

Received from Lindsay Moore, December 20, 2004

EMAIL INSTALLMENT #1

So here is the long awaited conclusion to my European travels and my arrival in St. Andrews (I know how longingly many of you await my extremely lengthy emails--I hope this is sufficient):

So the rest of my time in the Netherlands was lovely. The weather, although still vacillating, was less rainy and actually quite warmer. After visiting lots of quaint towns and villages surrounding The Hague, my favorite by far was Delft. Its tiny alleys, cobblestone streets, and intimate shops and bakeries definitely made it a very enjoyable place to stroll about and enjoy the tremendous history of its inhabitants. Jimmy, a family friend of his, Sue, and I ventured into the afternoon markets of cheese, sweets, antiques, and tile work. and then found our way to the Ould Kerk (the supposed final resting place of Vermeer and Anthony van Leewoneuk) and the Nieuw Kerk (the resting place of the royalty--most famously William of Orange). After an extremely enjoyable day, I felt as though I was living in the time of the local artisans and craftsman of the seventeenth century. The city itself, is still surrounded by its original canals (I believe the only town left in the Netherlands that maintains this status) and windmills which line the outmost canals fortifying the town. Truly a sight to see--and I, of course, in my seventeenth century mindset was in love.

So on Thursday evening, my sister Emily arrived with her Davidson girlfriend Miranda Horas. The evening was a bit of a frenzy b/c their train arrived 3.5 hours late (the train station having no knowledge of the train's arrival). I, of course, without a cell phone was not aware of this, and spent a frantic 2 hours running about the 3 train stations in the Hague worrying that they both were either forlorn in some random part of the Hague or that my sister was extremely perturbed with me--neither was the case luckily. When they arrived I was so thankful to see them!

On Friday (Sept 17), Emily, Miranda, and I left on an early morning train to Amsterdam (only a 25 minute train ride). We spent the first part of the day tackling numerous museums and sights (The Ann Frank House, Rijksmuseum, the Van Gogh Museum, etc.) and then caught up with Jimmy and a few of his friends for the afternoon and evening. Overall, I really loved Amsterdam for its city charm, architecture and museum quality, but I must admit I preferred the quaint charm of the surrounding villages visited earlier in the week--Utrecht, Delft, etc. Our evening was spent at a great tapas bar over yummy food and sangria right in the heart of the city. I can't tell you what a sheer blessing and encouragement it was to have my sweet little sister around--definitely the best send off for my year abroad--we hugged and laughed all day.

Following dinner, we walked about the Red Light district for about an hour and to be honest, my heart was broken by the end of our walk. I truly felt an overwhelming brokenness and emptiness for the women who walk the streets and place themselves on display in the windows. And while, yes, you could argue its legal, they pay taxes, and are tested according to national health standards on a regular basis, I kept wondering why they felt this was their only way to survive? In my personal faith life, I found myself on an hour-long prayer walk of light for the darkness that so many of these women live in--my heart broke for them. And while this practice has been instituted for

over 400 years, I will pray that life may change for these women and they might hope in the one and only that satisfies.

So, on Saturday, we woke early and ventured about The Hague, Emily and Miranda visiting the MauritHuis museum while I got coffee and caught up on some reading/writing.

However, about 1 my precious sister and I parted ways at the train station. She and Miranda left for Bruges and I traveled back to Amsterdam to catch a flight to Edinburgh, Scotland. I think that when Em and I hugged and said our goodbyes, I definitely experienced my first bit of homesickness realizing my year was really beginning.

My arrival to the Schipol airport was uneventful despite an hour delay for my flight. I have decided that these cheap discount airlines (Sleezy Jet I have now termed in place of Easy Jet) are guaranteed to be late no questions asked. So many of you know I am a pretty avid flyer, no worries or fears usually upset me when flying, but I have to tell you I absolutely panicked on this flight. So imagine yourself flying over water (this particular water was right off the north sea--the Firth of Fourth to be exact (the waterway separating St. Andrews and Edinburgh)) and as the pilot nears the ground (and we are talking wheels down and about 100 feet from the ground), the plane all of sudden jerks upward drastically and the steward basically comes on the intercom and pretty much announces 'psych, we're not cleared for landing.' The weather, of course, was windy and the sky was hovering with rain clouds. If ever there was a time to hyperventilate in my life this was it. The pilot, a few moments later, shares with us that the supposed reasoning is that visibility wasn't cleared--and of course, this in no way puts my mind at rest--no worries. Just typing this brings back a slight tingling sensation, so I will stop.

So obviously I made it to St. Andrews safe and sound. My Rotary counselor, Graham picked me up at the airport and as we got to the car, I made my first cultural faux pas-- I went straight to the right side 'passengers seat--as we would call it in the states' and he of course asks me if I was planning on driving in a jovial voice. While I am blonde, I really think I have to give a large amount of credit to the most recent trauma of my flight's landing. You can make your own deductions upon your knowledge of me of course (for those of you who remember me making my cell phone up in my bed last year and not finding it for a whole month...).

Our drive from the airport to St. Andrews was spectacular and it took about an hour. The whole way there I experienced such a sense of peace and extreme gratefulness for this opportunity. I didn't talk a great deal because I was so in awe of how blessed I am and humbled by what a gift I have been given. Graham, is absolutely wonderful--a great historian, fun personality, and quite a storyteller. I felt Scotland and all of its tremendous history and life pouring forth as the rain clouds moved away and this amazing full rainbow stretched across the bluest of skies (you'll definitely get a picture of that when I get my email set up in my flat--right now I only have school use)--no joke. It was the most idealic situation I could have imagine. In my mind it was another faithful sign from the good Lord above reassuring me of my purpose and opportunity this year--truly the peace that passes all understanding pouring forth. Graham, with his extremely Scottish voice (he and his wife Dorothy's families have lived in the Fife region for over 300 years) shared the most along the rocky shores of the Forth of Fife (the bright city lights of Edinburgh to my South and the sweet small gleam of St. Andrews

lightly illuminating the skies to the northeast edge of the water). As we came upon St. Andrews, it was about 6:30 pm and I can't even begin to describe the sight before me-- words nor pictures would suffice. I truly felt like I had just won the largest lottery pot ever--a pot of gold at the other end of the rainbow--once again I was humbled by the awesome majesty of the beauty given to me so undeservingly.

Our flat is incredible to say the least. Not to brag, but by far the cutest and most idealistic setting imaginable. While it is modern in its facilities its facade holds the charm of a Scottish cottage. The inside has 3 bedrooms (one with ensuite bathroom-- Fiona's) two baths, and enormous kitchen with all the appliances you could ever dream of as a cook, and a very large sitting area with tv/music centre--quite the hook up I might add.

Knocking at the door, I immediately was greeted by my roommate, Fiona (an English postgraduate (who also went to St. Andrews undergrad as well, from Wimbledon, England (suburb of London)) who is absolutely gorgeous and uber friendly and sweet. Tamara, my other gorgeous roommate (who is an American Rotary scholar as well) followed soon after with a very familiar and loving warmth that definitely felt like a homecoming. Dorothy, Graham's wife, was also at our flat, having arrived with an enormous basketful of goodies--wine, cheese, milk, oj, sweets, to say the least. The hospitality of the Scottish and their giving hearts is astounding. She has the sweetest eyes and most giving spirit about her. She reminds me of my godmother, Ann Adock, in almost every way. So, with Graham and Dorothy's departure, the three of us, immediately started getting to know one another as we unpacked and chose our perspective rooms. As a random note, I chose the bedroom that wasn't square/rectangle. I have always lived in a square room, and felt like I need some rounded sides in my life for the year so I chose the smaller room with interesting walls (you are all allowed to laugh at my eccentric sense of aestheticism--my roommates did). Following a little unpacking, we joined 3 of Fiona's Scottish friends at a local pub called Broon's--extremely yummy and great atmosphere. I felt quite at home and the food was actually very healthy.

Sunday I went to a Baptist church in town and enjoyed it a great deal. The church was attended by an outstanding number of div students and the teaching was very solid and worship a great mix of traditional and contemporary--a great find to be sure. I am very encouraged by the fellowship and opportunities here already--my expectations are always exceeded of course. After church, Graham and Dorothy took Tamara and I to Dundee (a large city about 20 minutes away north across the Forth of Tay) to visit the local Rotary service project of the year--the Mercyship. The day was extremely windy and somewhat rainy, but we were prepared with our macs and layered clothing. The MercyShip project is by far one of the most ingenious mission efforts I've heard of and I was fortunate enough to visit the original ship docked in the Dundee harbor on its last days. Mercyships are a Christian medical mission that spends 4 months a year (between Sept and January) raising prayer and financial support and then the other 8 months docked in either Africa (Ghana, S. Africa, or Sierra Leone), the Caribbean or South America. This particular ship, Anastasis, is the original MercyShip and was open for a week long viewing and fundraising in Dundee. Ann Gloag, a local Dundee billionaire is one of the forerunners of the mission efforts. On board the ship I was blown away by the medical help these ships provide. The MercyShip organization sends a physicians and nurses (usually about 30 doctors and 90 nurses on board--who pay their own salary to work) into the country they will dock at about 3 months prior to arrival to

screen and test potential medical candidates (you can imagine this is a quite costly and tedious process). Upon selection, the doctors treat cleft palates, cataracts, unseemingly tumors, crossed eyes, leg corrections and other plastic surgeries and dental surgeries on board until full recovery and then leave remaining physicians in the cities to educate and continue supporting the patients in their recovery. The ship itself is a retired 1960s cruise liner and also supports the children of the staff families as well as the welders, cooks, and maintenance crew (all of which raise their own financial support). To say the least, I was floored and so grateful to be at least a prayer warrior and local support raiser during my stay here. I have a month break in the spring and I am already praying about spending a few weeks on board cooking, cleaning, or doing whatever might be needed. I'll keep you updated to be sure.....

Anyway, I am running out of steam and I can only imagine you have already quit the email and have resorted to skimming. I failed at my promise to shorten my emails as well.

More on Rotary scholars soon. But I have met them all, but one here at St. Andrews and they are all some of the most giving, warm, and intellectual people I have ever met. There is a small group of Princeton graduate students here I have all gotten to know and gone out with at night and they are incredibly fun.

I wanted to give you more contact info as well:

My address again is:
1 John Coupar Court
Bridge Street
St. Andrews, Fife
Scotland KY16 9EB

PHONE NUMBER is (I don't think I am getting a cell phone, but this is a landline at my flat) is: 011 44 1334 478594

AND if you really, really miss me and want to call this is the cheapest way to call by far (39 cent connection fee and 3 cents a minute):

Just dial all of this and you will just receive a monthly bill, no service connection required:

10 10 297 011 44 1334 478594 (there will be no prompt, just dial all at once).

I can't tell you how I miss you all and long to hear your voices....please fill me if you ever get a chance....

With much love and thoughts,
Lindsay