

EDINBURGH'S OLD AND NEW TOWNS

Edinburgh's Medieval Old Town (encompassing the Castle, the Royal Mile and various closes and wynds that come off the Royal Mile) and the Georgian New Town (Princess St., George St. and the other regally named streets which are part of the grid) are another of Scotland's World Heritage Sites, with Princess Street Gardens providing a link between both parts of town.

In the 1700s around 25,000 people lived in cramped conditions in Edinburgh's Old Town – it was so noisy and smelly that visitors could smell Edinburgh as they approached Dalkeith, eight miles away!

Building began on the New Town in 1767 (to relieve the appalling conditions that people were living under in the Old Town). First, the Nor Loch was drained. The Nor Loch is now Princess Street Gardens, but formerly and rather worryingly it used to be the town's water supply - worryingly because all of the town's effluent used to run down the hill and into the loch. It was apparently a cesspit.

The second phase of New Town building was in the early 1800s and the architectural style is much more regular and has some beautiful curved, sweeping streets such as Royal Circus. There are similar streets in Bath and London.



NEW LANARK

New Lanark is situated in a gorge in the Clyde Valley near the town of Lanark. In 1785 a man named David Dale created a cotton mill village there. In 1800, Dale's son-in-law, Robert Owen, took over the mills and ran them for the next 24 years. What is remarkable about the mill story is that Owen realised that the mill's success would be best achieved by ensuring the wellbeing of his staff. His ideas were revolutionary at the time. Amongst the benefits he introduced for his staff were: childcare facilities, education, healthcare and cooperative shopping.

The cotton mills were the largest in Scotland for many years and closed in the 1960s.



THE NEOLITHIC HEART OF ORKNEY

The Heart of Neolithic Orkney comprises of four discrete but related sites situated on West Mainland, Orkney - the village of Skara Brae situated in the Bay of Skail; the chambered tomb Maes Howe; the standing stones of Stenness, together with two other stones which stand alone: the Watchstone and Barnhouse Stones; and the Ring of Brodgar.

Skara Brae lay hidden for almost 4000 years and was uncovered after a severe storm in 1850. When excavated soon after it was initially thought to be a Pictish village (third - ninth centuries AD). However, in the 1930s it was re-dated to between c3100-2500BC. It is the finest and most well-preserved Stone Age settlement in Western Europe. Ten buildings, almost sub-terranean, are linked by a central passageway which runs through this compact little village. The passageway is cramped and narrow; the houses in comparison are spacious (by stone age standards) and interestingly enough built to a similar cruciform design. Unfortunately few artefacts remain from Gordon Childe's 1927 excavation (which by today's standards was an archaeologist's worst nightmare; his notes describe 'sweeping and clearing out' broken pieces of pottery!).

Older Orcadians still talk of playing in the houses of Skara Brae when they were children, lying in the beds and lighting fires in the hearths. This is not so today. The 55,000 tourists who visit the site each year have taken their toll on the site and visitors now have to view the buildings from paths and viewing platforms up above.

The Ring of Brodgar Stone Circle comprises of 60 stones set in a near perfect circle 104 metres in diameter and surrounded by a ditch. It dates from around 2500BC. Nearby are the Standing Stones of Stenness - giant monoliths which look dramatic in the flat Orcadian countryside.

Closeby is the chambered tomb Maes Howe - the crème de la crème of chambered tombs. Maes Howe is thought to be associated with the midwinter solstice and on the shortest day a webcam seeks to record the setting sun shining directly down the passage of Maeshowe, illuminating the back wall and passage in a dramatic fashion for a few minutes.

For such a small nation, four World Heritage Sites (with one more on the way possibly this year) is indicative of the passion that the Scots have for maintaining tradition and educating people about the nation's heritage. Come and see for yourself; you won't be disappointed!

For more information see: www.whc.unesco.org



Charles Handy

Laura Westbury

Laura is DESTINATIONS' cartoonist and one of the sub-editors. Her last article was on another famous Shell expat, Roald Dahl. Laura lives in The Hague, the Netherlands, with her husband Jonathan and their three daughters Isabelle (currently playing cricket at boarding school in England), Julia, and Sophia.

To the business community Charles Handy is a world famous management guru, the only non-American ranked in the top twenty according to The Thinkers Fifty (2005). His many books have sold over a million copies and his work has led to a fundamental change in the way organisations and employees worldwide see their futures. In his recent book, 'Myself and Other Important Matters', Handy writes about his crucial first job after university - nine years with Shell.

Born in 1932, Handy grew up in modest but happy circumstances in rural Ireland, the son of a vicar. Academically bright, he completed his formal education at Oxford University where he studied 'Greats' – the language, history and philosophy of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Having gained a first class degree at Oxford, many careers were open to Handy:

"I wanted something that would take me abroad in comfort, and applied to the great Shell organisation which I knew spanned the globe." 1

Apologising for his choice of degree subject, one far removed from the oil business, he was told not to worry, Shell would fill his well trained but 'empty' mind with useful knowledge!

One of 14 'Golden Boys' (new graduates with management potential), Handy was given a three year posting to the Far East. In Kuala Lumpur, after a spell shadowing the GM, he was soon presenting the operations director with

his new plan to reorganise the oil transportation system in Malaysia. This did not go down well. However, soon after, in Singapore, his lack of experience was no bar to him being appointed as an economist covering South East Asia. This was his first taste of Shell's preference for learning by immersion; armed only with a book, 'Teach Yourself Economics', he even found himself guessing prostitutes' earnings in his estimate of Singapore's income.

Then, again Shell threw Handy in at the deep end when they sent him to his first management job in Borneo. He became their marketing representative in charge of all sales of petroleum in Sarawak and Brunei, responsible for 200 local staff. even though, as he points out, he was only 22 and still couldn't tell petrol from diesel fuel.

With little interference from the head office in Singapore Handy learned fast, grateful to Shell for leaving him to make mistakes unnoticed. Over time he realised that people matter more than anything, that there is no text book answer for anything, and that formal learning must be tied to experience to have any value.

After this eventful three year apprenticeship, Handy tried to find a job outside Shell. Unsuccessful, he found himself back in Malaysia for a further three year posting which ended with a spell as the Shell manager in Malacca living in some style in a fine old colonial house. This proved to be a sad contrast to his two bedroom flat when he was promoted back to HQ in London.

Bored and underused in a desk job, he was happy to move to work at Shell's management training centre near Kingston. So happy in fact that he decided that his future career lay in such training, and, refusing the job of Shell manager in Liberia, he resigned. In his book 'The Elephant and the Flea' [2001], he refers to his wish to be an 'flea', independent of the Shell 'elephant':

"It's a very bad exchange to hand over the ownership of intellectual property in return for an employee contract. My intellectual property is mine." 2



Windsor Castle where Handy ran a study centre

Asked to join the fledgling London Business School, Handy started by spending a year at MIT attending an American university business programme. Then followed ten years at the London School where he became a Professor specialising in management psychology. His father's death caused a major rethink in his life, at which time he went to live and work at Windsor Castle, running a study centre considering ethical and moral issues in society. In 1981, aged 49, he finally gave up fulltime employment and devoted himself to lecturing, broadcasting and writing.

Handy's experiences have led him to re-examine the whole concept of work. He contends that the age of the 'mass organisation', with regimented hierarchies where we could be employed most of our lives, is over and that new types of organisations, new approaches to work, and new ideas about our purpose and place in this world are needed.

As an antidote to the 'cradle to grave' business culture, Handy writes of organisations having to get leaner, flatter and more flexible with fewer but better paid employees. In 'Age of Unreason' [1990], Handy writes of increasing freedom and flexibility where people can take more responsibility in their jobs and careers, shaping their own 'portfolio' of work, as he himself did.

By 1994 his view of how the world of work was changing had become less optimistic. He argues in 'The Empty Raincoat' that changes had come at too great a price; and society had lost its way in the headlong pursuit of efficiency and economic growth – with people becoming nameless cogs in the wheel of progress in the process.

Nine years with Shell, when it was more an old style 'mass organisation', gave Handy his only direct experience of big business, and what he learned there is crucial to his thinking. He frequently refers to his Shell experience in his writing. For example, on the need for organisations to be both big and small, with power at the centre and devolved also to smaller units, he writes that loyalties to both are

"Lubricated by cross fertilisation, by moving people between the parts and the centre. In that way more people are exposed to more of the bigger reality; they not only grow themselves, but their vision and understanding of the total organisation grows with them. Shell, one of the oldest of the corporate federations, knows that its core of 5,000 expatriates is the bond which holds it all together..." 3.

Referring again directly to his own Shell experience, Handy says in London his job had an impressive title – 'Regional co-ordinator marketing (Oil)' – but no power. It was dull and frustrating and it made him feel like an 'empty raincoat'. Conversely, in Sarawak, Handy did feel that he had a serious function, and this was not just to make profits for shareholders, but also to:

"... help produce things for people which were badly needed, in good condition, at a fair price, on time, without mucking up the local scenery or upsetting the local councillors or villagers..." 4

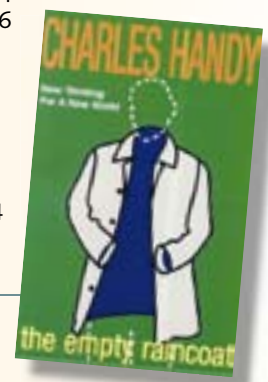
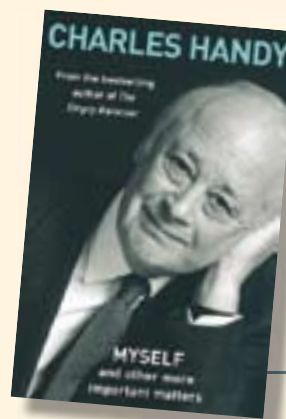
He believes that profit is necessary but it should be used wisely, to enable a business to continue to do or make things, and to do so even better. And as for personal profit, in his early days as an 'oil executive', Handy says he compared his progress in life with his friends by looking at how much they earned, but in later life came to a different conclusion,

"Money is seldom the measure of much once you have enough." 5

Leaving the security of full time employment enabled Handy to find his true calling as a writer and philosopher. Despite leaving the company many years ago, the good memories he has of his time with Shell, the elephant to his flea, are evident throughout his writings.

REFERENCES

1. Myself and Other Important Matters, C. Handy 2006
2. The Elephant and the Flea, C. Handy 2001
- 3.4.5. The Empty Raincoat, C. Handy 1994



Destinations will feature more articles on people who have gone on to interesting new careers after leaving Shell. If you have ideas on who we could profile, or would like to submit a story yourself, please let us know.



Sacred place on Olkhon Island

We flew into Khabarovsk, and began our nerve-wrecking trip to the hotel in a taxi with a crazy driver, and no seat belts. We were soon standing on the roadside, our taxi grounded by two blown tyres. Another taxi arrived within minutes, complete with a driver as crazy as the first!

Taxis aside, Khabarovsk turned out to be a lovely city built on the hillsides of the beautiful Amur River. The well-maintained old buildings, coffee terraces and the nice weather made us feel like we were in Europe.

Our real journey began the next day, when we boarded the Amur train. Our first stop would be Ulan Ude, then Irkutsk. From these stops, we planned to spend some time exploring the Lake Baikal district, considered the centre of Siberian Buddhism and Shamanism.

The Amur train (not the “real” red and blue Trans-Siberian Express)* was army green, and staffed by lovely young provodnitsa’s (wagon attendants). Not many foreigners take this train, and the provodnitsa seemed puzzled by our passports. Eventually she let us board, and showed us to the four berth Kupé that we had to ourselves. Her name was Nadia and she was very curious about us, so she returned occasionally to chat, as did a Russian guy who had drunk too much vodka.

We watched as the vast Siberian landscape passed our window, not wanting to miss any of it. At times there was

Khabarovsk, Trans-Siberian Lake Baikal

Louise is a regular Destinations contributor. Her article ‘The last mosaics of Sakhalin’ was awarded the JMS Literary Prize 2007. Louise read a book about crossing Siberia by train when she was 15 years old. Last year, with her husband, she made the trip - fulfilling a long time dream.

Louise van Alenburg

nothing to see but taiga, taiga, and more taiga* in stunning autumn colours.

We passed the journey taking turns getting hot water from the Samovar for tea, coffee and noodles, pizza from the trolley, going to the Restoran, making more coffee, and eventually, “ah, why bother, let’s open this bottle of vodka!”. We slept soundly, lulled by the train’s monotonous rhythm, but we woke up early to catch the sunrise over the misty plains dotted with villages and haystacks.

After three days of travel, we reached Ulan Ude, where we were met by the red-headed brothers Kostya and Pasha. They took us for dinner, and we strolled through the town centre, admiring the well-kept old houses and buildings. The next day we visited the biggest Buddhist temple in Russia, the Ivolginsky Datsan, and then enjoyed a traditional Buryat lunch. Our lovely hostess, Gelya, shared my love of gardening, and I promised to send her to send her some Dutch produce seeds.

Kostya and Pasha took turns to drive the 260km journey north to Ust-Barguzin on the east side of Lake Baikal. On the pass through the mountains we had snow - on September 6! At least the cold weather made our backpacks lighter as we needed to wear more layers! We paid our respects to the spirits by sprinkling vodka in the directions of the four winds at a holy tree. There are many sacred

Railway and

places in this area, where all energy seems to flow together.

In Ust-Barguzin we stayed with a family who gave us a warm welcome by heating up the Banya (Russian sauna) and by preparing a great meal, in spite of a power cut.

We were woken the next morning by the smell of fresh blinis. We drove to the Zabaikalskii National Park where we headed for the Sacred Nose Peninsula. It was too cold for staying in our tent, so we spent the next three nights in a hut. It was equipped with 3 tables (2 for sleeping) and a fire-place. The thick walls held the heat so that the hut stayed warm long after the fire went out: "A good design". The brothers used this expression continuously. When the fog finally cleared from the mountain that we climbed, they said "good design"; when someone won a game with dice made from bread, they said "good design"; when we saw a fox roaming around the hut..." good design". But when a head-light fell off the car because of the bad road, they were not sure: was this a good design or not?

We did a lot of hiking, went out on a boat on Lake Baikal, took a hot mineral bath, and visited the strange Barguzin Valley further to the North. The landscape was definitely a good design! Vast steppes, golden fields, and strange rock formations made the valley an artist's heaven. Our guides were fantastic cooks and prepared three hot meals a day on the open fire: "ochen vkuzna" (very delicious). They were very knowledgeable about our surroundings and the Buryat culture. We felt sad to leave, but our train to Irkutsk was waiting for the next stretch of our Trans-Siberian journey.

Our next guide, Leonid, met us in Irkutsk, a pleasant city of old Siberian houses with wonderfully crafted wooden window frames. We spent the night at a local family's typical Stalinist Russian apartment. From Irkutsk, we traveled to Olkhon Island, the largest island on the western side of Lake Baikal. The landscape here was sparse. There were hardly any trees, and horses, cows, and sheep roamed on the golden steppe that contrasted with the serene, dark blue water of Lake Baikal.

We stayed in the village of Khuzir with Olga and her family who were very hospitable and stuffed us with their very good cooking. They had a banya, and an outdoor bathroom. The toilet was in the garden behind the potato plants. Imagine in winter!



Lake Baikal gorge

Khuzir only got electricity in 2005. Village life was great to watch; people were busy preparing for winter, cutting firewood and getting hay indoors. Everyone owns a cow that grazes with other cows in the fields during the day and returns home itself as soon as the sun sets. The cows each wait in front of their owner's house to be let in for the night.

The rocky northern tip of the island had magnificent views over the lake, and Leonid was a knowledgeable guide. We could feel the calming, Shamanist energy around us. We spent our last day on mountain bikes, criss-crossing the hills and watching the cattle graze and the hawks hunt rodents.

Sadly, our time was up, and Leonid took us back to Irkutsk. We stumbled upon a great restaurant in a wine cellar where we drank vodka and danced away the last night of our journey.

We caught our plane back to Khabarovsk, then on to Yuzhno Sakhalinsk, bringing home with us many wonderful memories.

* Many people take the Trans-Siberian Express from Moscow to Vladivostok, but taking the Amur train, the other way round, is less common.

* taiga = trees

Home with a husband

Sharon Montgomery

Sharon, editor DESTINATIONS 2004-06, has been 'home with husband' for just over a year.

My husband jokes (well, he'd like you to think he's joking) that he daren't turn his back on me when I'm in easy reach of the knife-rack. Meanwhile, I tell friends that the reason he's taken over the cooking is that he fears I might poison him. Not the cosy traditional image of a newly-retired couple in their prime, is it?

It's probably not a good idea to be suddenly spending all day, every day in one's husband's company when one is still in the turbulent throes of hormonal changes (thank you, menopause) and one's last child has suddenly become alarmingly independent. Oh, and you've just left a rewarding and challenging job. Someone's got to be the target for all your mixed-up anguish - guess who? Yes, him, sitting innocently on the sofa trying to get on with the crossword.

I've been thinking hard, and here are the advantages I've come up with of having your husband home all the time:

- He helps you fold sheets.
- You don't have to lock up the house every time you pop out.
- He takes out the rubbish.
- He cooks you lunch, and dinner.
- He carries heavy shopping home.

There may be others. I have to reflect a little longer.

The disadvantages:

- You have to explain what you are doing.
- You have to tell him where you are going, and when you will be back.
- There are conflicts over having the radio or music on/off.
- He gets strangely irritated when you casually mention DIY jobs he could be doing.
- He is incapable of holding a civil conversation whilst doing the crossword.
- He expects to eat all meals properly, at the table.

Etc, etc.

The home is no longer your domain, you have to share it. He, fresh from making high-powered executive decisions and facilitating outcomes, or whatever it was he did at Shell, expects his home to operate on the same lines. You may have run the household for 30 years, but would have done it far more efficiently if you'd done it his way! Now he's here to show you how. Why aren't you grateful?

Friends a few years down the line mutter darkly about needing 'apart time', and one took a part-time job simply to get away from the happy home a couple of days a week. However, these women are still married, so how do they avoid the divorce courts/high court on a murder charge?

I suppose we'll get there in the end - to that Darby and Joan nirvana of cosy cups of tea in National Trust cafes and gentle strolls in matching leisure wear. Meanwhile, there are a lot of compromises to agree on.



Jane Roberts

Jane Roberts launches Uni-box, an innovative new business, on returning to Glasgow, Scotland, after years abroad.

Jane and sons visiting Grand Mosque Kuwait.

A new life in Glasgow

Having spent the last few years living the expat life in the US and Middle East, my life changed drastically when I moved to Glasgow. From being the lady that lunched, shopped, sunbathed and partied, I arrived to the busy streets of Glasgow where little of my former life was possible. I missed it dreadfully and felt quite homesick. To top it off, I also now had to help fund my children's education at university and school.

Our first son attended university while we were still living in Kuwait. I flew back to the UK with him and since he hadn't got into the university halls of residence, we spent a harassed week trying to find him accommodation. What a task! Even once we had found somewhere for him to stay, there was still all the bed linen, kitchen bits and studying paraphernalia to buy.

Our second son did get into university accommodation, and because we were now based in Glasgow the logistics were slightly easier, but once again we still had to purchase suitable bedding, kitchen bits and study bits and pieces. It was while shopping with him and getting totally frustrated by his lack of interest in what he needed, that I thought to myself that I would try and buy everything online and have it delivered. This was not as easy as I thought, as it would require separate purchases and delivery fees from different companies to get what he needed. That was where the idea of Uni-box began. Going through this difficult 'kitting out' process with my sons, I realised that there was a missing niche, a way of saving time and hassle for other parents in our position. My idea was this - I would put together student packs: kitchen, bedding, and study packs, and deliver them direct to the halls before they arrived.

After much market research and trials, The Uni-box Co (UK) Ltd was formed and the website www.theuni-box.com was launched. Our products are all of excellent quality and come from well-known manufacturers. We supply bedding packs containing everything from duvets to towels. Kitchen packs with everything from saucepans to a corkscrew, and study packs containing files, pens, calculator and more. We have also just launched a line of double bed packs, and a new super

kit containing a kettle, toaster, iron and sandwich maker as well as the more basic items. In fact, we now cater not just for students but also for anyone setting up a new home. Our prices are kept competitive with, and in some cases cheaper than, the average high street store.

One year on and we are going strong with our packs going to students arriving in UK from India, China, Malaysia, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, France, Norway, and Germany as well as from throughout the UK. We deliver UK wide, and have just launched our boarding school pack. The business is going well and 2007 is looking to be just as bright.

I still miss the sun and travel of life in warmer climates, but I can say we have had a great summer in Glasgow and my life is now busy and fulfilled. I cannot complain. The weather can be a downside, but there are many upsides - the shopping in Glasgow and Edinburgh is great, the locals are extremely friendly and Scotland offers beautiful scenery and interesting locations. Even whale watching, which we did last summer!

THE DELIGHTS OF THE UNI-BOX...

