

# Breakfast with capital B&B in Scotland

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By Edith Dunbar  
special writer

I watched the dark Italian youth, his black hair in short ringlets, pour hot tea on his corn flakes.

I glanced at my husband Harry; his attention was on the tea splash, not on the boy. The young man, who was perhaps 20, passed the teapot to his friend, another young Italian whose long hair was twisted into a pug on the top of his head. He too, proceeded to flood his cereal with tea.

The four of us were seated in the dining room of a farm house near Bettyhill in the hilly, desolate portion of Scotland's northern Sutherland.

land County. While peat burned in the fireplace keeping the room warm but musty smelling on a mid-August day, we were participating in the second B of B&B, bed and breakfast.

Pointing to their cereal bowls, I said, "Is that how it's done in Italy?"

The young man with the pug stared, apparently not understanding English. The curly haired one tried, "The milk . . . it is too . . ." He paused; the right word didn't come.

We all looked at one another. "Parlez-vous Français?" my husband asked. No, they didn't speak French.

For many years we have eaten our corn flakes. Then suddenly it came to me. Italian. Spanish. Kissing cousins, right? "Caliente!" I shouted. "You like your milk caliente. Hot."

"Sl. sl." the travelers said. For Pete's sake, I thought, they'd rather soak corn flakes in hot tea

## reader's report

than cold milk.

The breakthrough in communication prompted the curly haired one to try again. "The breakfasts . . . the breakfasts . . ." He stopped, unable to go on.

Harry and I leaned toward him, waiting.

He tried again and succeeded. "They . . . they . . . overwhelm us."

"Sl. sl." Harry and I responded. Now we were simpatico. "They overwhelm us too," Harry said.

We were into our second week of B&B in Scotland, and we knew the breakfast routine well. After we helped ourselves to cereal (usually a variety was stored in huge glass jars on a sideboard) the hostess came in to ask whether we wanted tea or coffee.

Because we had learned that Scottish coffee is too strong for our taste, we always ordered tea. After the tea was brought in, the hostess returned with dinner plates covered with fat sausages, bacon (pot in strips but in wide pieces), flowing fried eggs, fried potatoes and sometimes mushrooms.

In addition to the fried foods, there were ample slices of toast, cut in half and cold, and orange marmalade. Fruit was often missing, although sometimes wee glasses of

orange juice were at our place settings when we arrived at the table. (In London at a bed and breakfast, we were given a choice between cereal and fruit juice. Cousin Iain enjoyed both.)

When our Bettyhill hostess brought in eggs, bacon and sausage, the Italians sighed. I said, "We have a saying. When in Rome, do as the Romans do." They didn't understand. "Clue," they said and left.

From that day on, Harry always brought out his hostess the evening before that he didn't want eggs for breakfast. He'd found it impossible to eat only the cholesterol-free white bordering on the now-mildewed. He was unable to explain to me why he became so distraught.

When we arrived in Irvine on the west coast in Ayrshire where Harry has relatives, I became confused. I discovered that Cousin Maud feasts

on only bran flakes and orange juice for breakfast. Cousin Iain enjoys wheat germ every other morning and two pieces of toast and stewed fruit for his mid-morning meals. Cousin Iain eats either blueberry or strawberry yogurt. Nothing else. No one wanted eggs or bacon or sausage, although they offered to prepare them for us.

Iain insisted that no one she knows has cereal, sausage, bacon, eggs, tomato slices, mushrooms, and toast for the first meal of the day. "Why it takes too long to eat all that," she said. "We'd be eating right into morning tea."

Are big Scottish breakfasts at B&Bs the result of a misunderstanding? Perhaps few foreigners, except for Romans, consume them to please their hosts. The Romans attempt to carry on as if they were in Rome.



One of the many entries in the "Milk Carton Boat Regatta" at the cherry festival in Traverse City.

## Take your pick: cherry mustard, dressing, jelly or barbecue sauce

**Continued from back page**

the fruits have given way to the nuts when you read that "competition will include both individual and teams. Corporate teams are encouraged to register early for this hilarious event."

Everybody is cheered out by the final Saturday night, when the Milk Carton Regatta takes place on the beach in downtown Traverse City. Sailors in outrageous costumes sail

For more information on the festi-

"creative" boats made of milk cartons, they come around the point and usually sink slowly beneath the water to the cheers of the crowd.

One of the themes of the 1991 National Cherry Festival is handi-cap-awareness. There will be Fun and Games for Special Kids 9 a.m.

to 1 p.m. July 13. The Wheelchair Golden Miles joins other popular events July 13.

For more information on the festi-

val contact them at P.O. Box 141, Traverse City 49685 or call (616) 947-4230. You can get general area information by calling the Grand Traverse Convention and Visitors Bureau toll-free at (800) TRAVERS.

If you would like recipes from the Cherry Marketing Institute, write to CMI at Suite 200, 2200 University Park Drive, Okemos 48861.

Though Danes are fiercely proud of their fighting Viking heritage, they have, over the centuries, married like good wins. Norwegians call them "viking" (vendel), because they're so darn nice. Their great friends are even day-old friends, with affectionate hugs and smother rosy-cheeked children with kisses.

## Fun, fireworks heat up on summer nights

**Continued from back page**

On the Fourth, an evening program will feature a 38-gun salute and patriotic music played with whistles, fiddles, bugles, bagpipes and drums. Traditional picnic fare will be served at the Fort's Tea Room, where seats under umbrellas are perfect for watching the twilight scurry of people, bicycles, horses and carriages on village streets below.

Just before the explosion of island fireworks, fort soldiers will give a burst of cannon fire. High on the limestone cliffs of Mackinac Island,

Fort Mackinac offers everybody "the best seat in the house" to watch the colorful display.

While visiting the forts at the Straits of Mackinac, save time to walk the trails and gaze at the wildflowers at Mill Creek southeast of Mackinac City and Mackinac Island State Park on Mackinac Island.

### ROCKET'S RED GLARE

The state parks are just part of a 20-plus-island fireworks display that will brighten the Straits of Mackinac over the Fourth of July weekend. For more details call the Straits Area Tourism Council toll-

free at (800) 678-1119.  
**PLAY IT SAFE**

According to AAA Michigan, more than 100 communities are hosting professional fireworks displays over the July 4 holiday this year to help spectators celebrate safely.

But the fun doesn't end then, with other hamlets, villages and cities across the state planning fireworks celebrations for various events throughout the Labor Day weekend in September.

While most displays will be near parks or parks to allow ample room for viewing, your best bet is to arrive early, says AAA Michigan Club Services Director Peter Erickson.

Ericsson suggests packing a picnic and games for the kids while waiting for the fireworks to start. Remember to bring chairs and don't forget blankets to ward off an evening chill. Stroller and wagons are the ticket to help ease the walk after the show when youngsters are tired.

Another AAA Michigan travel tip: Wait until crowds disperse to make your way home. You can anticipate as much as a hour's wait at some of the state's larger shows.

Another prime spot for fireworks viewing is on the water, and boaters are urged to arrive early, too. Check with your Coast Guard on local safety zone restrictions, so you're not asked to move after anchoring.

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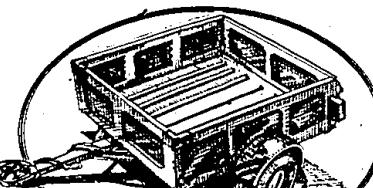
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