

Dover, Paris, Vosges, **Bayreuth**, Wernigerode, Göttingen, Twijzelerheide -
August 2011

Thursday 11 th August	Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway, a scaled-down railway, coaches big enough to sit 2 side-by-side, and engines as good models looking rather odd with the driver so large. The railway runs a regular passenger service. Dover, hotel near ferry port. Walked along prom after dinner.
Friday 12 th August	Walked up to Dover Castle. 'Operation Dynamo' Exhibition (the evacuation from Dunkirk) Round the castle and up the keep. To the ferry to Calais. Calais to St Requier, near Abbeville. Nice hotel next door to the Abbey 'Abbatis Villa Jean de Bruges'. Whole square filled with tents, seating, etc. For Medieval Fair starting tomorrow. Walked round stalls and other preparations in the large field behind the Abbey. Parked car by the side of the Abbey. Dinner in small cafe on the square - delicious!
Saturday 13 th August	Rain, but looked round the square, watched the procession from our window and took pictures of the hog roast. Managed to unlock gates to get car out. To Paris. Michael, Nicky, James and Charlie all back from holiday in Greece. Lots of chat, dinner outside.
Sunday 14 th August	Pat's birthday Michael took us to 'Monet's Garden' at Giverny, lots of flowers and colourful borders. Fabulous lake with water-lilies. The boys stayed at home. Lunch opposite in a creperie. Sat outside and drunk cidre with delicious crepes, both savoury and sweet. Visited the church in Vernon. Barbeque at home, followed by a Birthday cake!
Monday 15 th August	Lazy morning, then out with Michael and Nicky to St Germain en Laye. Walked into the courtyard of the Schloss and looked into the chapel. A walk along the terrace over looking Paris and back through the woods, I had too much sun and retired to bed, a rest helped. We did enjoy our visit but didn't see much of the boys.
Tuesday 16 th August	Driving out of Paris was relatively easy in August. Mainly Autoroute driving towards Saarbrucken and took off at Sarreguemines; through Bitche, citadel on the hill, to Lembach, L'Auberge du Cheval Blanc. We stayed in the small 'inn' next door' - very comfortable. Dinner at a hotel up the road
Wednesday 17 th August	Very elegant breakfast. To Burg Fleckenstein, 13 th century, built on a sandstone outcrop only about 5 m wide. Walked up from car park to the reception and then climbed to the castle - fascinating, with passages and steps built into the rock. Picnic lunch back at our hotel in the garden. A visit to the Maginot line at Four a Chaud, a guided tour of the underground passages built in the 1930s. Outflanked after the war started and never used afterwards. We went on a German tour, very interesting. Splashed out this evening by eating at the Michelin restaurant attached to our hotel. We had the set menu, interesting, delicious but perhaps not my

	usual choice.
Thursday 18 th August	Set off towards Speyer and the Autobahn to Bayreuth. North from there to Altdrossenfeld, Brauere Gasthof Schnupp recommended to us by Penny Moore, a large room under the eaves.
Friday 19 th August	Quiet morning. Walked up the road into the village of Neudrossenfeld and bought small picnic for this evening. Lift to the Festspielhaus for the first Wagner Opera ' Tannhaeuser ' lovely occasion, hot sunshine, good seats, fabulous auditorium, stupendous chorus, mostly exceptional singing, but the setting was AWFULL!!, it made no sense, the videos distracted one, and it was sometimes difficult to find the singers on the stage. A great night though, and much to talk about.
Saturday 20 th August	Drove in to Bayreuth to buy and write postcards, frequently changing seats to stay in the shade. Lazy lunch in the town, visited the Markgraefliches Opernhaus (lovely golden Barock opera house), Haus Wahnfried (shut) and Richard Wagner's grave. A walk in the Hofgarten then on to Neues Schloss, some really beautiful rooms with interesting decoration - a great day out.
Sunday 21 st August	To the Eremitage, Schloss and gardens to the East of the town centre. A walk around the estate above the river, keeping in the shade of the trees (another very hot day with temperatures reaching 30°C) and then to watch the fountains playing, wandering and looking, before finding some lunch. Guided tour of the Altes Schloss, more fountains. Stopped for icecream in Neudrossenfeld Another great day out.
Monday 22 nd August	Quiet morning only walking up into the village, then a lift to the Festspielhaus for the 2 nd opera ' Tristan and Isolde ' another great experience with spectacular singers, it looked good too, even if there were one or two things that I felt didn't work. The love duet in Act 2 made the whole wait and final trip here worth it all.
Tuesday 23 rd August	Staying at the Brauere Gasthof Schnupp was superb, good food, interesting menu, friendly people - well designed arrangements for the opera, including a small meal, already ordered, when we returned. Drove North on the 85, lunch at Saalfeld, then on to Weimar. Found the statue of Goethe and Schiller, and then wandered around - it was still very hot and I got quite tired. Continued North on 85 through Stolberg (lovely village, worth a visit next time!), though it was a long drive - to Wernigerode in the Harz. Ate at the Hexen Kessel, (potato menu) then a walk through town which was a lot longer than intended.
Wednesday 26 th August	Narrow gauge train up the Brocken, steam driven, very exciting. Ate outside at the Ratskeller, even though it was raining. As we came to leave, the heavens opened and the wind blew, a right proper storm. We rushed across the square to shelter as did anyone else out in such weather. It finally abated and we sloshed home still wet.
Thursday 25 th August	Walked up to the Schloss and round on the tour, a 19 th Century building. Off after coffee to drive through the Harz to Göttingen, stopped the site of the former border. A nice hotel but rather in the middle of a building site, a difficult walk from the car to the hotel. Took a more noisy room on the 1 st floor rather than climb to the 3 rd . Around the town, then ate in the Kartoffelhaus.
Friday 26 th August	Drove up to outside our old flat and off for a walk in the Wald. Still hot and sunny, but lovely in the trees. We didn't REALLY get lost, but were pleased to find signs to Hainholz where we had a beer and our picnic. Looked at the deer then towards the Bismark turm, and so back to the car. Had 'cafe and kuchen' before going home.

	<p>Jurgen Troe took us to visit the lab and then we picked Heli up to go out to dinner. Stopped at the Seeberger See en route, then through Duderstadt to eat at a Gasthaus on the former border with views across the countryside..</p>
Saturday 27 th August	<p>To Holland, mainly on Autobahn to Groninigen then N355 to Twijzelerheide: the Farmhouse B&B. It seemed miles from anywhere but we were soon shown where we could go out to dinner at Buitenpost. The China Garden is a 'wok restaurant', essentially a buffet, the main course was selected by you and then cooked in a wok; lots of fish and absolutely delicious. We both had salad and sushi as starter, and fruit for desert.</p> <p>Drove round afterwards and didn't actually get lost!</p>
Sunday 28 th August	<p>Drove to the north coast in pouring rain, which soon stopped to give a nice day. Ferry to Schiermoonikoog, one of the Dutch Friesen Islands. Bus from the ferry port to the centre of the town, and after hot chocolate we set off to explore towards the coast. Walked past the 2 lighthouses, and onto the beach - miles of wet sand. Stopped in the dunes by the side of a lighthouse to eat our picnic. The lighthouse was a good shelter from the rain storm that we could see coming towards us. A good walk along the beach and then inland towards the town and an ice cream before catching the bus and ferry back to our car on the mainland. A great day out, but not finished as we went on to Dokkum to find a meal there. A rather hazardous turn on a river bank to get out of the parking place. And back home in the dark, not too easy.</p>
Monday 29 th August	<p>Visited Leeuwarden, though we were surprised to find that it seemed to be a holiday - everything opened at lunch time. Interesting town but not spectacular.</p> <p>Drove North to Holwerd to see the ferry to Ameland. As the tide was out we parked and watched the waders, curlews, redshanks, turncoats ----. Then home for another visit to 'China Garden', we had much the same and it was just as good.</p>
Tuesday 30 th August	<p>Packed up for the last time on our way to Europort and the ferry home. Drove across the dyke and visited the exhibition. On and into Haarlem an interesting town, had bagels for lunch and into the Franz Hals Museum - a lovely building and some great paintings. Hurried back to the car and on our way again. We finally managed to find our way out of the town and onto the correct road, but our general European map is hardly good enough in these conditions. And on the Europort and 'The Pride of Rotterdam'. Drinks in the Skylounge, and dinner in the brasserie, unfortunately a disappointing meal.</p>
Wednesday 31 st August	<p>Hull (arr) and drove off without and wait. To Barton-upon-Humber, and visited 2 churches, the 2nd with a Saxon tower and external archading.</p> <p>A journey across country took us to the Lincolnshire Wolds Railway - bacon butty and coffee helped while we watched the train arrive and depart.</p> <p>To the coast to a bird sanctuary and a walk along the shore (hardly any birds) and back and the land side. We did see a flock of Shelducks.</p> <p>The station buffet for lunch and then we drove home.</p> <p>An absolutely splendid holiday, it all worked!.</p>