



The Report

November 2006

A change from past trips —

A Rhine River Cruise

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In Brief —

By: Charlotte Vincent – one of 38 adventurous travellers

This trip was a little different from the trips the BIA has taken in the past but it was as interesting and we had as much fun as all the others.

There were 38 BIA members on the trip. All of the flights were on time: no luggage was lost, there were no accidents, and no serious illnesses. We had beautiful country to travel through on the boat, with lots of optional side trips, nice accommodations on board, and excellent service.



Lake Zurich

The group meet at Liberty Lake Park on Friday, October 13, which turned out to be the typical Friday 13th. The bus developed a diesel fuel leak requiring repairs in Culpeper, however, we still arrived in time to for our flight to Zurich, Switzerland, arriving arrived at 8:15 a.m. on the 14th.

The first day was a "free day" to adjust to the time change. Most of the group spent the day touring the money capital of the world.

On Day 3 we had two optional tours before going to the boat in Basel: a guided tour of Zurich and a tour of Lucerne and Mount Pilatus in the Swiss Alps. At just over 7,000 ft. above sea level, we got an impressive

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**Bedford International Alliance, Inc.
P.O. Box 951
Bedford, Virginia 24523**

Visit our website to see the latest updates:

www.bedfordva.gov/alliance



**Let us know if you're coming to the
Bedford International Alliance's
Holiday Soiré**



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2006 CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND MEETINGS

January 11

BIA Annual Meeting
Membership Dues for 2006 payable

January - May

Fund raising activities begin to support Student Exchange program and activities

April 5

Board of Directors Meeting – Planning for St. George's Day event; continue planning for Student Exchange activities for student visit to England and France

April 22

St. George's Day Celebration for all BIA members.
Liberty Lake Park, Bedford

June 6

62nd Anniversary of D-Day at the National D-Day Memorial

June 14

Board of Directors Meeting – Planning for Bastille Day picnic at Liberty Lake Park, Bedford; Bedford students prepare for trip

July 15

5th Annual Bastille Day Picnic for members
Liberty Lake Park

September 20

Board of Directors Meeting – Planning for Nov/Dec. final Social Event for 2006

October 13-22

BIA Rhine River Cruise trip

November 1

Board of Directors Meeting – 2007 planning and plans for Membership Social Event for 2006

November 17

2006 BIA Holiday Soiré at the Bedford Area Welcome Center, 7:00 to 10:00 p.m.

Note: BIA Committees will determine meeting dates.

River Cruise

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panoramic view of 73 alpine summits and countless lakes. After a short tour through Lucerne, we traveled to the Port of Basel, situated on the Rhine where France, Switzerland, and Germany meet, to board the MS Avalon Tapestry, our home for the next six days.

We were welcomed with a cocktails reception to go over the safety rules on the ship. We had our first wonderful dinner on-board and set sail for Strasbourg, France.

On Day 4 we were in Strasbourg, which is situated on the border of France and Germany and is influenced by the culture of both countries. It is the capital of the Alsace region. The group had a tour of

Strasbourg by canal and then by foot. The tour also included the spectacular Strasbourg Cathedral and free time to shop in the city.



An astronomical clock, located inside the cathedral, features carved figures of the apostles who parade past Jesus, while a cock crows and flaps its wings. Other figures move on the hour and ½ hour. The clock tells the time, the year, moon, and other astrological information.

During the afternoon we had two optional shore excursions. The first was the Alsace countryside grand tour with Alsace wine tasting and the second was through Germany's the Black Forest with a shopping spree for typical German souvenirs.

We were in Speyer, Germany, on Day 5, Tuesday October 17. We had a two-hour morning tour of the city which was settled more than 5,000 years ago.



We rode the world's steepest cogwheel railway to the top of Mount Pilatus.



The trip down was by aerial cableway and gondolas back to Kriens.



Strasbourg Cathedral



Speyer Cathedral

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Heidelberg's Old Bridge, built in 1788

River Cruise

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During the afternoon we travelled by bus to Heidelberg, known as the site of the archeological find of the oldest European, the jawbone of Homo Heidelbergensis.



A replica of the Gutenberg printing press in the museum in Mainz

Heidelberg was spared damage during WWII and became headquarters of the main military administration department for the American Armed Forces in Europe.

Those not on the land excursions sailed along the Rhine to Mainz, Germany. It took a very fast bus trip on the German Autoban to get the day-trippers back to the boat on time at Mainz.

Wednesday morning we took guided walking tour of Mainz, Germany's largest and most important wine market. Gutenberg, the father of modern printing, was born here, and the museum has a copy of the Gutenberg Bible.



We were treated to Rudesheimer Coffee at the Rudesheim Schloss Hotel.

At noon we sailed for Rudesheim, Germany, a perfect example of a Rhine Valley town. We were picked up by the "Orient Express Rudesheim" and transported up the side of a steep hill to visit the town. Many of the group visited German beer gardens and enjoyed the wine and beer of the area. We also shopped at many Christmas stores.

Day 7, Thursday, October 19, found us downstream from Rudesheim in the dramatic Rhine Gorge, the most beautiful strait of river dotted every mile with castles. We had a sightseeing tour of the City of Koblenz to see Germany's legendary medieval past. The castles, some of which are privately-owned homes, are protected and can only be repaired by government-approved plans. During WWII, 80% of the city was destroyed and has been rebuilt as it was before the war.



The Rhine Gorge, above, and one of the castles along the Rhine River, below



Dinner at the Captain's table

As we sailed that evening, we were treated to the Captain's Gala Dinner and classical music by La Strada featuring violin and guitar music.



We arrived in Cologne around 10:30 p.m. Cologne is the capital of the Rhineland and one of Germany's largest cities. We had a

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River Cruise

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Cologne's Cathedral

spectacular view of the city's magnificent Gothic Cathedral, which took 600 years to complete, and was not damaged during WWII.

The soaring twin steeples of Cologne's cathedral dominated the river skyline. While digging bunkers during WWII, they discovered the Deamysus mosaic, the Roman city walls, and the Roman water system were discovered. The Roman road network is still in use.

We sailed for Amsterdam, Holland, at 12 noon. Our tour director gave a lecture on the European Union. We passed four nuclear power plants located on the Rhine. After dinner everyone was treated to a crew talent show with several skits,

dancers, and singers. The night ended by all aboard singing. We sailed all night.

On Day 10, we arrived in Amsterdam, Holland's capital. The 700-year-old city is sophisticated and modern, with elegant, classic architecture, numerous cafes and restaurants, and a lively marketplace. We had a morning tour by canal boat, cruising through the elegant grachten, lined with stately homes and houseboats. The city, and Holland, is built on peat, which is protected and cannot be used as a fuel. Windmills were used to pump the fresh water from the peat into the canal, rivers and out to the sea. Bicycles are the most-used mode of



Amsterdam's classic architecture

transportation. We had to be very careful crossing a bicycle road because bicyclists have the right of way. Seeing the bicycle garage that stored 4,000 bikes was impressive.

During the afternoon, several of the group took a tour of Zaanse Schans to see Dutch windmills and a demonstration of how wooden shoes are made. We also visited a Cheese Shop and old Dutch homes near the windmills.

That evening, we had a farewell cocktail reception followed by our farewell dinner.

After dinner, we had our last two optional tours. The first was a Candlelight Cruise of Amsterdam through the canals and under

many lighted arched bridges. The cruise also passed through the red light district.

The second tour was a walking tour of the red light district. Those who took the tour observed the girls behind their windows. They described the tour as an excellent way to spend an unforgettable evening in Amsterdam.

Day 10, Sunday, October 22 was our day to return home. We left the boat at 8:30 a.m., flew back to Dulles and took our last bus trip to Bedford, arriving home tired and happy at 8:30 p.m.

Now, when can we go again?



The crew talent show entertained everyone.



One of the many bridges across a canal.

Annual Meeting Scheduled

January 10, 2007, Wednesday at 7:00 pm

The Bedford International Alliance will hold its Annual Meeting for the Membership at the Bedford Area Welcome Center. The Bedford students who visited France and England in July will be at the meeting to share their experience with us. Light hors d'oeuvres and drinks will be available for everyone.

At the meeting we will hold the election of nine directors for a three-year term each. Also, we will vote on a proposed dues increase for 2007, from \$10 a person to \$15, and we will vote on a by-laws amendment to facilitate the removal and replacement of a director when that director is no longer active and participating in oard of directors meetings. Information on both of these issues will be detailed in a mailing to members in December.

The first meeting of the new Board of Directors and election of officers will follow the general meeting of the membership.

Make your plans now to attend!



We're looking for donations to the Student Exchange Program

At this time there is the possibility that we may be hosting both French and English students in late Spring 2007. In anticipation of this, we need to increase the funds in our treasury. Every donation, no matter what the amount, is needed, and every donation is appreciated.

Importance Notice to Members —

The mailing list of the Bedford International Alliance must not be used for any purpose other than for business of the organization. Our By-laws governing usage is printed below.

ARTICLE THREE - Limitations Upon Operations

Section 3.1 The Corporation shall neither have nor exercise any power, nor shall it directly or indirectly engage in any activity that would (a) prevent it from obtaining exemption from federal income taxation as a corporation described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or (b) cause it to lose such tax exempt status.

Section 3.2 The Corporation shall not be operated for the primary purpose of carrying on a trade or business for profit.

Section 3.3 No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall consist of carrying on propaganda or other activities attempting to influence legislation, nor shall it in any way or to any extent participate in or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office; nor shall the corporation engage in any activities that are not lawful under the applicable Federal, State or Local Law.

Shots from the 5th Annual Bastille Day Celebration



*It's time once again to celebrate the
Holiday Season...*

BEDFORD INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE, INC.
P.O. Box 951
Bedford, Virginia 24523



The Board of Directors of the
Bedford International Alliance, Inc.
cordially invite you to attend the

2006 HOLIDAY SOIRÉ

Friday, November 17
7:00 to 10:00 pm

at the
Bedford Area Welcome Center

Light hors d'oeuvres will be served.

Please RSVP your attendance to Charlotte Vincent
at 540-586-0219, by Friday, November 11, 2006.

A free-will donation will be collected
for the 2007 Student Exchange Program.



Seaman Fuller donates uniform jacket to the D-Day Memorial

Bert Fuller was the bowman of LCA 839 which was in the first wave at Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944. As the craft neared the beach it was hit by an anti-tank shell which penetrated the armor plating of the LCA. Fuller believed his LCA was targeted by an anti-tank gun manned by Germans onshore because there was a tank coming ashore along side the LCA.

Fuller lowered the ramp and helped the troops disembark. He found that two of the men on the LCA were unable to move: they had been fatally wounded when the LCA was hit. He made them as comfortable as possible, but one of them died on the way back to the HMS Empire Javelin, the mother ship for the LCAs. The second wounded man died shortly after being taken on board the Empire Javelin.

One of the men Seaman Fuller had tried to help was Technical Sergeant Draper, Jr., from Bedford. Fuller had loosened Draper's clothing and removed the leather binocular case from his neck while giving the man first aid on the way back to the Empire Javelin. He retrieved Draper's binoculars from the LCA and held on to them for the next 61 years as a painful reminder of that day. Those binoculars were returned to the Draper family in December 2005.

Knowing about the D-Day Memorial and its goal of



This is the uniform jacket worn by Able Seaman Fuller who was the Bowman on the landing craft that took many Americans to the beach on D-Day. The stripe on the left sleeve indicates three years of good Conduct and the emblem on the right sleeve is a Combined Operations Badge. The hat was worn by the seamen who served on the HMS Heron, a training ship and is similar to what Seaman Fuller would have worn.

preserving artifacts from WWII, Bert Fuller decided to send his uniform jacket to Bedford. He no longer had his hat, so he located a friend (from on a different ship) who still had his similar hat and convinced him to donate it.

Once again Englishman and professional photographer Tony Martin assisted. (He was instrumental in getting the Draper binoculars returned to the family last year.) Martin once again contacted BIA members Meg and Dave Ballard to find out if they would assist in getting the uniform to the Memorial for display.

Knowing that help was available in Bedford, Martin got the uniform from Fuller, then gave it to BIA members Glen &

Nita Holt when they visited him at his home in Scotland in May. The Holts brought the jacket back to the Ballards. The Ballards got the jacket and hat ready to display through the purchase of a very small mannequin to mount the jacket on.

Now after many years of being stored away in England, Able Seaman Bert Fuller's uniform jacket is on display at the D-Day Memorial. It adds another piece to the story of the Bedford Boys.

We are saddened to report that Bernard "Bert" Fuller passed away on September 29, in his beloved England.



2007 Membership Renewal

Dues rate for 2007 will be set at the Annual Meeting.

The deadline for paying dues for 2007 is March 1.

It is now time to renew your membership. Please make your check payable to the "Bedford International Alliance" and mail it to the Treasurer. You must have your dues payment up-to-date in order to participate in the activities of the Alliance.

NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

HOME PHONE # _____ WORK PHONE # _____ CELL PHONE # _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS(ES) _____

Mail to: Meg Ballard, Treasurer, 995 Ashland Avenue, Bedford, VA 24523

In Brief —

Bedford Area Welcome Center draws visitors from other "Bedfords"

During the last week of October, our Welcome Center was visited by four people from Bedfordshire, England, as well as visitors from Bedford, TX, Bedford, PA, and Bedford, NY.

BIA Members active in community

Chuck Neudorfer and Nanci Drake are serving on a committee that is planning a benefit concert for Roger Cheek at Liberty High School on November 18. For information on tickets, call 540-587-5670, 540-587-5682 or 540-586-4721.

Tom and Connie Messier are serving as co-chairs on a capital campaign to build a hospice in Bedford.

Many BIA members continue to volunteer at the D-Day Memorial.



Don't forget to RSVP if you plan to attend the Holiday Soiré.





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