



# BILL & DEBBIE'S NEWSLETTER

## UNITED KINGDOM EDITION No 2



Hi Everyone,

Welcome to our 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of our Newsletter. In our last Newsletter I finished with our trip to Bristol. I mentioned that we had met a Welsh couple at our hotel in Magor and after we left the Bristol area we head west to Cardigan on the West coast of Wales. We stopped at Cardiff, the Capital, and visited their Museum which was great and then headed to Swansea. We had lunch in Swansea before heading West again to Cardigan. We stayed the night with Mike and Colleen and they were fantastic host. We talked to late at night then next morning we went with Mike in his BMW to Colleens farm which she has on the market at the moment. It is located in the countryside and was beautiful. We all then went to a seafood restaurant on the coast for lunch. A great day out. Mike dropped us back at their house and then Deb and I hit the road again for Manchester.



### IMPRESSIONS OF WALES

*This is a place we will have to come back to see more. We did manage to see a little of it but we decided we need to go back and spend a few days in Wales to fully appreciate it. We will mark that down for a future time when we come back to do Ireland. The countryside is beautiful and as there is no major highways with the exception of the East to West motorway from London, we were driving on small country lanes through lovely villages.*

We arrived in Manchester on Wednesday the 9<sup>th</sup> of April at the Best Western Smokies Park. The next day we took a day trip to Liverpool to visit the Beatles Museum, The Museum was great with plenty of memorabilia of the Fab Four to look at. We then took a walk up town and were surprised at how modern the city was. They have retained some historic buildings but have created quite a good modern shopping district right in the city. We also visited the World Museum in Liverpool which is housed in one of the original buildings that were retained. The next day I bit the bullet to coin a phrase and went to see a local dentist as I have had a bad tooth ache for days. He found I had an infection in the tooth I had fixed prior to leaving Adelaide. Luckily I had some Antibiotics with me which were prescribe by my dentist. After



a few days it calmed down and has been OK since. As a result of the visit to the dentist we had a quiet day.

### IMPRESSIONS OF MANCHESTER

*A great place to base yourself if you want to visit the surrounding areas. Liverpool is only a 1 hour drive away and Manchester City is full of historic buildings and roman ruins. We enjoyed our time there.*

The next day we headed north again to the Lakes District. We did a side trip to Blackpool to check it out on the way. What a tacky place. Full of amusement arcades and not much else. We took a walk out to the end of the Pier but it was so cold and windy we headed into the city, had some



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lunch then continued our journey North. We arrive at our B&B late in the afternoon and were delighted with the accommodation. It was a 400 year old water mill that had been converted into accommodation. It was run by two gay guys who were fantastic. The room was beautifully decorated and the whole feel of the place was such a contrast to the B&B we stayed at in Southampton. It was set in the country side about a 10 minute drive to Kendal. There were two pubs close by to enjoy a pub meal. Breakfast was fantastic and they gave us a lot of information on the history of the Mill and also the local district. We spent three days in the Lakes District and could have spent a



week. We visited a motor museum which had a replica of Sir Donald Campbell's Bluebird Boat which was the one he was killed in. They also had his father's Blue Birds as well. We took a cruise on Lake Windemere, visited some beautiful villages and also the home of Beatrice Potter. We also visited the grave of Donald Campbell in Coniston. That was also the place that he crashed his Blue Bird Boat on Lake Coniston. As I said, we could have spent a week in the Lakes District as there is so much to see and it's absolutely beautiful. Everything is made of stone. There a hundred of miles of stone fences and every house is made of stone. It just blows your minds when you see the beautiful buildings and surrounds.



### **IMPRESSIONS OF THE LAKES DISTRICT**

*If you every come to England make sure you allow at least three days in the Lakes District. Just driving around the lakes is an experience in itself. The villages are quaint and a great place to stop for a coffee or lunch. There are a lot of attractions including Museums and historic towns like Ulverston where Stan Laurel (Laurel and Hardy fame) was born and they have a museum dedicated to them both.*

After three days in the Lakes District we headed further north to the Border town of Carlisle. We stayed at a 400 year old Coach Inn. It wasn't flash but comfortable and the owner was a great bloke who we spent a lot of time with on our first night. We were only about 10 minutes out of Carlisle. The city castle has a fantastic history having been sieged by the Romans, Normans and countless times by the Scots. We spent several hours in the Castle and neighbouring Museum.







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We also visited the Cumberland Pencil Factory where they make Derwent Pencils. That was quite a good insight into how they make the humble pencil. Did a few sorties into Scotland while we were



in Carlise as it's only a few miles to the Border. We visited Gretna Green which is a little village over the border where 16 year olds used to go to get married back in the early 1800's when the legal age for getting married was 18 in England. The local blacksmith used to conduct the ceremony in his blacksmith shop which is still there. We also visited a fort on Hadrians Wall. Some of the wall is still there which is amazing since it was built by the Romans back in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century AD.

### IMPRESSIONS OF THE CARLISE

*Carlise has a fascinating history and the city itself is a lot to offer visitors. The castle is right in the town and the museums are great. There is a great market in town which sells a good variety of goods. There are interesting places not far from the town.*

From Carlise we continued our journey north but this time it was to relax with my relatives in Irvine Scotland. We spent Easter with my cousin Jessie and her husband George. We arrived at their apartment on Good Friday and my Uncle John was also there to greet us. I had not seen any of them since 1976 so it was such an emotional time for me. We talked for hours and it was after midnight before we went to bed. Next day we visited Jessie's mum at her nursing home. I stayed at her and my Uncle George's in 76 so it had been a long time since she had seen me. I think she recognised me when I introduced myself as Jimmy's boy Bill. There were a few tears and she never stopped looking at me the time we were there. That afternoon we visited the home and museum of Robert Burns and found it very interesting. The following day we visited my other Uncle Bobby and his wife Heather. The last time I saw him was in 1961 when he was a sailor on HMS Tiger, a British Cruiser that was visiting Australia. We had a great chat and discussions on a variety of subjects. I really enjoyed the banter between the two of us. Reluctantly, we left Irvine to travel to Inverness. I wished we could have stayed longer as we really enjoyed our time with Jessie and George and they were the best hosts you could find. I'm just glad that I am related to them. I learnt so much about our family history as well when we were there and had an opportunity to meet Jessie's daughters and her Grandson. It was also an important time for Debbie as well as she finally tried 'Black Pudding'. George cooked up some for breakfast one morning and believe it or not, Deb actually liked it. Haggis is next on the agenda before we leave Scotland.





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### IMPRESSIONS OF THE IRVINE

*Being the home of my Dad before he migrated to Australia in 1948, Irvine has always had a place in my heart. The town still retains some of the old shops and houses but a lot have been pulled down and replaced with modern buildings. Regardless of this, it's the people that matter and everyone we met were wonderful and friendly. We felt right at home with my cousin and my Uncles and Aunties and look forward to return in a few years.*

We arrived in Inverness after a lovely drive up the middle of Scotland passing by Loch Lomond and then Loch Ness. The weather had turned for the worst but it wasn't too bad. About 9 degrees and light rain. The next day we headed down past Loch Ness again to Fort Augustus. There is a canal system which runs from the North Sea to the Irish Sea. At Fort Augustus there is a series of locks which allow vessels to be lowered or raised between canals. These canals connect the various Lochs together. We then turned west to go to Plockton. The fishing village of Plockton was used as the town in the TV series Hamish MacBeth and it was one place Debbie always wanted to see. The scenery on the way was amazing. What amazed us was that there was still snow on the mountains.



We left Inverness this morning and are now in Aberdeen.

I will finish off now as I have rattle on again. I will write our next Newsletter once we are in Europe in a couple of weeks.

Love to Everyone,

Bill and Debbie