

JAN AND DENNIS FRIES

2014 TRIP TO IRELAND

We went with another couple that we travel with a lot, we had a great time. This was our first trip to Ireland and it was an experience. The worst part of course was the flight over, especially as we flew over Ireland and; landed in Zurich, Switzerland, waited two hours and then flew back to Dublin, landing about 11 AM. We knew going into the trip that is what they had scheduled and as this was a tour group they did the flight bookings

The tour guide was an excellent guide, very knowledgeable of course, but also about the economy and world affairs and how they were affecting the people and economy of Ireland. She told us that the Irish love America and our visits to their country. And it was somewhat obvious in the way we were treated, not just by her and the driver and the hotel people. They of course would be nice because they were making money off of us. But almost everywhere we went they had American flags flying. Most of the tour buses were flying a small American flag. As it was the 4th of July, the tour guide told us that we would see this love of America and especially in Kerry. They went all out in celebrating the 4th, in a way that they might have gotten from old American movies. We went on a carriage ride with our traveling companions, Kay and Mike and three other ladies also from our tour group and as we drove into the Main Street area, as one of our group was going to the bank the bank got robbed. The robbers were wearing masks of course, but the rest of their attire was right out of the old western movies. There was a "shoot out" with the robbers sporting "long guns" (rifles) and the hand guns cowboys used. The street scene included saloon girls. "Billy The Kid" got on the back step of our carriage and had a conversation with us and then "Rose" who was the head of the saloon girls climbed up on the front seat with the driver and tried to convince us to come to the saloon, showed us she too had a gun and asked us if that frightened us. Eventually we were able to continue our carriage ride, laughing so hard we had tears in our eyes.

Later we went back into the downtown area and were entertained by the local high school band playing American songs and the Star Spangled Banner, etc. The street was decorated and that included a Statue of Liberty at each end of the main thorough fare and an Uncle Sam bigger than life. Later they had a parade which included a huge eagle made of flowers. After dark they had a huge fireworks display.

The country was beautiful and the colors were so vibrant. On one of the tour stops we met a business man whose last name was the same as my grandmother's maiden name. So we talked, and he was very helpful in telling us that the Joyce tribe was one of the 14 tribes that founded Galway. He also told us about my Grandfather's name, "Kane" and they were from a little farther South of Galway and Jan's family name "French" was also from Galway. Ambrose Joyce has a marble mining and polishing and jewelry making business outside of Galway. We also found a Family Crest story card and part of the message was about my Great Grandfather, Corporal Kane, carrying the Irish Flag in the Civil War.

We were glad to be back home after traveling to Galway and points south and back up the east coast. Connemara, Cliffs of Mohr, Killarney, Kerry, seeing several castles including the Blarney Castle and kissing the Blarney stone, Waterford, and then back to Dublin for the last two days of a wonderful trip.

Jan and Dennis Fries

SCROLL DOWN TO SEE PHOTOS



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Figure 1 Marble Shop of Ambrose Joyce



2 Jan at Blarney Stone



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3 Billy the Kid



4 Jan at Kylemore Abbey



Figure 5 Saloon Girl

6 Jan and Dennis with friends