

# Jim and Emmy's Travel Journal

## The Country of The Netherlands

1970, 1979, 1980, 1983, and 1985

# 1970

We arrived in Germany on August 18, traveled to Austria a few days later, spent several days in Italy, crossed Switzerland, then entered France. Then by Hovercraft across the English Channel to England, and a few days later we returned, by ferry to Belgium, then crossed the border into The Netherlands.

Then left and drove toward Amsterdam. On the way we saw a sign to the Breendonk prison. Built in 1914 as a fort, it was used by the Germans as a prison during WW II. Originally it was a bunker-type underground structure during WW I. To give the WW II prisoners something to do, they decided to have them "un-dig" the bunker and expose the concrete walls. It's a very grim place. Whereas Dachau had been cleaned for the tourist, Breendonk was not cleaned up very much. They still had the posts where prisoners were tied for the firing squads, and smelly straw cots where they had slept. At each stop through the prison, a loud speaker would tell the horrible story.

We drove on to Amsterdam and looked around the city for awhile. Found the Anne Frank House, just after it had closed for the day.

We headed for the campsite located next to the Olympic Stadium. At one point we saw a big sign for camping, but then could not find it again. Kept driving awhile and finally found another campsite in a nice large park. By this time, all the work and driving had caught up with Jim, and he fell asleep in a bed in the tent, even before dinner. He was barely able to get into the camper to complete the night's sleep he must have needed very much.

The Lindas took the opportunity to wash their unmentionables, and since it was dark, thought nothing about hanging them on a line around the tent.

### NL, Amsterdam, Sep 7, Mon - 16

This morning the bright colorful pretties around the tent did attract some attention!

We went back to town and spent the day seeing Amsterdam. Among other parts of town, we drove through Amsterdam's huge, famous red-light district. They really do use red lights, and they really do sit in the windows to advertise the goodies. As we passed one large window, Linda S. said, "That looks just like my Aunt!" Emmy was less than impressed with the tour of Amsterdam's "red-light" district.

Emmy and the Lindas had to find a restaurant that served Rijsttafel, the Indonesian Rice Table, with up to 40 dishes, most of which include rice in one form or another. Jim just walked around the city. At one place, in response to Jim's answer to her "question," the lady exclaimed, "You brought a wife to Amsterdam!"

In the evening we took a boat ride on various canals. It gave us a chance to see much of the city, and the hotels and houses that line the canals.

We drove across West/East Germany to West/East Berlin (still very much behind the Iron Curtain), then we visited Emmy's cousins near Germany's western border. We left for the US on September 14.

# 1979

We arrived at the Luxembourg Airport on August 26, bought a camper at the US Army base in Mannheim, and visited Emmy's cousins and West Germany for a few days. We traveled by ferry to Denmark, to Sweden, then by over-night boat to Finland, and another ferry back to Sweden. We then visited along the Norwegian coast (including many small ferryboats), and another ferryboat back to Denmark. We crossed Germany, to spend a few days in The Netherlands.

Drove thru Oldenburg on our way to Holland, then to the town of Groningen. Unlike our impression of Holland in 1970, Groningen seems extra dirty and we saw nothing especially interesting. There are many, many bike riders and they act like they own the streets, and maybe they do. As we remembered from 1970, there is dog mess on the sidewalks of Holland.

## NL, Groningen, Oct 2, Tue - 18 - 283 - 4,135

Visited a different part of town this morning and found it nicer than what we saw yesterday.

Went to a bakery, of course, and drove to Heerenveen and looked around. Emmy talked to a woman at Groningen's outdoor market, and was proud that her few words of German could make a conversation. Emmy is amazed she knows as many words as she does, and familiar ones keep popping up all the time. She had no idea she remembered any of the German language her parents sometimes spoke to each other, as Emmy never spoke German as a child.

We found Giethoorn to be a lovely town. Only canals, foot or bike paths, and there are streets only to the edge of town. We stopped at a small grocery store and sat in the camper and looked at maps and brochures for a moment. We got out of the camper, then found we had locked the keys inside. We asked people in the store for a wire coat hanger. An English speaking woman overheard and said she had done the same thing with her car keys just a few days ago. She invited us to her home in Giethoorn for a cup of tea after we got the camper door opened.

It was too easy to get the Dodge door open, but we then went to visit "Cocksie." Their house is very nice on the outside, and has a thatched roof. The outside and the roof must be preserved "as is" when any repairs are done. The inside of this Dutch home has a fireplace, a loft over the living room and the kitchen looks like one in an American home. Even the refrigerator door is paneled to match the kitchen cabinets.

Cocksie fixed tea and told us stories about the war, including the one and a half years she spent in a German concentration camp. Her husband, John Derk, has been in the Dutch Army for thirty years, and is now the Colonel in charge of the Commandos. He is the real life "John Wayne" of Holland. A few days ago he was having a physical examination for promotion to General, when the doctor found he has a heart problem. So he retired a day or two ago. (When we stopped for a visit several years later, he had just had a heart operation.)

He said that as a young teenager in Holland during the war, he had to steal food, etc., so his family could live. John Derk can't get his bad feeling for Germany out of his mind, even though he has been working with the German Army many years and has very good German friends.

After looking around the town some more, we went on to Zwolle. Found they are remodeling a beautiful old building into a McDonald's. We noticed the name of the next town on the map is, of all things, Hattem. Columbus discovered America with less fanfare than Emmy discovered Hattem, Holland. Hattem is the last name of our good friends in Canoga Park, but is also the name of an interesting town dating from the 800's with a wall built in the 1200's.

Drove on to Apeldoorn and determined the first two campsites we found are closed. By law, they closed on September 30, and they said they could be in big trouble if they let us stay. Must have taken over an hour to find a place to stay.

#### **NL, Apeldoorn, Oct 3, Wed - 19 - 278 - 4,413L**

Our good weather has disappeared, and it's raining today. Drove to Arnhem and visited the outdoor museum that has old houses, bridges, windmills, all furnished like years ago. Buildings were brought from other parts of Holland.

In Arnhem's downtown shopping area we had hot chocolate and french fries at McDonald's. It would be fantastic if McDonald's in the US were located in such charming buildings.

We talked to a driver of a tour bus, parked at the museum. He had lived in the US for awhile and liked it very much. He had to return to Holland in an emergency and in his haste did not get some official paper taken care of properly, and now he cannot return. When he can get his papers fixed properly, he will go back to the US. He says in Holland people get paid for working or not working, and how hard he works has nothing much to do with his pay. In America, if he works hard, he can get ahead.

We are still not satisfied with the way the steering feels on the camper. The bus driver gave us directions to an auto dealer near Utrecht he thinks can solve the problem. When we arrived, we found they are indeed a very large dealer selling almost all makes of US autos, but they insist they will work only on vehicles they sell. They gave us the name and address of a big truck repair garage in Amersfoot. We stopped there, and they said to come back tomorrow. We spent much time finding a campsite again tonight, then found we had been driving back and forth past one, and couldn't see the sign through the trees.

#### **NL, Zeist, Oct 4, Thu - 20**

The mechanic drove the camper so many miles while he was testing it we thought we were going to Los Angeles! They finally decided it needed some front wheel bearings and an alinement. Emmy went shopping while part of this was going on.

We joined the mechanics for their coffee break. They eat more for coffee break than we eat for lunch. Many of them are unhappy with the amount of money and all the things the Dutch government gives to people who do nothing, and to those who don't want to do anything. One man said his son gets paid less in the army than people who just lay around the street. They are unhappy with all the South Americans who have moved into the country and are messing up

Amsterdam. And they also have nothing good to say about the American hippies laying round the streets of Amsterdam.

After we arrived in Amsterdam it seemed to us the streets are much dirtier than we remembered from 1970. We were told it has gotten so much worse in the past few years, since the "South Americans" have arrived.

The traffic is terrible and parking is almost impossible, so we plan to see more of the country now and come back here on Sunday. We stayed in the same campsite where we stayed in 1970. It was easy to find this time.

There are several big tour buses in the campgrounds. They each pull a trailer containing the tents and the kitchen for the passengers, mostly college age kids. The tents are lined up in a straight line. The bus takes them into town at night, and will take them sightseeing during the day. Sometimes a "guide" sets up the tents and does the cooking, and in other cases it seems the passengers do the work.

There is a company, Top-Deck, that uses old double-decker London buses, with the downstairs holding the kitchen and seats, and the beds are up-stairs. We have seen these companies several times.

**NL, Amstelveen, Oct 5, Fri - 21 - 91 - 4,504**

Emmy went to a beauty parlor this morning. Each little thing they did cost a little more, until she paid twice what she expected. That doesn't make her happy.

There was a big outdoor market with food and other things. Selected some oranges we wanted to buy, but the man got mad and would not sell unless he selected them himself, so he no sell.

Went to downtown Amsterdam on the bus and walked around a while. It seems to take forever to get cash from Merrill Lynch, it's not as easy as advertised. Walked to see Rembrandt's home and museum, and more of Amsterdam. Ate at a little restaurant in nearby Amstelveen. The waitress had lived in the US for awhile a few years ago. She couldn't stand the Phoenix heat and when she got a letter from her mother she held it to her face, hoping to feel a little of the Dutch cool weather.

Stayed in the same campsite tonight again, but have arranged to stay at a B&B (Bed & Breakfast) tomorrow night.

**NL, Amstelveen, Oct 6, Sat - 22**

Drove to Haarlem, shopped at the outdoor market and went on to Hemsteed where they had a model of the dike system, and displays to show how it was built years ago. The museum was in an old pump house. Stopped along a canal for lunch. On many canals in the cities and in the countryside of Holland, we see house boats docked, with people living there.

We drove to The Hague to see Maduradam, a museum or playground consisting of acres of miniature houses, Cathedrals, an airport, etc. Each Cathedral or other building is maybe four to six feet tall, and is an exact copy of a building someplace in Holland. Many displays are activated when a coin is dropped in a slot.

Got to our B&B about 6:00 PM. Bob and Janet Holms have a very nice home. Our room is good sized and has a double bed, but is very cold. Bob worked as a steward for KLM for many years. They rent this house from the Airline retirement fund for about 360 G1 instead of the 1,000 G1 it would normally cost.

When we arrived Bob smelled as if he had been drinking wine, and we later found they are "wallpapering" the dining room wall with wine corks cut in half. Don't think it will take too long to finish!

**NL, Amstelveen, Oct 7, Sun - 174 - 4,678**

Bob fixed our breakfast but we saw no more of Janet. Soft boiled eggs, cold cuts and bread—some moldy! It was an interesting night, but the camper is really more comfortable, much cheaper, and of course, our cooking is best.

Drove into Amsterdam and stopped at the Anne Frank House. We had toured it a couple of days ago, but Emmy wanted to get some literature. Rewarding place to visit, but such a sad story.

We then drove north through Edam, Hoorn, Enkhuizen, then across the large dike separating the English Channel from the Ziddar Zee. It's so foggy we can't see much. Did see some interesting Dutch farm buildings. A large long building with a very high steep roof, with bright roof tiles over the house part, and plain tile over the barn part.

Drove to Giethoorn, but since our "friends" appeared to have guests, we didn't stop. Went to a small flea market, then to the campsite, and took a long walk through the town. Tried to call Linda, but there would be a 45 minute wait. We could have dialed direct from the pay phone, but there is no way we could stuff Dutch coins into the phone fast enough to keep the line open.

**NL, Giethoorn, Oct 8, Mon - 23 - 219 - 4,897**

This morning we visited an experimental farm with large greenhouses and many flowers and fruits, and all kinds of farm exhibits. Then to Amsterdam, and to Merrill Lynch again. They gave us a check but we had to go to a certain bank to get it cashed, and to get Travelers Checks.

Spent the night in the same Amstelveen camp site again tonight. Sure better than a B&B.

**NL, Amstelveen, Oct 9 - Tue - 24 - 103 - 5,000**

Bought some English cheddar cheese before we left the area, then drove back to The Hague to tour the Peace Palace. Andrew Carnegie donated most of the money to build it years ago. Inside is very nice, but as usual the outside and the gardens are most interesting to us.

At noon we visited the Mauritshuis art museum in The Hague. It had many Great Masters paintings, our kind of museum. Met some people from Minneapolis who are spending two years living in Europe setting up training seminars for some company.

Drove on to Delft, looked around and visited a porcelain factory where they made and painted the Delft Blue dishes. Not our favorite, and most items seemed very expensive. We went in with a group from a tour bus, and the people in the store seemed unhappy with the small amount of money the people were spending.

At the town of Barendrecht we stopped in the Post Office to make some calls. When the phone calls from Holland to Sherman Oaks were complete, the woman said they were free since she forgot to set the meter before we started, so didn't know what the cost was. We didn't mind at all!

Found a campsite on the south side of the river near Rotterdam. They were prepared to have people stay for months at a time, but not just overnight. They told us to park on the private street outside and plug our electric cord into their restroom electrical system. (Don't remember if they charged us or not.)

Tomorrow we want to go back to Rotterdam to see the city and to ride to the top of the Euromast (TV Tower).

### NL, Rotterdam, Oct 10, Wed - 25 - 95 - 5,095

We rode in an elevator to near the top of Rotterdam's Euromast, where we got in another car that makes a 360 degree turn as it goes higher. We were the only customers, so the man (who had lived in the US for awhile) took us up a second time. Rotterdam was badly destroyed during the war, and was rebuilt in a modern, lackluster style.

We keep buying things for the camper, today we bought a pan for popping corn. Little by little we get what we need, and available storage space keeps getting less and less.

We left for Belgium, on our way to Paris. After several days, we continued to Spain. For the next couple of weeks, we visited in Spain, several days in Portugal, then two days on a tour to Morocco in Africa. We spent several more days in Spain, and spent a couple of days resting in Palma, on the Island of Majorca. We returned to Barcelona, and a couple of days later drove on to France, then Monaco, across Italy and through the tunnel beneath Mt. Blanc, to another part of France. Spent a couple of days in Switzerland, then through Germany to Mettlach. We parked the camper at Toni's neighbor (for several months), and from Luxembourg's airport, on November 29 we flew to Iceland for a couple of days, then home to the US.

# 1980

We arrived at Frankfurt, Germany on May 9, spent time in Germany, traveled throughout central and southern France, tiny Andorra, a tiny piece of Spain, Monaco, then into Italy to visit Pisa and Florence. By ferry we went to Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily, back through Italy from the "toe" through Rome, and other fascinating places, to Venice. We crossed into Yugoslavia, then to Austria, a couple of days in Hungary, a night in Liechtenstein. Through Lake Como, Italy, St. Moritz and The Matterhorn, Switzerland, back through Germany to Mettlach. After a couple of weeks visiting Paris, Brittany and Normandy, France, we crossed into Belgium.

We boarded a ferry for a visit to England, drove to Wales, a ferry to and from Ireland, then Scotland, more time in England, then another ferry to The Netherlands.

We advanced our clocks again and arrived in Holland at 6:45 PM.

**NL, Hook de Holland, Sept 24, Wed - 110 - 26 - 14,428**

Campsite was easy to find, but no electricity, that's unusual on the continent, but it wasn't too cold last night either. Slept till 9:30.

Drove to Delft, and remembered our visit of last year. We came in from a different direction and parked at a different place, but Jim remembered exactly where the Delft Post Office is, and it has been a year, 20 countries and hundreds of little towns and many Post Offices since we were here last year. Jim likes to do that.

The old church spire has four clocks in it, and the new church is probably hundreds of years old. Jim remembers a small clock he saw and liked 45 years ago. It was an iron statue of a dog, about six inches high, with a clock balanced on the nose. The clock swings like a pendulum, with the clock above and the pendulum below.

Jim mentioned it in a clock store where there were interesting old clocks, and the man went in the back and came out with a similar one, with the clock balanced on the hand of a statue. It belonged to a man nearby and it was here for repair, and not for sale. Surprised to find it, have looked everywhere, and this is the only old one we have found and it's not for sale. (1992—By now we have seen several very new, very modern clocks that work in a similar manner, but no old ones, and no dog!)

We bought some of the best French bread we have found anywhere. On the way to Gouda we had to wait for a bridge to open and let a barge through, then close. When Jim made a right turn at one place, Emmy got all excited and yelled at the driver—then we both remembered we are no longer in England, and he is driving on the proper side of the road. Driving through Holland we see a lot of canals with a lot of barges, and a lot of bicycles on a lot of bicycle paths, and a lot of traffic lights to control all of this!

Most of the homes in Holland have a very clean, very large plate glass window, with lace curtains on each side, so we can look right into the living room. Gouda has several interesting sights, including lots of cheese, a lovely city hall, and a beautiful church reflected in a canal.

**NL, Gouda, Sept, 25, Thu - 111 - 112 -14,540**

We filled the LPG tank (cooking gas) a few weeks ago in Brugge, and today it needed 2.35 liters, or 60 to 70 cents for cooking gas for that time period. When we filled it in Brugge it cost \$7 and that was all we bought since the free fill-up in Sundsvall, Sweden over a year ago.

Along the freeway and the regular roads, we see people making hay from the long grass. They don't waste it, but it doesn't look very good for the cows.

The morning started out sunny, but it's getting cloudy now at 11:30. In the town of Enschede there are many new brick buildings, and not much of tourist interest. When we asked a bicyclist for directions, he warned us to be sure to lock the car, as "people steal, all over the world it's like that." Enschede was not special for tourists, but probably a nice place to live.

Crossed West/East Germany to West/East Berlin, then back to Mettlach, Germany. With Hannah and Toni as passengers, we traveled again to the Alsace in France. After a couple of days we returned to Germany, and on October 26, we returned to the US .

# 1983

We arrived in Germany on July 6. We bought a camper on the US Army base at Nelligen, near Stuttgart. We spent a couple of weeks in Germany, a night in Luxembourg, and after 10 days in Paris and other parts of France, we visited Belgium, and now entered The Netherlands.

No border people at the Belgium/Holland border, and we did not even have to stop. We stopped in Breda to get some Dutch money, and the lady at the bank said this is a good time to get money as there is a sale in town today. In answer to Emmy's question, yes there is a flea market today also. We looked around Breda but did not buy, flea or otherwise.

We decided to find a campsite early and after nearly an hour of driving in the woods, and rejecting one with no remaining electric plugs, we found one site that was fine.

Dutch campsites are unlike any other in Europe. Most of the people stay camped for months or they seem to leave their trailer there forever. In the general area, there is a large forest, and miles of bike and walking paths. People really use the recreation areas here. There are hotels, lakes, and large play grounds, all very busy.

Our impressions of Holland? Lots of lovely homes most with a very large, very sparkling clean picture window with lace curtains, an occasional windmill, millions (so it seems) of bikes, confusing bike signs, traffic lights and wide paved bike paths, we have almost driven on a time or two. Too much trash beside the roads and streets, and of course dog mess on the sidewalk. The national "sign" for Holland should be a picture of a pile of dog mess with a shoe print in it, followed by several places on the sidewalk where that person tried to clean his shoe!

## H, Oislerwijk, Aug 4, Thu - 14 - 78 - 1,800

We left at 8:15, early, in sunshine, but by 9:30 the sun was gone. We stopped in Hertogenbosch for a few minutes. Surprised at the number of jewelry stores, and the few number of bakeries.

Bought a couple of flat macaroon cookies that were very good. Saw a large number (hundreds) of new trees planted near the freeway. The freeway system is very nice in Holland. In spite of the fact they keep pumping water back into the ocean in order to get more land, their interchanges are very wide and sweeping.

At one intersection in Holland, we counted 27 different traffic lights. They are needed for the auto traffic, a complete set for the separate bike system, and

lights for pedestrians. It seems like we can wait forever for our light to become green.

We parked at the RR Station in Arnhem and paid \$14 for round trip tickets to Utrecht. There was a young Dutch school girl riding on the train with her parents. She was learning English in school, and was delighted to practice on us. The RR Station at Utrecht is combined with a large 200 store shopping center opened in 1982.

The Dom Cathedral (Utrecht) started in 1253 and completed in about 1517, was built on the spot where another church had been built in about 950 AD. In 1630 a big storm blew down about half of the church between the Dom Tower and the middle of the Cathedral. In 1826 as the Utrecht tourist book says, "The rubble was finally cleared away," almost two hundred years later! They never have rebuilt that part of the Cathedral and the tower is now at the end of a bridge, and the street goes right through the arch in the tower!

Jim asked the manager of the local McDonald's if they serve Egg McMuffin. He said people in Holland eat very little for breakfast, and eat that at home. They tried them in Rotterdam and Amsterdam, and only tourists ordered them, and that was not enough sales to keep them on the menu.

We arrived back in Arnhem at about 1:00 PM and walked around for a while. Bought some food, and kept looking for some of the good windmill cookies, but can find nothing that tastes like what we remember.

We drove about 100 miles to a campsite in Gulpen. We got the last place where they had electricity, and not a regular camp spot at that. We had looked for a campsite for awhile and had not found anything, so we then drove 10 miles out of our way to find this one. A man had a small take-out cooking place, so we had some very good French Fries with our dinner.

This being a Dutch campsite where people stay forever, they had a nightclub and we were closer than we would have liked to be. The band in Gulpen had a saxophone, drums, and a couple of other instruments, and played a funny type, or style, of music. The first song we recognized was "Oh Johnny, Oh Johnny," and all the rest sounded just like that to us. They were still at it when we went to sleep at 11:00 or so.

#### **H, Gulpen, Aug 5, Fri - 15 - 180 - 1,980**

We drove 10 miles back to the main highway, and as expected we found a nice campsite about two miles further down the road.

We stopped for gas and forgot to put the gas cap back on. Not much a gas station in this area, can do with a Dodge gas cap. We are near the Holland/ Belgium/ Germany borders and there are acres of concrete tank traps still sticking up out of the ground. They were used to delay or stop tanks that tried to travel across these fields during WW II.

We now crossed a narrow part of Belgium to visit cousins in Germany. With Linda and Margit in tow, we toured Switzerland, France, and across Italy to Venice, where they left us and went back to Germany. We continued through northern Italy, across Switzerland, a couple of hours in Liechtenstein, and back to Mettlach. With Toni as passenger we visited one day in France, then with several cousins in

Germany. Spent a couple more days in France before we parked the camper, then returned to the US on September 30.

# 1985

We arrived in Germany on May 30. For the next two weeks we did sightseeing in Germany, and now will spend a few days in The Netherlands.

Soon after arriving in Holland we stopped at a US Army cemetery. There are 8,300 buried there, in a beautiful grassy area donated by the Dutch government. As soon as we crossed the border into Holland there was an change in the look of the houses. Here, they are of a dark brick, with large picture windows in the living room, a different design from Germany. The houses are mostly the same style, and we think the towns would look better if they were not so much the same. The freeways are landscaped better than in Germany.

We remember Dutch campsites are a problem to find, and after discovering one closed and another full, we wondered if we would find a place for tonight. We found one where they let us camp next to the men's room. They don't get many transients.

## NL, Nijmegen, June 10, Mon - 2 - 120 - 542

Left the campground at 8:00 AM. It appears strange to us that in a country with no land to spare, they have very wide sweeping freeways and ramps.

Emmy really liked the flea market in Nijmegen. (We'll will let you know if we find a flea market she doesn't like!) Raining all the time. A large part of Nijmegen's market was filled with fruit and flowers, and Emmy found a smoked mackerel fish for 85 cents—delicious, she later reported! Emmy bought a small planter with blue ceramic handles, and after we were in the camper and ready to leave town, we had to find another parking place, then run through the rain to get a brass coffee pot she can't live without—not for coffee, just for because.

It rained 10 times today, maybe more. We keep going, as the countryside is attractive in the rain. We are on the way to Hattem, Holland (named after our friends in Canoga Park!). It appears to be an upper class suburb with many expensive looking houses, many with thatched roofs. We picked up some bumper stickers to mail to the real Hattems.

Had the usual Holland campsite problems. They just are not interested in taking care of people who are not permanent residents. That is funny, because we see a lot of Dutch people camping all over Europe. Maybe this explains why so many Dutch are camping in other countries. We blew a campground circuit breaker, so used gas for heating and for the refrigerator.

## NL, Hattem, June 11, Tue - 3 - 114 - 656

We are leaving the campsite in Hattem in beautiful sunshine. Driving through a wooded area with many expensive homes, some with thatched roofs.

We went down an unusual road. Hard to describe, but starting from one farmer's field, there is a row of large trees, then a one way bike road, then a row of trees, then a bike road the other direction, then a row of trees, then a wide two

lane road for autos, then a row of trees, then a bike road in one direction, then a row of trees then a bike road in the other direction, then a row of trees, and finally another farmers field. They really take care of the bike people in this country.

We see a bike road system throughout the Dutch countryside, complete with its own signs noting the distance to the next towns. This is a separate road system, not just at the edge of the auto road.

In the medieval town of Kampen, we were backing into a parking place, when an older man saw the USA sign on the bumper. He smiled and came over to talk to us. With a big smile on his face, the Dutchman said "America, (pointed to himself) Freiheit (freedom, then pointed to us) President (put his hand as if to shake Reagan's hand, then pointed thumbs up) President, Moscow (here he placed his fists as if to indicate Reagan protects him from Russia) and all the time was smiling and letting us know he likes the Americans very much.

In Kampen there are a couple of colorful old town gates. We then went to Zwolle and stopped at an electrical store on the shopping street to buy some lamps, etc., to install a better lighting system for reading, than we now have. Two lamps and all the rest cost \$13. Low price, but now we must do some work.

We have seen numerous places where they have trees bordering the road, much as they do in France, and there are fields of red poppies.

A couple of times we have seen trucks going door to door selling groceries. We have seen that several times in Holland. Jim remembers the Hucksters (truck-vendors) at his Grandmother's home in Indiana years ago. Emmy remembers having a vegetable man who came to her house when she lived in Schiller Park, near Chicago. Years ago, in Martinsburg, Pennsylvania, Jim remembers the milk man and the meat man, who stopped at the house. Not a milkman delivering bottles of milk, but one who poured milk from his ten gallon can into our little can. The butcher had large pieces of meat, and would cut to order! Jim knows all about the milkman who delivered bottled milk, he did that himself years ago, in both Pennsylvania, and in Chicago.

We stopped at a store near Giethoorn to get some information, but when we came back to the camper it wouldn't start. Used the camper battery to get it started, and went looking for Cocksie and John Derk, the people we visited here in 1979.

We found their home and she answered the door and indicated for us to have a seat until she finished her phone conversation. (In 1979, John had just retired from the Army after the doctor had found he had a heart problem.) Cocksie said John had just had a heart by-pass operation a few weeks ago, and was home now, but is not feeling well. She had just talked to the Doctor and was going to take him there right now. We offered to take him, laying down, in the camper, but she said he would not like to admit he was feeling that bad. We said we would check back with her before we left for home.

We had left the camper motor running because of the battery problem, and now went to a garage recommended by Cocksie, and they did have one battery that fit. We also had an oil change, and while looking under the motor, we could see signs of a gasoline leak, but no one could find where it was coming from.

(Remember the problem we had near the end of our 1983 trip. We had asked Chrysler dealers what the problem was, and they told us we needed a new carburetor, but no one could tell which one we needed. Of course they just took Jim's word for what the symptoms were, they didn't see it. We just keep starting the camper so it never sits more than 10 hours, and it works OK, but it does seem that gas is being used very fast, lately.)

We drove off with the new battery in place, and soon found the alternator gauge was showing the battery was not being charged. Went back to the garage, and they took off the cables, cleaned them, and put them back and it worked fine. An hour later it was discharging again, so we drove toward Zwolle, a larger town, and stopped at a large Ford dealer on the edge of town. A mechanic who spoke English checked it and found the alternator was charging fine. Power was getting to the camper battery and not the van battery. He didn't know what to do, so Jim had him reverse the wires and we could at least keep the van running until we found someone who could find and solve the real problem. Most likely didn't need a new battery.

We found a campsite right near the garage, and there were nice hot showers. Emmy just loved the Mackerel from this morning's market.

**NL, Zwolle, June 12, Wed - 5 - 114 -770**

Left the campsite at 8:15 and are going to look for the truck garage who fixed our other camper in 1979, in Amersfoort. Needed to ask directions one time, but we were in the right area. Showed the service manager a picture of the other camper, and he remembered us from 1979.

He sent us to his electrical expert, and since it was now coffee-break time, nothing was done until that was over. They checked a few things, and were going to take the dashboard apart and mess around under there. Jim insisted they should check the gadget that lets the two batteries charge, but keeps them separate otherwise. That was the problem and they happened to have a replacement part, made in Portland, Oregon, and it fit. Jim had asked in the US about bringing one as a spare, but was told it would never fail. Since it cost \$65, we didn't bother bringing one with us. Here, it cost \$65 plus installation, plus of course confirming the problem. Finding the problem took equipment we didn't have. Forgot to ask them about the gasoline leak.

It has been pouring rain most of the morning, and we are driving toward Utrecht. This is the place where the storm blew down part of the church in the 1600's, and left the spire and back of the church in Utrecht still standing. Took them 125 years to get around to cleaning up the mess, but they never did rebuild the front of the church. We parked nearby, and walked and enjoyed the city.

Emmy has found (surprise) Amsterdam has a flea market, and here we go. While we were on the freeway to Amsterdam, it rained so hard for about five minutes we almost had to stop right in the middle of the road. The water was standing three or four inches deep, right on the roadway. Jim tried to get to the shoulder, or to an off-ramp, but by then it had stopped raining. People in other cars and trucks were concerned also. (We know it rained hard while we were in Venice, but at least the flooded streets weren't a problem, like it is on the Dutch Autobahn.)

We drove around and looked at Amsterdam and stopped at a bank to change money. They had an information desk and we asked where we should camp. They mentioned a new one in a part of town we haven't yet visited.

We then drove on and found where the flea market will be tomorrow, then started toward the camp. We were on a freeway with stop and go traffic, mostly stop. Finally we asked the man in the truck in the next lane if we could get off at the next ramp and still get to the campsite, and he indicated yes. In a little while we pulled off into a gas station, but before Jim could start the gas pump, the man in the truck came up beside us and asked why we were going to "that place." We said that the people at the bank in Amsterdam had told us to go, but he said, "That's a bad place (drugs), don't go there."

He said he had one more delivery to make to a nearby restaurant, then we could follow him to the proper campsite. Soon found ourselves at the campsite next to the Olympic Stadium in Amsterdam. We then saw a huge CAMPING sign, 30 or 40 feet high. Jim recognized the sign from 1970 when we drove past here looking for a campsite. We had seen the sign in the distance, but never found this campsite. In 1970 we went on to Amstelveen, and have camped there each time since, but this is much closer to downtown.

**NL, Amsterdam, June 13, Thurs, - 6 - 113 - 883**

Drove downtown and parked in the center of town and walked to the flea market

The flea market has a lot of more-or-less permanent stalls, but found only a small pink depression-glass bowl, then back to the camper and out of town. Was not worth our effort.

Walked through Amsterdam's red-light district and saw the ladies hard at work displaying their wares in the glow of the red-lights, even this early in the morning, but perhaps this is very, very late at night for them. Walked through Amsterdam's red-light district and saw the ladies hard at work displaying their wares in the glow of the red-lights, even this early in the morning, but perhaps this is very, very late at night for them.

The older houses along the canals in Amsterdam have a beam sticking out at the very peak, and when people move in or out they attach a rope and pulley, to help move the furniture. Much like we used a rope and pulley to put hay in the haymow, years ago. We have seen some new houses with the same beam, and wonder if it's for style, or if it's still in use. We were told that in the olden days in Amsterdam they built large windows on the first floor for the large furniture of the adults, smaller windows on the second floor for smaller furniture for the children, and smaller yet on the third floor, for the maid's furniture. Makes a good story, anyhow.

Along each side of the canals there are places to park cars, often without a rail of any kind to help stop the car. There are also warning signs, with a picture of a car going into the canal. We have heard of a school that teaches how to get out of the car when it goes into an Amsterdam canal, as apparently many do each year. Wonder why they don't have a school to teach them how to park instead.

We left The Netherlands and entered Belgium. Spent the next couple of weeks in Paris and northern France, then back to the cousins in Germany. We crossed

France and Switzerland to Milano, Venice, (Country of) San Marino, Florence and Rome, Italy. By ferry we crossed the Adriatic Sea to spend a week in Yugoslavia, including Dubrovnik, Split, and Zagreb, then crossed the border into Austria.

We drove into Czechoslovakia, for our first visit to Prague. Then visited Wrocław, Kraków, Warsaw and Poznan, Poland, then across East Germany to the West. We boarded a ferry to Denmark, another to Sweden, then another ferry back to Denmark. We crossed Germany for another visit with the cousins in Mettlach.

We drove across Luxembourg and Belgium on our way to Rotterdam.

We crossed the Holland border at 1:30, after 191 miles in Belgium, and 229 from Mettlach. We crossed this border at full speed as there was not even a flashing light at the border.

We have had no major problem (except the water pump on day one, and we changed the starter before it became a major problem) with this camper in all these countries and miles in two different years, but we now feel relieved. If we happen to have a problem at this point, a tow truck can get the camper to the ship and we would worry about the problem in Canada. (Can't imagine why we were worried [paranoid!], this vehicle had very few problems, all the years we owned it.)

We bought a Rotterdam map at a rest stop and as we approached downtown Rotterdam it came in handy. Since we had the map Jim was able to say, without a doubt, we had just missed the turnoff we wanted. Without the map we would not have been sure!

We went a short distance out of the way and soon we were at the pier, and almost out of gas. The literature from the ship said we must have little gasoline and no luggage in the camper when they load it onto the ship. We did have a small can of gasoline, just in case, but the gauge was very low as we stopped at the pier.

We had been told we could camp on the pier for the night, no electricity, but we didn't care. The guard unlocked the restrooms and showers the workers use during the work week.

There was a VW camper (among a couple of others) in the lot as we arrived, and the man looked familiar. Turns out he is the man who told us about this ship in the first place, when we met him in Strasbourg, France several months ago. They had planned to stay in Europe for a year, and camp in Portugal during the winter. By now they had had more of camping than they could stand, so are going home. They were more used to a Hilton Hotel, than a campsite. (As Jim says, before you make a trip like this, make sure you can spend six weeks or six months with your travel partner, in a space half the size of a dining room! In Jim's case that's no problem at all, but from his partner's prospective, maybe it's not so clear!)

We walked around the pier for a few minutes, watched the sunset, then went to bed. We used the gas for the refrigerator and the gas heater, and all worked fine.

**NL, Rotterdam, Oct 21, Mon-102-266- 13,159**

The Stefan Batory arrived at 8:00 AM right on schedule. This is their trip number 132, so they must know how to do it by now. We drove the camper into the building and took out the luggage we will need on the ship.

We had packed all of our goodies in boxes and suitcases, also just in case. If we had all that stuff under the seats, what would we have done if we found they were serious about no luggage in the camper.

The ticket says they will weigh the camper before loading it on the Stefan Batory. We already paid for 1500 Kilograms of camper weight, but we weighed it in Mettlach and found it weights 2500 Kilogram. If they did weigh it, we didn't want all this stuff in the camper as that could have put it into a higher weight bracket, and it would have cost several hundred dollars extra. We were allowed 500 pounds of boxes, etc., on the ship as luggage, at no additional cost.

We had extra cash with us to pay for the additional weight, if needed. All of our concern and work was for nothing, as they neither weighted it, nor cared what was in it. We try to think of everything, and most of the time we do!

Here is where we more than got even with the Polish Government for keeping our money at their border. They did not weigh the camper, so we did not have to pay \$900 for the extra weight. That is much more than the \$150 they kept at the border, so there Poland!

Jim went to the office to pay for our upgrade to a room with bath, and asked about marine insurance. We cancelled our European auto insurance as of tomorrow, and the US insurance will start when we arrive in Montreal. They said to buy marine insurance, we would have to go across town and see a certain insurance company. We tried to telephone them, but the pay phone on the pier was out of order. About this time we could see they were loading other campers, and soon we saw them start to lift ours.

We could just imagine the conversation with the insurance company, "Where is your camper," and we would answer, "The last time we saw it, it was a hundred feet in the air on the end of a cable." Since they load vehicles all the time, they must know what they are doing, so who needs the insurance. We found later, in addition to several campers, the Stefan Batory had a lot of cars on board including a Rolls Royce, and an antique Mercedes-Benz.

We now had nothing to do until after lunch, and nowhere to do it. We thought of taking a cab downtown, but we have been there before and it's not much to see in such a short time period. Jim went for a walk and Emmy sat and talked with some people she had met. Finally we boarded the ship at 1:30 PM, had lunch at 3:00, left the dock at 4:00 or 5:00 in the afternoon, and had dinner at 6:00 PM.

We stood on deck and watched while the ship sailed out of the Rotterdam harbor and down the river toward London. Here it's called the Maas River, but it becomes the Rhine River at the German border.

We got settled in our cabin, and Jim expects he will live for the entire trip, but after seeing the menu, he doesn't expect to eat too much, or at least not a great variety of things.

We put the camper and us on the Polish ship, the SS Stefan Batory, and sailed to London for a day. Then we spent 10 days crossing the Atlantic Ocean to Montreal, Canada, and from there we drove the camper home to California.