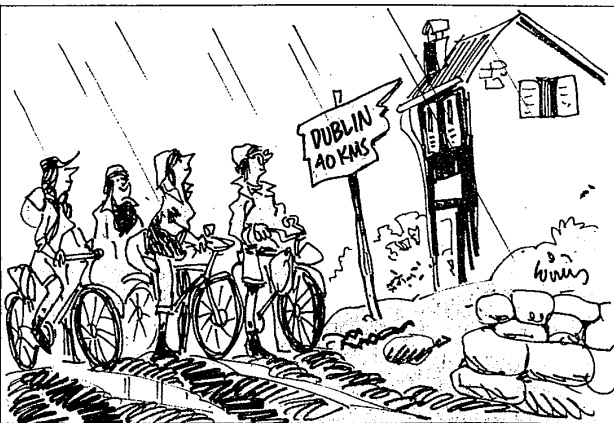


travel



O&E artwork by Cliff Wirth

Sure an' it was a wee bit o' sod they covered two-wheeling in Ireland

By IRIS SANDERSON JONES

Some people pack everything but the kitchen sink when they travel. Others just look like they are taking the kitchen sink, flattened and boxed and dragged across airport floors to the check-in counters.

Chances are the box doesn't contain plumbing but a dismantled bicycle ready for a trip abroad.

Biking abroad is a simple, inexpensive way to see the real world from the slow lane, as two Birmingham mother-daughter teams discovered in Ireland last year.

Frederica (Teddy) Lawrence, 49, and Barbara Van Dusen, 51, were just two typical mothers who knew nothing much about bicycles until they were invited to travel with their college-aged daughters, Diana Lawrence and Katy Van Dusen.

"Our daughters decided that mothers never get a chance to do anything that is really fun," Mrs. Lawrence said. "We had both traveled a bit with our husbands, but never with the freedom and flexibility of the young."

"Our daughters decided it was time that we had a chance to travel as they did. They invited us to Ireland on condition that each of us paid our own way. That meant it was necessarily a low-budget trip."

These Oakland County bicycle travelers are two of many Americans who take their bikes abroad.

"You can rent bikes in Ireland, but they are almost never 10-speed, and that's what we needed to get up and down those hills."

THE TWO MOTHERS didn't even own bicycles, so they bought them and signed up for a bicycle course and an exercise class.

The bicycle course was a winter Cranbrook P.M. offering on bicycle repair and maintenance at Cranbrook Schools in Bloomfield Hills. The class was under the guidance of volunteer teacher Dennis Hayes of the Pine Lake Bike Shop in the Pine Lake Mall in West Bloomfield.

Hayes helped outfit the women with the right bikes and other necessary gear. Both women chose 25-pound bikes, suited to their 5-foot-3-inch heights.

In preparation, they read books about Ireland, wrote to American Youth Hostels (but decided not to join) and picked as many experienced brains as possible about the science of traveling on two wheels abroad.



Barbara Van Dusen and Teddy Lawrence took to the road for a three-week bike tour of Ireland with daughters Katy Van Dusen and Diana Lawrence. The college-aged women decided their mothers should experience the travel freedom and flexibility that accompanies touring by 10-speed. (Photo by Dick Kelley)

"All the airlines we talked to take bicycles aboard," Mrs. Lawrence said. "Some provide boxes, some are satisfied with plastic bags. Aer Lingus (the Irish national airline) takes bikes along with luggage at no extra charge if they are in boxes (available at any bike shop)."

"All airlines want the pedals unscrewed and the handle bars loosened and turned around."

Ireland was in the middle of a mail and phone strike last summer, so the four women landed on the old sod with nothing but a bicycle wrench in their hands. They collected a list of bed-and-breakfast accommodations from the Irish Tourist Board, which has offices in the airport and in all good-sized towns.

The board provides maps marked with geographic configurations like hills and valleys. It warned the four women to go slowly the first few days until they got their wind.

THEY HAD NO itinerary. "We arrived at Shannon airport, took out our trusty wrenches, put together our bicycles right there, asked a few people which way to go, and went."

Their three-week trip took them along the west coast to Sligo, where they rented a car for a three-day tour of Donegal. They took the train from Sligo to Dublin and south into Wicklow, where they stayed another three days before biking back to the airport at Shannon.

What kind of accommodations did

they find along the way?

"All the bed-and-breakfast places had some form of hot water and bath or shower-by-arrangements. All the proprietors were friendly, and all the breakfasts huge."

"All the inns cost between \$6-\$8 a person, including breakfast. We ate picnic lunches. Dinner was usually in as good a restaurant as the area offered and cost about \$8 each, including wine and a tip."

"You can spend lots less. In Dublin and in the castles of Ireland, you can spend much more. Food was excellent."

Round-trip airfare at the time cost them \$400 each. They spent about \$20-\$25 a day "and I'm being generous (with those figures)," said Mrs. Lawrence.

Here are some tips from the Lawrence and Van Dusen trip for anyone considering such a trip to Ireland:

"A rain jacket is real, but not very wet. A rain jacket is enough."

"There's not much petrol (gasoline) and not many cars on country roads. Cities are not much good for bicycles anyway."

"Trains will take bicycles for a charge. Buses say they won't, but if you look forlorn, they give in. Taxis the same."

THE GEAR THEY carried included bicycle saddle bags over the back wheels and small handlebar pouches for wallets, cameras, bike locks and pencils.



travel log

Iris Sanderson Jones

Energy crunch fueling travel industry woes

I recently chaired a program in which public relations executives from the travel industry were asked to name their greatest on-the-job problem. They answered: energy.

The problem was not just the shortage of fuel and its increased price, it was also the response of the press and the government to the energy shortage, and the effect that response had upon travelers.

These cries of anguish came from the airline and hotel industry, from state tourist bureaus and parks, and from amusement sites and restored villages as diverse as Opryland and Greenfield Village.

THE GIST of their complaint was that the press responded to the energy shortage by advising people to stay home. The government responded with legislation that basically had the same effect.

It would be easier to dismiss these complaints if the travel industry were not such an important part of our state and national economy.

Despite this, there is a noticeable difference between our response to a troubled auto industry than to the way we react to a troubled travel industry. I think that different response is based on an instilled puritan ethic and the way it affects our viewpoint about work.

We see the auto industry as solid and respectable. We see travel as play. Play is not only a slightly suspect word in our vocabulary, but it is certainly the first thing we cut in a crunch.

What we don't always see is that travel is also an industry. It affects millions of jobs and provides millions of dollars to the nation's well being. In some areas it is a main source of income. This is true in Hawaii and it is largely true in the Upper Peninsula.

ARE WE JUSTIFIED in using precious energy to travel for recreation? First of all, let's put that in perspective. Less than 3 percent of our energy resources are used nationwide for recreational travel.

Secondly, the Department of Transportation confirms that the real test relates to waste and not to use. A full car is a better use of energy than a half-empty train; that's one of the reasons that Amtrak cut down or eliminated seldom-taken scheduled runs while retaining popular ones.

A single driver in a car may waste energy. A half-empty plane wastes energy. But you are likely to waste more energy by jumping in the car for an unnecessary trip to the shopping center once a week than you are by traveling for recreational purposes in an energy-conscious way.

We should also encourage the development of travel modes and entertainments that don't use a lot of energy. This week, we tell about four local women who traveled around Ireland on their bicycles. In future stories, we will also tell you about putting public transportation to use in your travels.

Some of you are miles ahead of me. You have already explored ways of saving energy while continuing to enjoy travel. Hopefully this means more than the usual suggestions about staying closer to home.

Share your energy-conscious and budget-conscious travel ideas with us. Help us to tell others how to go on exploring the world, without using up all the world's energy resources.

If you have a story idea or a travel suggestion along this line, write to me in care of this newspaper, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, Mich. 48150.

Total luggage per person was 25 pounds. They carried a skirt for dinner, slacks or culottes for riding.

The women traveled 30-35 miles a day but didn't total up the miles ridden. They watched a lot of people go faster, but they could never understand why. The scenery along the west coast was a beautiful world of high cliffs, crashing seas, deserted white beaches and flowers.

Mrs. Lawrence said they "stopped at almost everything we could find. Along the west coast, though, there wasn't much entertainment."

They found people of all ages on the bicycle route, including elderly couples on regular and even tandem bikes. The only warning the travelers have is about the friendly Irish folk who will offer to help you fix your bike.

"Everyone in Ireland thinks he knows all about bicycles, but none of them know anything at all about 10-speeds! They all want to be helpful, but try to avoid their help if you can."

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Taking the Artrain

The Michigan Artrain will be making tracks to a dozen communities statewide from April through July.

A snazzy 415 feet long, the train includes three gallery cars, a generator car, studio car with art in progress, a turn of the century caboose.

On Artrain '80, there will be the works of such masters as Picasso, Matisse and Chagall, a photo documentation of major Michigan public sculptures, including Nevelson and Calder pieces, and a post-World War II exhibit gathered from Michigan museums and private collections.

ONE OF ARTRAIN's most popular features is the studio car. It's equipped with work areas, potters wheel, kiln and more to accommodate resident

artists who travel with the train, demonstrating and chatting with visitors about their work.

Local artists are also invited to participate. Artists in residence may range from potters and painters to taxidermists and violin makers.

Local committees have devoted a considerable number of hours getting ready for the train's arrival and at most stops, arts fairs and other special activities have been planned in conjunction with Artrain's stop.

THERE IS no admission charge to this far-from-ordinary approach to getting people together with the art and artists of the past and the future. Since its opening in 1971, Artrain has visited more than 100 Michigan communities, attracted more than 2 million visitors, and been on national tour to 19 states in the Rocky Mountain states, upper Midwest and southeast regions. Plans are under way for another out-of-state tour in 1981.



Albion April 5-11
Tucumseh April 16-21
Fenton April 26 to May 1

Bangor May 7-11
Grandville May 14-19
Reed City May 23-28
Alpena June 3-8
Bozette City June 12-16
Ludington June 20-25
Norton Shores June 29 to July 6
Detroit July 12-20
Mackinaw City July 25-29