

Bruce C. Murphy

From: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
To: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
Sent: October 5, 2007 8:15 PM
Subject: Duffy's Affair With Paris



Whoops, wrong Paris.

Sorry

*Here's Duffy's latest report from the other Paris.
 Sounds like they're having a great time already,
 and 3 more weeks to go. Nobody can fill the days
 like the Duffys.
 jcb*

Been here going on four days and just touched on some touristy high spots,
 and then just a small percentage of those. This place is some friggen big.



But the trip began at Halifax Airport---
 I think we named it after some 1960's politician-----who lost.



Here we were, sitting around, waiting to go through security,
 wondering how to start my journal.

EUREKA!!!!!!

A dipsy, buxom, blond has started to dismantle her suitcase,
 releasing the expansion feature, taking stuff out, putting stuff back,
 re-arrange, do it again-----finally kneeling on the top to close it----
 now if she had a bra expander. She finally contained her clothes

for the trip--but not her other accoutrements.

She turned an hour wait into an entertaining evening.

The entertainment continued after we boarded the plane, finding a dipsy brunette in my seat, number A---she belonged in F on the other side of the plane, she had to crawl over the existing 4 people who were not impressed.

I'm travelling with a ship of fools.

Arriving in Charles DeGaulle Airport (at least named after a winner)



I was immediately impressed again with European efficiency. Train,

subway, (all for 8 euros), and a 5 minute walk got us to our Hotel near the Eiffel Tower--a one hour plus taxi ride in a quick 4(minutes.

We checked in, had a couple hours sleep, and have not stopped moving.

Wednesday night we walked the 4 kms to the Tower, stood in a one hour line, and then took the elevators to the top---fantastic views of Paris--stayed a couple hours until 10:00pm--very romantic.



Walked home, stopping for Chinese snack on the way.

The Metro is fantastic--rubber wheels like Montreal---very quiet, come every 3 minutes and go everywhere---all for £1.00. I am now an expert and can get around Paris without a map-----only got the wrong one 3 times.

Thursday morning we spent ' hours in the Louvre Museum, probably saw 20 percent, but saw that well--I guess we have to come back more times. The Mona Lisa is very, very, small---11 x 18-- but must be impressive since there were a lot of people looking at her.



Thursday afternoon, 3 hours in Notre Dame---
not a hunch back to be seen----



but lots of beautiful young ladies--
it is true what they say---style

everywhere.



Very impressive.

Had supper at the Great Canadian Pub, waitress from Quebec who went to Dal, and whose boyfriend (Dal player but that is his problem) is playing pro over here.



Thursday night, walked, subway, more walking up the Champs Elysees and up the Arc de Triumph.

Again walking home at 10:00pm---vewy, vewy, tired.

Lights out, Nancy blew a fuse---literally---put the whole Hotel out, we have a short in a lamp, electrician fixed in an hour, good night.

Friday morning, Nancy forgot we had a bad light, flash----the whole Hotel out again.

Off we went to check out another Basilica, Sacre-Coeur,



a lot more walking and proving, again, that I was not yet perfect with the Metro--where's my map!

Back to the Hotel to meet Ken and Tracey, Nancy's cousin from Rye, England. More walking, and a 3 hour trip on the Seine River,



Seeing all the stuff again from the water, walked back for a nap, while I went for a 5 km run.

Off to supper and into bed---it is 11:00 again,
I'm learning new habits.

Thanks to Jerome for adding pictures to the text because
I have not figured out how to do it yet---
That being said I have taken 180 pics so far.

Tomorrow it is off to Vienna, check in later.



Au Reservoir

Sg

In the afy

Bruce C. Murphy

From: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
To: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
Sent: October 7, 2007 3:44 PM
Subject: Duffy's in Vienna

*Another instalment from the Duffy's, now in Vienna.
 Don't you wish you were there too.*

jcb



I actually can get by pretty well with French, as with Spanish
 -----but now in Vienna, this German/Austrian is impossible.
 Everytime some one says something I think they are angry.



But at least they use words that at least look like words---even though I'm not sure what they mean.

I was just looking at my Romanian cheat list and I'm afraid I'm in for a lot of sign language.

Hey, very excited:

-picked up a couple tickets yesterday to the Opera 'Tosca' for when we get
 back to Paris in a couple weeks. Opera Bastille!

9 euros, can you spell 'nose bleed' section?



-Also going to Mozart concert tomorrow.



-----I'm not sure whether to wear my Brooks or New

Balance running shoes.

They will look out of place with all the Italian leather jobbies, but then again, the Italian leather jobbies would look funny with my Misty Mountain hiking shorts.

Cheerios, eh!

Hope you are having as good weather as here---shorts and T shirts
--then again that's all I have--can't find a Frenchy's anywhere.

Bruce C. Murphy

From: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
To: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
Sent: October 9, 2007 5:56 PM
Subject: Duffys head out east of Vienna

*Is it just me or does that little guy on the bottom right look somewhat familiar?
 Nah, can't be.*



*Anyway, here's the
 latest word from
 the Duffys in
 Vienna:*

jcb

Off to Romania, who knows what access will be.

Arrivaderci



Bruce C. Murphy

From: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
To: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
Sent: October 11, 2007 3:33 PM
Subject: The Duffys Roaming Through Romania

*Here's Mr. Duffy's latest submission.
 They're still having an amazing experience with more yet to come.*

jcb

Tuesday (Oct. 9) night's arrival in Bucharest was not a pleasant experience, but I will go back a bit first since I'm not sure when I stopped typing.

Vienna is just full of eye candies every turn you make
 -- the architecture is very impressive even to the unwashed like me.
 Really enjoyed a Mozart/Strauss concert but I have a feeling
 I am typing the for the 2nd time.



Bucharest:



From the time we taxied up the runway to the terminal I did not have a good feeling.
 Lots of buildings, lots of planes, but mostly in the dark -- I knew this was Bucharest's

2nd airport for the NO FRILLS airlines but.....



We then turned toward the main building and it wasn't toooooo bad?
 Into the arrival department and there was only one washroom with one urinal,



then into the line to stamp the Passports, etc.

Did we have reservations -- showed him the voucher -- he never heard of it
 and besides, he couldn't speak English, I'm sure he didn't read it.

BY THE WAY, IT IS 10:45PM

Lots of phone calls, I was starting to wonder when, and how,
 I pulled a couple bucks out of my pocket--then again that could
 maybe not be a good thing.
 Finally they stamped us in and away we went--about 150 meters.

It was friggen dark out there, the bus terminal was away over there,
 and I knew it was only 2 kms to the Hotel and taxis are cheap in Romania.
 When I asked how much, they didn't recognize the Hotel, the street,
 even when I told them. They talked English and then, not a word.



First go around was 50 euros (that's \$150, eh! Beat them down...

When I saw 'them' I was going to one, then the other---I was raising my voice,
 basically calling them crooks, etc.. As I became more pissed I said
 I was going to walk. Nancy wasn't impressed with this. Finally got a quieter guy,
 gave him 20 euros and he drove us the 10 minutes to the Hotel
 ----which turned out to be extremely deluxe with old style.

The closing comment on the Taxi story is, we got a bus from the Hotel
 to downtown Bucharest the next morning, it passed the airport on the way,
 and continued for another 30 minutes -- the cost 1 RON, or about 30 cents.

Bucharest is a grim place--extremely big, 2,500,00 people and not a lot
 of high rises--covers a lot of ground, dirty, falling apart, sidewalks all dug up etc.



This was outside, again inside out Hotel was nicer than most places I have been in. All for 60 euros.

We hoofed it all over Bucharest, saw all the biggies from the revolution --just think, it was only 1989 when the tanks rolled all over the people at University Square



Really scary feeling just sitting

there--you could see the numerous bullet holes in the brick building all around the Square--and picture this area as 500 meter by 300 meters.

Glad to pick up our car this morning (Thursday) and get out of Bucharest into the countryand loving it.



We are now in Brasov in the middle of Carpathian mountain range



It's

going for a hike tomorrow and just hang out in the Piatas.

gorgeous,

Probably hang out a couple days here doing day trips in Transylvania,



then figure out how to best spend the next 5 days before we have to go back to Vienna on the 20th.

Cheers, love and kisses to all

Bruce C. Murphy

From: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
To: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
Sent: October 15, 2007 7:58 PM
Subject: The Duffy Report

First of all, I want to report that we have another couple of Gonzos currently on the other side of the pond. Bernie and Wendy Levy left last Friday for a two-week vacation in Greece. And from all reports, Bernie is settling into a relaxing mode - must be, he only called me once at the office today (from Athens) to discuss a work-related issue (I was expecting at least 3 calls from him).



Hopefully they'll find an e-mail station along the way so they can send us a trip report.

jcb

And now, HEEEEEEEEEEERE's DUFFY

Hey folks:

What do you think of the pictures
 Jerome is adding to my words?



*(And they said I'd never
 amount to nothing. - jcb)*

Thanks--probably better than the over 500 ones I have taken
 --just can't take the time to figure out how to transport (really edit) them.
 Got to get better at the BLOG but different computers allow access in
 different ways--those darn 'Java 'cookies', etc.

Please send any comments or questions or information of what is going on
 --we are having excellent email access--not so good phone.

duffy.bruce@ns.sympatico.ca

Anyway, time for an update from Thursday leaving Bucharest and onward
 to Sapanta where we will be today, the northernmost part of Romania.
 We will driving by the Hungary/Ukraine borders--maybe 'stepping' across.



Google Sapanta and Sighetul Marmatiei for where we are tonight.





Oct. 11,--Picked up car and were out of Bucharest in 1/2 hour, cruising north to a medieval pearl of Romania, Brasov (called here the new Prague), a 1200ad Saxon town, where we stayed for 3 nights.



and one of the top ski areas of the Carpathians.

On the way we stopped at Sinaia, vacation home of Charles I,



So I don't have to repeat it in all future tales, the country side has been amazingly beautiful,

mountain passes, valleys and plateaus thick with vegetation, farms, and forest.

For the 3 days in Brasov we:

-hung out at the 2 piatas, people watching and picture taking--beautiful architecture everywhere.



-Stayed at a pensiune, what we would call a B&B. A 10 minute walk to the square, down a VERY steep cobblestone path--which we drove the car up.

Also a short cut through dog city at midnight.

-Day trip to:

-Rasnov--a 1300ad medieaval, walled, hill top, town
 ---excellent, felt like I was back in the old days.



For the Monty fans, I could picture the Knight at the wall calling to the attackers below--"I fart in thy general direction."



-Bran, and Bran Castle made famous by Bram Stoker's Dracula
 --Disney World--too bad since it would be a great, spooky, place, with

out all the 'carnival stuff--and to top it off the truth is that Vlad probably never set foot in the place.



This was our only foggy/wet day so far, so it fit the image of the place
 --great pics though difficult to keep the tourists out of the lens.

-Took cable car to top of mountain overlooking city--not real good but nice view.

-Note--500ml beer here costs \$1.25 Canadian.

-Saint Nicholas and the Black Church--you must google them, eh!



-Transylvania Restaurant--best meal yet...again..sour cabbage soup, stroganoff, cabbage rolls--all meals have been great.

TOPPED the 3 days off with an amazing evening at the Opera, Offenbach's 'The Tales of Hoffmann.' The Opera House is an old building, built just for this type of stuff--fairly small--400?--but with the box seats and everything. This was as good a production as I have seen in the theatre anywhere
 --International touring cast--3 Canadians--with the local people added, the cast was 40 on stage and a 14 person orchestra.

I can hardly wait for our trip into Paris for 'Tosca' at the Opera Bastille.

I'm not supposed to mention price, Murphy gets upset, but I have top for this--senior citizen--they call them retired here --cost 5 RON, which equates to around \$2.00 Canadian.

Sunday, October 14th--we are off, heading basically north.

Spent a couple hours (each) at the medieval towns of Sighisoara and Sibiu.



The first was very enjoyable, again made me 'almost' think I was there, the second--although Nancy loved it, made me think of Historic Properties

--which I really don't like very much--reminds me of plastic.

We spent last night in a typical suburban town--Aiud--can you think Truro or Bridgewater, found a little Hotel, spent an enjoyable night.



Well, it is time to head off--as I noted, it has been very successful in finding email access so please send us a note. I will try to call some

people as time--and the touchy phone system, allows.

Couple quick snappers:

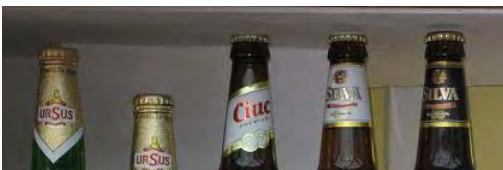
-They really don't have their own music here--mostly older American stuff

-can you remember 'Brown girl in the ring-tra-la-la-de-da' and other Boney M classics--I'm sure off in the gypsy camps things are different but we are not there-----yet.

-sort of same with food--lots of Hungarian, Italian, some Chinese. That being said, we have not had a meal we didn't enjoy. And it is nice to have 'normal' breakfasts of bacon, eggs, juice, and coffee--yes, real coffee. I still can't get to enjoy that latté, cappuccino, etc..., stuff.

-We can not get over all the agriculture, for some reason we thought that area would be bleak--they eat GOOD food. Lots of greens, salads, and veggies.

-they match their beer well with the bottles, only once did my glass(Turbog) not match the brand(Ursus)



Hey, I've had 4 runs so far, at least one in each country
---I'm still slow though.



Bruce C. Murphy

From: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
To: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
Sent: October 17, 2007 10:16 PM
Subject: Cabbage Rolls, Pork.....and Palinca

Another submission from the Duffys.....



First, an apology to the Romanian people when I mentioned I haven't noticed what I would call a National food or music. I think that was because I had, so far, been in the 'bigger' more

'worldly' areas that were trying to mimic the West in their growth from the restrictions of Communism. The revolution was less than 20 years ago, which is well mentioned as many of their piatas and streets are named 22 December, 1989.



The last 4 days and I have been hearing lots of stuff that is certainly regional

and the foods, though not like Italy has pizza or China has egg rolls, it certainly is recognizable. I have been stuffing myself with cabbage, legume, and pork based goodies:



And don't forget,
a 500ml beer is
only \$1.20 Canadian.



SUPPER WITH THE CHEF

Monday, we travelled north and were first into rolling hills, starting to remind me of pictures of the Steppes with guys flying around on horses, beating on people. Then mountains, and gorges, levelling out to more peasant farming.



went back from there.

It was interesting how the houses were all right on the road, I mean 5 feet from the traffic, and the land just



A small town of 1,000 houses took a long time to get through because you had to drive by 500 houses, all at 50-km per hour. Travelling 100-km takes at least 1 1/2 hours with all the twisting, turning, slowing down for towns, which sometimes seems continuous, AND for the many wagons on the road - everyone has a horse and wagon and walks right down the middle of the Highway. And they have the right of way - not to mention the cows or sheep that may decide to sun themselves.



We arrived in Baia

Sprie late afternoon, checked into a local Pensuine.



Maria immediately tried to ply me with a drink of Pălincă, local 52% hooch, which I diplomatically refused....this time.



Pálinka is a traditional type of brandy that is produced in Hungary and Romania (mostly in Transylvania, a region of Romania; in Romanian it is spelled pălincă). The origin of the word is Slavic stemming from the word páliť (in Slovak) which means to distill. Pálinka is almost always drunk in shot glasses straight up.

It is usually made from plums (Hungarian: "szilva", Romanian: "prune"), apples (Hungarian: "alma", Romanian: "mere"), pears (Hungarian: "körte", Romanian: "pere"), apricots (Hungarian: "barack", Romanian: "caise") and sometimes cherries (Hungarian: "cseresznye", Romanian: "cireșe"), and is double-distilled. These potent home-made, "házi (house) pálinkák", are not commercially available, but are none-the-less very common. In Hungary, one can ferment a batch of fruit mash at home, then take the fermented mash to distiller, who can then legally distill the mash to the desired strength, although home distillers exist.

After a shower we went down and asked where we should go for supper. Maria and Octavio, her husband, looked hurt....immediately brought out the bottle of Pălincă, and said they were going to serve us a "traditional dinner". We really had no choice.

Out came the food, the bottle of Pălincă, and it was set before us. They sat down with us. We were at the Captain's Table.

Octavio took me out and showed me his new furnace, then out back to show the wood he just got for the winter. Pălincă always at the ready.

We finished the night with Octavio going over maps showing where we had to go - really trying to please us. Finally got off to be bed around 10:00pm

The next morning we came down for breakfast....the first thing that came out was the Pălincă. We declined.

Then came traditional breakfast, 6 wieners each and 2 cabbage roll (last night was chicken and pork in gravy). I DON'T THINK THEY EAT VEGETABLES OR INTAKE ANY ROUGHAGE HERE.

To top the start off, he DROVE his vehicle into the mountains with us a few kms to ensure we got on the right track.

THE TEMPLE OF DOOM

As noted, Octavio got us on the backroads of Romania and we have stayed there ever sinceway past our comfortable point at times, but getting by. Narrow roads, switch backing up a mountain, and back down, peasant farms all over the place. We are in a day dream. The scenery is stunning as we toured Sisesti, Surdesti, Căvnic, Budești, and Olina before we found a main road again.



Nancy called the people, and their

land we were passing through, "THE LAST THRIVING PEASANT CULTURE IN EUROPE." They were poor in our eyes but they were not wanting. They were not unhappy and they were very healthy. A simple life.

We were onto Sapanto and the painted graves - worth goggling to read about them.

Dropped into a couple Monasteries and then onto Borsa for the night.



Do you remember the scene in Indian Jones and the Temple of Doom when Indie's girlfriend drank the Cossack under the table? Well, we are there tonight folks.

First we are only 4 kms from the Ukraine, the building

we are in is 4 stories high from the outside. Inside it has maybe 7 internal levels, lots of steps, lots of doors, lots of halls, and lots of landings, animal skins all over the place, including our beds.

When we came down for supper, we had to 'crawl' across 3 tables of a large bunch of guys playing cards, smoking, drinking, carousing, etc.- ya gotta love it.

Also it's not usual to see the waitress standing at the bar smoking. Everyone smokes here.

The owner, who played waitress for us, would not take our order but just said she will do something special (visions ran through my brain, but she meant supper). She brought out a platter of grilled chicken, veggies, and mushrooms, AND OF COURSE Pălincă.

Time to go to bed, it is really now Wednesday night but I am too tired to write up today's adventures which were mainly in the mountain passes (stunning), Google Prislop Pass, most remote area of Romania



and also touring the Bucovina Monasteries.



get a bit homesick, but must push on.

I hear rumours of transit strike in France. That's bad news as Mini Bruce would say.

Bruce & Nancy

Bruce C. Murphy

From: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
To: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
Sent: October 18, 2007 2:00 PM
Subject: Mountains, Monasteries, and Maintaining Sanity



Our most recent Duffy Report, probably our last one until they arrive back in Vienna.

jcb

Wednesday, October 17th, found us wending (winding) our way over the Prislop Pass, the pass itself at 5,000 feet. This is the joining highway between the Maramures and Moldova--absolutely stunning, can not be described with words.



switchback through various 'painted' Monasteries, covered in frescoes. described in previous email - got kicked out of one because wearing shorts.



Both an adventurous day, not really knowing what was next. As mentioned earlier, we are on the very edge of being uncomfortable, but having a great time, and also a relaxing day. Very meditating to lay back at the Monasteries and do 'NOTHING' but dream.

Into Suceava and instant dreary 1960's city that has not changed. Still like what it must have been like to be in a communist country back then, except you can freely move. Industrial city, dirty, nuclear plant, dust, grim.



Our Hotel, the Bucovina, an 11 story BLOB of cement, square, with no decor, a mirror on one wall, etc. Bedding and blankets, heavy, worn, but warm. What ever will give the most for the least money. It must have been a fun time, eh! We went through a couple rooms before we were satisfied. AND WE SATISFY EASILY.

The elevator drops 4 inches everytime you step in, very disconcerting.

We have made the turn from the North West corner of Romania and are heading back to Brasov for Friday night (Tonight, Thursday??). Off to Bucharest and Vienna Saturday.

The next 2 days are unknown since they are not in our 'book' so imagine maybe pretty docile?

Time will only tell.

Cheers
Bruce & Nancy



Bruce C. Murphy

From: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
To: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
Sent: October 22, 2007 7:12 PM
Subject: Onto the Valley of La Chateaus

We hear from Bruce & Nancy again, still enjoying wonderful experiences every day. They'll be back home this coming week-end.

jcb

Hey, I'm finally back. It's Monday morning (October 22) and we are in Vienna again, getting ready to spend our last day here before flying out to France tonight, and 5 days in the Loire Valley.

But it's catch up time :

Thursday, October 18th

We have finally 'made the turn' in North East Romania (Suceava) and are heading back toward Brasov.



We spent most of the day driving through fields, pastures, steppes, and gardens, visiting 5 monasteries along the way, Lunch (Peatre Neamt) was sort of like Monty Python's 'cheese' skit, a large menu, but only

a couple items available.



Tripe soup was one of them. Nancy vetoed. Our bread reminded me of the Super Store Hamburg buns. They actually may have made the trip from Bedford - on our plane 2 weeks ago. Not a memorable meal,

at least not one I hope to remember.

WOW and double WOW.

All of a sudden we were going through---up, up, up,--Pangarat Pass, which turned out to be very nerve wrecking, 15kms of hairpin turns, most at 10-12%, cutting through the vertical rock, sometimes the side(s)

of the car almost touching the rock, sometime looking straight down.



Then, a tourist area, right on the mountain side--Laku Rosu (Red Lake), area called Gyilkosto -- 5 Star. Can you imagine Lake Louise and multiply by at least two.



Supper was WOW again--this is a day I will remember. I went for a 5km, Mount Washington, training run, actually if I go slow enough I like these uphill,

no stress on the knees.

Nancy noted this may have been the PERFECT DAY, because she found the monasteries today very 'meditative' and real, Dirt roads, single tract walk into the walled areas, geese swimming in the brook. Very Monistic so to say.



Friday, October 19th--Happy birthday to the Birder.

A great breakfast, included---I've probably never been at a 5 Star - kind of like it.

Contrary to my belief, we were not at the summit, the road switched back and forth for another 10 kms though not as exciting as yesterday. Down the other side in BIG swooping switches, continuing through valleys, fields of farming, grazing, cutting, planting, and burning. I think there are more prairie land here than Sask. and Manitoba.

Arrived in Brasov to our same B&B. It was now raining - first of the trip. We packed our gear for tomorrow's flight to Vienna, and went down to the square to just schmooze and have supper at the Transylvania Restaurant - highly recommend.

Saturday, October 20th

It looks like I am mathematically challenged. Is there anyone else out there that would look at 2200 hours and read 8:00pm? Take those 2 hours, add an extra hour we left Brasov early because of anticipated 'snow' over the mountains of Sinia, the normal 3 hour drive, normal 'possible' Bucharest traffic hassles, and a fudge factor----
HERE WE ARE SITTING IN A '0' STAR AIRPORT FOR A 10:00pm FLIGHT AT 3:00 IN THE AFTERNOON.

Taking the above into consideration, our hope for a pleasant day took another drop, when a local scam artist, smelling like he was wearing Gordon's running gear he stole out of the TUNS locker, sat down next to me and said the magical words---'Do you speak English?'

At least he was entertainment for the first hour but that wore thin. But I digress within a digression - our good byes at Brasov was filled with hugging Semone (what a honey), and the drive to Brasov turned out to be delightful - valleys of hardwood turning colours, and lots of prairies---as far as you can imagine.

Sky Europe is a no frills airline but very efficient, on time, etc. and great prices - can you say \$39.00 for a flight Bucharest to Vienna?



Arrived at the ETAP--great Hotels for around 50 Euros all over Europe--and into bed by midnight--long Day

Sunday, October 21st

Finally got English CNN, finally found an English paper--the Herald. I understand the Yankees are gone and the Red Sox will soon be gone. Cleveland should be a big draw, eh! I have no scores from the NFL, MLB, or the NHL, and I really do not care. Spent the day wondering around downtown Vienna with no plans, just walked, got lost, found ourselves again.

Highlights:

Greek Church



Beethoven Pub, and Hoher Market, to find we were still lost. Had a great day. Buskers, couple coffee breaks to Pee and keep warm.



We have returned to FALL weather. It is now 5 degrees and I am not in shorts anymore.

Went online and made reservations for most of our next 5 days in France. Watched some TV, good to see Wolf again. Out to the Ka-Ko restaurant near our Hotel, local favourite place, for cabbage soup and pork and sauerkraut -did not go over well on my system - can you spell Imodium - enough said.

Tomorrow, a walk about until noon in St. Stephens Platz,



and then off to the airport for a late afternoon flight to Orly South, Paris,

come home, EXCEPT, she is so excited about the Chateaus and the trip into Paris next Thursday and the Opera.

I have no idea what access will be over the next week, but there sure doesn't seem to be a shortage of ATMs or Internet Cafes.

Drum Bun to all

Bruce and Nancy

pick up our car, and on to the Loire Valley. Nancy said she is ready to

Bruce C. Murphy

From: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
To: "Jerome Bruhm" <j.bruhm@ns.sympatico.ca>
Sent: October 26, 2007 12:39 PM
Subject: Killing Time in France

Another report from Les Duffy. They'll be home tomorrow night. Will they be able to handle Windsor Junction after all of what they've seen during the past 26 days?

jcb

Hey, howse she goin', eh?

It's Friday afternoon and we are in a little town (Beauvais), an hour north of Paris.



It is our last day and we are just basically just hanging out in the 'square', just finished eating a kabob and fries.

That being said, the last 4 days have been busy and we are enjoying this doing nothing.



We arrived back in France (Orly Sud Airport) 10:30pm Monday night, picked up our car, and immediately headed towards Paris for our Hotel. An hour later, after doing some screaming

and yelling, we found it. We were only

(minutes from the Airport, but couldn't get off the super highway.

Paris is neat at night. "é&èç-("



Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday were pretty much mirror images of each other, spent cruising the Loire Valley, 'Chateau Bagging.'
Note: Again we were blessed with 3 sunny, magical, days.

Chambord



Massive property, 32-km stone wall around it, a ridiculous combination of chimney pots, towers, etc.. There must have

been 25-30.

Blois



Series of buildings in the old town overlooking the river.
REALLY picturesque.

Chaumont-sur-Loire



Gorgeous from the outside, wonderful garden--
cold inside.

Not sure they didn't get the furnishings from

Cliff Matthews?

Amboise



In the town we stayed for the 2 nights, and
the only one we really

didn't see that much or get pictures of---go figure! The town itself,
old medieval city, was stunning.

Saumur



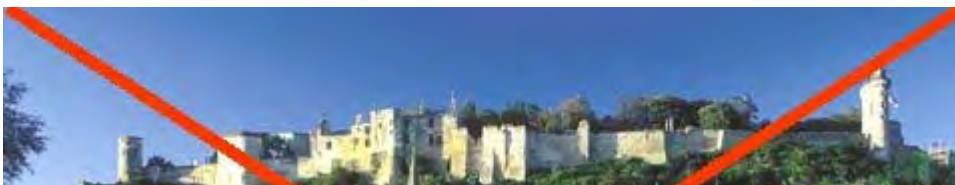
On top of a hill overlooking the old city---absolutely stunning--may have been the best yet, except we couldn't find the car. THIS IS NOT FUNNY IN A MEDIEVAL CITY--you may not find it again. It took an hour.

Fontevraud



This time we got lost IN THE CAR--not as serious, even though we were lost just as long. Nancy went into the Abbey while I just wondered around town in the sun.

Chinon



Disaster! Tried to find it, never did, couldn't find our way onward, had to back track an hour. This was not a good day.

Rochecorbon



The troglodyte caves/ houses were amazing, built right into the sandstone. Some were just windows in

the cliff---really neat.

Now Thursday around noon, we headed back to Paris for our night at the Opera.



Again couldn't get off the free way where we wanted to, again ended up IN Paris, did a turn around and found our Hotel.

This would not have been too bad, except it was the same Hotel, the same route, and in daylight.

The Opera was just a fantastic night and a great way to close out the adventure. Took the Metro one more time--I love Underground systems--30 minutes direct to the Opera Bastille. Absolutely gorgeous theatre, built only a few years ago so doesn't have that OLD charm, but is more modern. We were in the nose bleed section, but had great seats---we were literally looking straight DOWN onto the Orchestra Pit. Not the best angle but we were there.



Remember, when I bought these tickets over two weeks ago, there were only 9 seats left. I estimated the place sat over 3,000. TOSCA is a classic, I was surprised I didn't know the music that well like others. That being said it was all good--the Soprano and Tenor, being of the best in the world, were obviously very competent. The production was outstanding, their stage would be " times the size of Rebecca, and mucho higher. Some statistics: There were 78 persons in the orchestra and I counted at one time, over 100 on stage, even thought the majority of the Opera was the tenor and the Soprano

See you next week.

Bruce & Nancy