enjoyed it so much that we missed the last hop-on / hop-off boat and had to take another

foot ferry back to where we started.

After returning to downtown Stockholm we went up to Tim's office and met some of his co-workers. One was a Irishman, and we went out for drinks and a light dinner with him. We wanted to pick his brain. He was not particularly talkative, but he did give us some helpful tips about going to Cork and avoiding Limerick. We got home fairly late from Stockholm, but we did laundry at T+A's. They do not have a dryer, so we needed to

got the wash started in order
for it to have time to line dry.

Today was amazing.

Skansa was the most
interesting place I have
ever seen.

1. Bakery,
2. out buildings,
3. Flax mill; - 4. Hardware
store w/ home in back
from the 1920-1960?, Cafe,
shops, dairy, Compressed
musemen, "Beds" were
short and the was
amazing carving, textile
wall coverings, glass
work, period dress,
wood shoes, apothecary
and everyone describe
their area. I learned
so much

The Pub we went to was
like a cave. We reached

it by going through the narrow streets of Stockholm which have never been anywhere like that.

Got home late. It was good to see A. missed her today.

August 23

We got up and went down to Tina's to finish the wash. Anna Lena had put in the last load before she went to work, so we just needed to hang it up. After breakfast Rich and Tim tried to figure out a doctor for Rich to go to for his shoulder. Rich lined up a "Naprath" which is not common in the US. He is sort of a combination of chiropractor and osteopath. We got some info about it for Leslie. The Naprath did some massage, some ultrasound and some acupuncture (yes,

acupuncture!) It helped some,
but he had to be conservative in
treating me since he had never
seen me before and would not
be able to do any followups.

~~After the napropath, we drove~~

Before the napropath, we drove out
past a Castle Vik, which is now
a school and conference center.

After the Napropath, we ate
lunch at a good cafe and then
went to "old uppsala". This
was the original site of uppsala
but it was moved in the 1200's
There is a church still at

the original site, which is still
in use. It was really interesting.
Also at this site were some
burial mounds of old kings at
the site.

After finishing at Gamla Uppsala,
we went and picked up Anna Lena
at the day care where she
worked and we had a look
around. Tim + Anna Lena took us
out to dinner at a very good
Thai restaurant with a buffet.
We also went to a store and
picked up a coffee press for
Rick and some real Swedish

fish. (for Katie)

When we got home on our last night in Sweden, we discovered that not all of our clothes were dry. We took them up to our cabin and hung them all over with the heat cranked up. Then we went back to T+A's to watch and help them make pickles. Finally we went home to pack for leaving the next day.

I really going to miss T+A. The church ~~was~~ ~~for~~ again amazing

August 24.

Up really early to go to airport. Tim dropped us off and now our ~~real~~ trip begins. - "On our Own!" Got on plain fine w/ slight delay we still arrived on time - sent ~~the~~ luggage through to Ireland - Keeping fingers crossed. Spent about 2 hours @ Heathrow then off to Ireland.

We are in Ireland and 15 mins off the plane we lost each other.

we found each other
rather quickly but
decided we always need
to designate a leader.
Bus ride to hotel (which
is really nice). Good dinner
after about a 45 min
walk. Potato and leek
soup extraordinary. Orange
cream curd ~~at~~ out of
this world. Swiss Pick's
neck felt better. Send
e-mail to everyone.
Had quite night

Aug 24

Not much to add to Jamie's description of trip from Sweden to Ireland. There is lots of security at every airport but we've had time to get through. Losing each other was scary for both of us. We decided to choose a leader each day by a flip of a coin, not only to keep from getting lost but to simplify decision making. Jamie is boss for tomorrow. I had roast chicken for dinner with sides of cabbage, potatoes and (I think) turnips + carrots mixed. Dessert was delicious range cream brolette + a dish of rasp. sherbert

Aug 25 - Friday

Got up early and got train to main train station in Dublin. Had breakfast in station Bag 'O' Bacon, coffee and sweet roll. Rode train for about three hours, read, slept and watch the country side. Very peaceful ride. Got to Sligo and took taxi to airport to pick up car. Driving and riding in car is quite unweaving.

made it to Letterkenney
after lunch in Yates
@ Yates - wonderful food
here - "farmers soap for
me. Dad had T-h-Ch&O
"Grilled".

Made it to hotel - Brand
new - really nice - I'll
let Dad tell you about
concert.

The "train to the train" was Dublin
Rapid Transit. We walked a couple
of blocks with all our luggage,
found the station and figured
out how to get our tickets from

a machine with strange money
Then we had to ~~figure~~ figure out
which platform to wait on. When
we got to Connolly Station we
had to find our way to a different
part of the station, buy tickets
for the trip to Sligo and then
make the trip. I am developing
a new appreciation for the con-
testants on the Amazing Race! We
are even in English Speaking
Countries! We got to Sligo and
took a cab to the airport to get
our rental car. The taxi driver
was nice and helpful, but he

had a very thick accent and I only got about every 3rd word!

The best thing he did though is show us a shot out out of Shigo.

Driving on the left is a real challenge!

I have to focus very carefully to keep from drifting too far off to the left

while trying to avoid the cars

whizzing by on the right. Also

there is a thing called a roundabout

that is absolutely terrifying! We

made it to better kenny and circled

around through the city several

times before taking refuge at a

shopping center, where we

found a map. From there we were able to find our hotel. After taking a break, we decided to get a cab to the concert and we were really glad we did!

Traffic was a mess and streets were blocked off because of the activities.

The concert was great but I'll get back to that. Before we went to the concert, we went to the hotel lounge, which was full of HS age kids who were here for the Fleadh. They were spontaneously jamming and they were really good.

The concert was primarily put on by the young people of Letterkenny to honor their predecessors in both Ireland as a whole and from Ulster. 3 fiddles, 2 harps a Bodhran, a concertina, pipes, a banjo, a flute and 2 accordions. Also there were 3 dancers and some singers. It was tremendous!

After leaving the concert we walked through the streets and it was one big street party! You couldn't get into a pub, but they were serving ~~the~~ beer from booths on the street and people were just

walking & around while others
played music in doorways and
on street corners. We wound up
walking all the way back to
the hotel.

Aug 26 - Saturday

Slept in and went down stairs for breakfast. Then showered and dropped off laundry and went to internet shop to send e-mails home. Left to explore northern peninsula - Several things we want to see we are getting a late start so had a late lunch at a pub.

Food was good. We are having hard time

getting around today
a hard time finding
things. Finally decided
to head back down
other side of peninsula
on our way discovered
Dreanan an Ailack
which was one thing
I really wanted to see -
it wasn't designated
well - and was closed
from entrance for
reconstruction, but we
could get close and
got lots of good pictures

This place has an amazing history - found O'Doherty's Castle on way home - called Katie D., Jason and Leslie. Got to talk to girls - we told Emma we were in Ireland and that we saw a castle. She said "Now takes what I call exciting." - Had dinner in hotel - Dad left in the evening to listen to more music. I am having a quite evening.

August 26

We must have circled through Letterkenny 3 times trying to find the tourist office (which we never found) and trying to get out of town on the way to Inishowen. We finally got on the road and the day was good practice driving. It still takes teamwork though. We found our way around the peninsula but as Janie said, we couldn't find the Brianan Alleagh until we almost stumbled on it. It was way up on a hill and reminded me a lot of Steptoe Butte near

Palouse.

After we returned to the hotel, we had a buffet dinner here. Jamie settled in and I went out to hear some music. The evening celebration is sort of like folk-life on a hill, where everyone has a beer in their hand. There were a lot of young people (20's) just walking around. Every corner and doorway had a group playing. I went into one bar to try to get a beer and it was packed shoulder to shoulder. I gave up and found one elsewhere (but I did find one).

August 27 - Sunday

tried to go to the band competition. walk across town to park after breakfast. Rich helped a man set up a awning to cover band instruments. It ~~poored~~ poured off and on - got wet a little after 2 hrs. of waiting. 1 hr after it was supposed to start we finally

left. walk all the way back to hotel and decided to drive to the ~~peninsula~~

National Park. Janie forgot to mention that the walk to the band competition was about 1 mi uphill and she diplomatically did not mention that I had us arrive an hour before the competition was supposed to start. Our trip to the national park was frustrating because we couldn't get good directions there. After a long and ~~and~~ windy road and stopping again for directions we made it to the park. Found out everything was free today. Look around

museum and took shuttle
to castle. It was amazing
saw gardens & hawk and
castle. Had sweets and
coffee and went back
to car. - Drive back
towards town a little
disappointed we hadn't
found the one place we
really wanted to see
I let Dad tell you about
it. (Janice is mixed up on her
day - an easy thing to do! The
thing she is referring to was the
day before - Griamán Alléagh)

The falcon was really interesting. The falconer released him and showed how they are trained to go after rabbits. I don't remember the type of falcon but the guy said it was native to the South.

On our way back from the Castle we had a much easier time finding our way, but when we got back to town many of the roads were blocked because of the Fleadh and we couldn't get back to the hotel! Jamie's expert navigational strategy (I was focused on not hitting anything) got us home.

by a roundabout route through residential areas. While we were wending our way through town, we passed a guy walking a horse like a dog! (I have actually seen a bigger dog in Scotland) This was like a mini Shetland pony. Still a lot of music noise and merriment in town but we seem to be surviving. Dad had about an hour nap & I did crossword puzzles and rested my eyes - Fire alarm started

of us. we quickly gathered
a few things and left
the building - only to
discover no one else
was leaving and everyone
was still ordering dinner
having drinks and
playing music. It's a
new hotel and still has glitches.

After we had a light dinner, we
went back to the room and watched
a video. I kept hearing a drum
thumping. Although there had been
almost constant "sessions" in the
bar while we have been here,

the ~~base~~ was too far from our room for that to be it. As it tuned out, some of the younger musicians (teens) were holding forth in the lobby of the hotel, which was just under our room, and they were smoking! There was a crowd filling the small lobby and it went on with high energy for a couple of hours. There was even some impromptu Irish dancing and spectators moved back to give them room.

August 28 - Monday

Tried to get an early start.
Eat breakfast early and
picked up laundry.
of course we had trouble
finding Lettixerry because
of the roundabouts and
closed streets. Guess what
we finally found as we
were leaving town. The
Tourist Information center.
we had been looking
for it the whole time
no one in town knew
where it was! Finally

headed in the right direction - towards Bayle Abbey - what an amazing place - I felt myself get more and more excited as we got closer. It is in the middle of a quite little town w/ very narrow streets. (all streets in Ireland are narrow) what a sight! I don't know what I expect, but this surpassed my dreams. What a sense of history and

roofs. Its being reconstructed
but the feeling of permanence
is in the ground and you
feel it moving up through
your bones. Its quiet and
also pulling you in all
directions, all at the
same time. Its peaceful
but you can still imagine
all the prayers that were
said. At its peak there
were up to 400 monks
living here. 100 for
singing and prayer - (those
who could read and

write) and 300 labor
mosks - working fields
and live stock here
and in outlying areas.
Because of the Church of
England and the king
this place was shut
down and was executed
because he would not
renounce the pope. The
abbey was later turned
into a military fort.

I am so glad Rick
brought me here -
we were also in

the outdoor court of
the abbey when it start
to pour. We stepped into
an outdoor fireplace
and discovered ovens
for baking bread on either
side of us. We both
looked at each other
and realize how in
awe we were - we
were looking at something
people used 800-900 years
ago. How can you wrap
your mind around that
we just looked at

each other and smile
and laugh. So glad
we were there just
by ourselves. Took lots
of pictures - it was hard
to leave - back on the
road and off to Galway.
Scenery spectacular and
traveling w/ Rick is just
easy. If driving is
sometimes scary -
went to cemetery in
Gurteen - really old
and interesting. Then on
to music museum.

Very disappointing - not
even open except for
a 20 min video (which
we watch) back on
road to Galway -
discovery along the
way - Knocks - a catholic
church - and site of
a Blessed Mary's visitation
interesting because of
the ancient stone which
showed the left and
summit of the mountain
the area. Enjoyed it
alot - another old cemetery

they are everywhere.

Finally made it to
Galway after eating
dinner in Claregalway -
Browen - Good food
Very home cooking -

~~- P.S. for Katie Sr. while~~

August 28

Janie gave a pretty good description of our day today. I also really enjoyed the Abbey and I was disappointed by the Coleman Traditional Music Center, although it would be a great venue for concerts. On the way to Gurteen we stopped to see an ancient dolmen. The woman at the Abbey had given us directions. It was in the middle of a cow pasture. We ~~to~~ parked at an old barn, walked up a small lane went through a couple of railroad gates and across the tracks, over a stile and into the cow pasture.

I really enjoyed the tavern in
Claregalway. The food was hearty
and good.

We found our way to the B+B
The owner seemed OK but not
overly warm. We were surprised
when we spent a little time in our
room. It was a blustering day and the
room was cold. When I told the
landlord that I couldn't figure out
how to turn on the heat, he said it
was too early in the season for heat!
Never mind that it was 13°C or about
 55°F outside! We froze in the
room and went to bed early because of it

Aug 29 - Tuesday

Up early - hoping that
Rich can see doc today
Finally found doc office -
must come back tomorrow,
found interesting area
called Salthill, walked
around - also found internet
place (Email you all) and
traverse to go into it did
a little shopping there -
Walked back to car and
went to the Quayside
to do more shopping
had lunch. (at 2:30)

Arch (1500's) back to
B & B. and was kidnaped
by Catherine. Rich had
to come find me after
40 min. walk to restaurant
for ^{half} dinner. Back to
B & B for quite night.
for Katie Sr. while walking
to "Keys" street shopping
we heard a street musician
playing guitar and
singing "brown eyed girl"

8/29 Although I didn't get to see
the Dr. we had a good time together
in both Salt Hill and in Balway. The
best time is when I can walk around
with Janice and we aren't terrified by
driving! We got souvenirs for people
and enjoyed both areas.
We found a shopping center and
bought an alarm clock because our
travel alarm is too soft to wake
us up - our ears are getting
old too!

Aug 30,

Going to a castle today
plus driving to Clifton
Had a hard day today -
missing home - missing
everyone - somewhat teary
Dad is trying to be supportive
Finally decided to go back
to B&B for nap - we have
hit the wall - Castle
was interesting - ate
lunch @ Daniel O'Hara's
Dad went through
museum, after 2 hour
nap went to the Fudge

for dinner - checks
e-mails before dinner
had a great salmon in
lemon & herb sauce.
went home - up for
trip tomorrow. First time
Dad drove at night!

Although Jamie had a hard time
today, she has been a real trooper
getting dragged all around. Driving is
tense - you are either too close to
the edge of the road or too close
to oncoming traffic! I am getting
used to how to do it, but I'm

Not getting comfortable with it.

It pretty much poured all day today. I tried to find a geocache but I wasn't sure if there was an actual cache or if it was just a location. I found the location at a youth hostel, but no cache. I'll look it up when I get home. I really enjoyed the castle. It was well presented.

The museum at Dan O'Hare's wasn't that great. They had a village there but it was raining too ~~hard~~ hard for it to be worthwhile. I went to the museum instead. Although

it wasn't that great, it did give some insight into the history of the Connaught area and the people. Also this was when Marconi set up his first wireless station, at least on a commercial basis. This area was also a strong IRA area back in the 20's. It is a desolate area and the history is sort of like the wild west. The main industries were smuggling, piracy and boot leg liquor in the past. The area was very hard hit by the famine in the 1800's.

We both enjoyed dinner at The Forge
after checking the email

This is out of order, but I did see
the doctor this morning. He gave
me a Rx for stronger anti-inflammation
and told me to see my Dr. upon
returning home for an MRI.

It is interesting that you cannot get
single aspirin or tylenol over here.

We did have heat at the B+B
today! Yay! It was another old
blasting day.

August 31.

Today we went to the Aran Islands. This is a 1 hour bus ride from Galway to Rossaveal, then a 40 min. ferry ride to the Islands. We chose to take a minibus tour of the Islands. We sacrificed seeing some of the sights but the alternatives are walking or bike riding - this island is 9 km long so the choice was easy. We could have taken a horse-drawn cart but it was more expensive and it was open. The weather was pretty raw. The tour took us to ~~the~~ Dun Aonghusa, a 3000

yr old ring fort. I found another
geocache location, but again, I don't
know whether I should have actually
found a ~~the~~ cache. The scenery at
this site is spectacular. It was
a steep climb, but we took our time.

The number of stone walls on this
island is astounding. The guide
said it was 7000 miles of walls
and I believe it! I don't
know how anyone farms that land.

We returned to Salthill where we are
enjoying a nice dinner before re-
turning to the B&B

Overall pretty good day -
Looking forward to Rich's
birthday tomorrow - going
to Killarney - Ready to
go home soon - Miss every
one -

Sept 1 - Friday Rick's Bday

Gave Rick his Bday present and sang happy Bday. Got everything packed and ready to go. Had breakfast and left for Killarney. Drove for awhile before we realized we still had the key. Called Catherine and she said to just mail it back. Drove to the Cliffs of Moher. Very impressive we walked as far as you were suppose to. Some people went beyond that

point and we saw two
women lose their footing.
They didn't fall the 300ft
but people can be stupid.
We drove pretty much
straight through and didn't
stop for lunch. Driving
went really well today.
Thought we had messed
up just at the end, but
then saw the Kingfisher.
Really nice place, great
people. Went to Buckley's
to listen to music after
late dinner @ ^{the} Fleck.

Had crab claws and potatoes - small claws but delicious. Good Bday dinner for Rich - music was great, walked around a lot and walk back to B&B after music & drinks - Great day! Four star.

This was a great birthday. Jamie gave me an Ireland calendar. Driving went surprisingly well. I adopted the attitude that I will go as ~~fast~~^{slow} as I feel like, and if people get behind me I'll pull over when I can. It

was much more relaxing. Before going to the cliffs we went through the Burren area - it was ~~so~~ really striking but it's hard to believe people can actually farm the area. We also stopped to take pictures of an unidentified well preserved castle marked "Private"

The Cliffs were spectacular but I agree with Janie's thoughts about how stupid people can be. Janie has amazed me with her stamina. She's also been doing a great job with navigation. We were at the point of thinking we were lost when we looked up and saw the B+B sign.

Sept 2 - Saturday

Quite morning - going slow - taking an easy day - Real self walking tour of city - shop seeing and just enjoying not driving... Back home late afternoon and its nap time - E mailed people today and talked to Jason, Katie, Emma & Sarah. That was wonderful. Went out for late dinner at the Swenneys' met two young girls from

Cincinnati Ohio. - Meg &
Faye - Really fun and
interesting. we talk
about PDQR. They want
to do it. I said they
could be our first
out a state team, we
all went to Buckley's for
music, much better
than last night. Instead
of 3 players - there were
about 6-8 - 1-Drums, 2 accord
1 fiddle, 1 penny whistle
1 guitar - maybe more -
that music) - really fun

Donald (B+B owner) showed up. Talked with Rick bought him beer. Late night, walked home,

I really like the B+B and it was pleasant to take an easy day. I sat in the parlor for an hour or more reading. Enjoyed the walk and window shopping. The girls were nice to talk to at dinner. I had steak & it was good. The music at Buckleys was really good & I spent time talking to the Bachman player as well as Donald the land lord.

Sept 3 - Sunday

Up by 8:30 - Breakfast
and ready for our
pick for bus tour
by 10:15 - Going to
Wengle Peninsula -
about a 6-hour trip
lots to see - really
interesting - stopped
at several places and
really enjoyed being
w/ Rick. Walked back
fr downtown after tour
and working on trip
route info for MRS

and catching up with
log - will go for late
dinner but will have
early night - talked
to Leslie and Claire
miss everyone -

Dringle Penn. was enjoyable and relax-
ing. Realized today (Mon.) that we had
not driven since Friday. No wonder we're
so relaxed! One sight on Dringle Penn.
was Blasket Is. Visitor Centre. Another
was 1300 y.o. church. Jamie + I en-
joyed the time together. We also saw
dolphins.

Very good dinner at Foley's Rest.

and walked back to finish GPS
programming + writing journal

Tomorrow will get an early start
and head for Kilkenny roundabout
via Castle Donoran (if we can
find it)

Apparently, we stopped writing when we got to the end of our notebook, or else we have lost the remaining pages. After we returned to Dublin, we stayed at Bewleys Hotel Ballbridge, which used to be an orphan school. We picked up a history of the building, which follows.

The building at Bewley's Hotel Ballsbridge.

The building is situated on the corner of Merrion Road and Simmonscourt Road in Dublin's exclusive area of Ballsbridge.

Originally built as the Masonic Female Orphan School, the foundation stone was laid by the Duke of Abercorn on St John's Day, June 25th 1880 "in the presence of a fashionable and extremely large assemblage." Two years after this foundation stone was laid, the construction of the new Masonic School was completed.

The M.F.O.S. was built by Messrs. Gahan and son according to the architectural plans of Messrs. McCurdy Mitchell. The work of Messrs. McCurdy and Mitchell is also linked to the construction carried out on the Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin, Trinity College, Dublin and the Zoological Gardens in Dublin's Phoenix Park.

Set on a site of nearly ten acres, the new School, which included a library, dormitories, schoolrooms, recreation and dining areas, boasted some of the most advanced building and engineering techniques of the day. The school formed two sides of a quadrangle, and was entered beneath a tower at the corner. This tower was not merely ornamental but also contained all the works connected with the water supply of both the building and the bathrooms.

Inside, the rooms were airy and bright and the dormitories, with their adjoining lavatories, were cheerful, despite the military style order, cleanliness and sparsity. The dining hall was also functional but comfortable, heated by slow combustion stoves, as was the entrance hall. The kitchens were furnished with the most up-to-date appliances and the laundry area was positioned so as to be convenient but not intrusive. Recreational and exercise facilities for the orphans were also to the highest standard.

As far as was possible, the fittings and furniture for the school were manufactured and bought in Ireland. Built at a cost of £14,986.47 the new school would remain the home of the Charity for the next 90 years.

The beautiful terracotta fountain which stands in front of the main building was bequeathed to the school by a Mr Sawyer who was not a member of the Masonic Order. The hall to the left of the main building was built ten years after the construction of the school was completed and was used as an assembly hall for prayers and meetings.

The building was bought by the Royal Dublin Society in the early seventies and renamed Thomas Prior House after one of their founding members. It was bought by the present owner in the late eighties and converted to Bewley's Hotel over the last number of years. The architects and engineers have worked very carefully in order to maintain the beauty and style of the original building.