

Life with a Scottish Accent: My Summer Studying Abroad - Part 3

By Natalie Wallace

Another two weeks have gone by and the Scottish adventures continue. I started my internship as a research assistant with the School of Sport here at the University. I am already starting to feel like part of the team! I got to assist in two bicycle trials where we measured lactate levels in the blood during different levels of resistance on the bike. During the first trial, I mostly observed so that I could get the feel for the trial protocol. Then during the second trial, they let me take the helm. I got to take the blood samples to test the lactate levels and also controlled the resistance on the bike. Another big part of my internship is data analysis. I have been taking the data from the trials and putting it into Excel



Natalie Wallace at the Glenfinnan Viaduct.

to make spreadsheets and graphs. Even though it was only two weeks, I feel like I have already learned so much through my internship. Last week a group of us decided to do a Ghost Tour of Stirling. The guide was in full costume and character as the old town "torturer." After walking through the old part of Stirling, he took us up to the cemetery, which was beautiful, and not as creepy as I thought it was going to be. Our guide was very knowledgeable as well as funny and told us not only ghost stories, but also a lot of the history behind them which I really appreciated. That weekend I also took a guided three day trip of the Scottish highlands. I have to say that trip was definitely the highlight of my time in Scotland (at least



The guide at the Ghost Tour of Stirling.

so far). Our guide's name was Nory, and he was frankly the best tour guide I have ever had. He was hilarious and told us tons of stories and history about all of the places we went and made it interesting, not just a boring history lecture. The first day we drove through the highlands to Glencoe, Fort Williams, and even stopped at the Glenfinnan Viaduct, which is better known as the Harry Potter Bridge. It was amazing how beautiful and green everything was, things in Oregon are green, but it is nothing compared to the shade of green in Scotland, it looks almost fake, it was like something out of a fantasy film!

The second day we spent exploring the beautiful



Faerie Glen

Isle of Skye off the coast of mainland Scotland. We first went to the Faerie Pools, which are these crystal clear pools and waterfalls that you can swim in. We ate lunch there and waded around in them for a bit. Since it is mountain run off, they were refreshingly cold, but it wasn't anywhere near as cold as the Oregon Coast. After the faerie pools, we headed out and stopped at many places to take pictures of various mountain ranges and landmarks. The last stop of the day was Faerie Glen, which is where the entrance to the faerie kingdom is supposed to be. Nory warned us that we better all believe in faeries or we could be dragged into the faerie kingdom where we would be stuck for a whole year until we could get pulled back out again.

The third and last day of our trip started out with us getting the chance to go out onto Loch Carron with a local fisherman to catch Queen's scallops. When the catch came up, we all had fun picking through all of the different organisms that had been caught in the net even though we didn't catch too many scallops. After that, we headed back out on the road and went to



Scottish Highlands

Loch Ness and then to Rob Roy MacGregor's grave to round out our trip. To my disappointment, I did not see Nessie, but that doesn't mean that she doesn't exist!

I took another trip to London with two of my roommates as well over one weekend. We saw and did so much that I can't believe we fit it all into only three days. The highlight had to be going to the Harry Potter Studio Tour. It was amazing to see where the films were actually shot and walk on the actual sets. While in London we also saw the Tower of London, Westminster Abbey, Baker Street, Kensington Palace, Hyde Park, and even did a night bus tour of the city. The night tour was one of my favorites because it gave us a chance to see the whole city all lit up.

Even though I am having a great time in Scotland, I do miss my family. I can't believe that I only have two weeks left abroad, it seems like I just got here. I guess that is just how these experiences work; after all, time flies when you're having fun!



Natalie at Loch Ness.

Natalie Wallace is a 2012 graduate of Vernonia High School who is majoring in Biology at Western Oregon University. Wallace is spending the summer studying abroad at the University of Stirling in Stirling, Scotland. Wallace will be sending Vernonia's Voice updates throughout the summer about her adventures in Scotland.

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