

Hosteling — inexpensive travel for teens and adults



photo by Sumanesh Agrawal

What goes where?

Joe Atwood, left, a mechanical engineering major, works on his girlfriend's carburetor. Trouble developed in the part while the two

were taking a countryside drive. Atwood's roommate, Ron Keeney, a geology major, helps with the work. Both are juniors from Houston.

United Press International
NEW YORK — That night in Scotland, when there was no room at the bed-n-breakfasts, was a turning point in her life, Stacy Landau will tell you. "It was my first trip to Europe," Landau said. "I was 21. I'd just graduated from college."

Having set out to travel through Scotland on a British rail pass and a limited budget, she found herself in Aviemore and all the bed-n-breakfasts were full.

"Somebody told me about the youth hostel and I lugged my suitcase there," she said. "It was dinner time. There were a bunch of kids, sharing the cooking. They welcomed me like I was a long lost friend."

"I wound up staying a week there. Then I threw away my suitcase, bought a backpack and for eight months I hosted through Scotland, England and Europe."

It had started as a summer excursion. "I'd planned to stay until my money ran out," she said. "Because of hosteling I could stay a lot longer."

She said a night at a hostel generally costs about a third as much as a night at a bed-n-breakfast, let alone a hotel.

She wrote a glowing letter to American Youth Hostels on her return and wound up with a job promoting hosteling for the Metropolitan New York AYH Council, with 17,000 members.

Landau, a Brooklyn, N.Y., native, preaches hosteling with evangelical fervor.

"It's not just for kids," she said. "It's open to all. Something we're working on is more accommodations for couples."

"We have all sorts of tours. And that has many advantages. But I had set out almost on the spur of the moment (five days from decision to takeoff) and

was soloing, traveling as an independent."

"But after I began hosteling, I was never really alone unless I wanted to be."

"You always meet people. Often, you travel together for a

... "Somebody told me about the youth hostel and I lugged my suitcase there ... A bunch of kids welcomed me like I was a long lost friend ... I threw away my suitcase, bought a backpack and for eight months I hosted through Scotland, England and Europe." — Stacy Landau, a promoter for American Youth Hostels.

day or more. The people I met at a hostel in Stockholm, I met again in Italy."

In all, she visited 15 countries. She recalls the hostels in castles in Scotland and Germany; those in chalets in Switzerland; one with a sauna and steam bath in Norway; one in Wales you could hike to only on foot; and one on a ship in Stockholm harbor.

Except for a hostel in Venice, which she feels suffered from the building's age and too much togetherness — "there were about 50 people in a single huge

room," she says the hostels were clean and well managed.

After all, as she puts it: "We clean them. It's part of the routine. When you get up in the morning, you are assigned a chore by the house parents. Everybody pitches in. It's not a big job and kind of fun."

"Often we could buy breakfast for a very nominal amount." She remembers with relish "fresh churned butter, home baked bread and hot chocolate" at a hostel in Switzerland.

But AYH tours are the thing for many. The advantages include a tour leader who is an experienced hosteler and has taken an AYH training course in such things as handling travel problems and arrangements, first aid, bike repairs and group leadership.

A majority of the tours, of

which there are scores of bikers. But some are for campers and some are for transportation. They cover the United States, Europe. There are tours to Canada, Cuba, the Andes, Japan and now tours to China.

A sampling of Europe including air transportation: *Journey Through Alps*, 23 days, \$1,399, including, hosteling-huts, *British Arts and Crafts*, 23 days, \$1,569, public transportation, hosteling; *France, Switzerland*, 36 days, \$1,689, including, hosteling, \$1,689.

Hosteling is open to those aged 13 to 18, and seniors 18. AYH membership fees, \$14 for seniors, includes the bearer to use 3000+ telts worldwide.

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Boots aren't made for much walkin'

United Press International
NEW YORK — A New York podiatrist and foot surgeon has a warning for urban cowboys who are joining the national craze for cowboy boots — those boots were made for riding, podner, not walking.

Louis Shure, D.P.M., said in the May issue of *American Health* magazine that the boots' shallow toe boxes cause corns and calluses on the tops of toes, and also hammertoes. The

curled-up toes also lead to calluses underfoot from poorly aligned metatarsal joints striking an inflexible boot sole. And the toe boxes cause bunions while the irritation causes bursitis.

Dr. Abram Pion, a Pennsylvania podiatrist, says cowboy boots contribute to low-back problems since they throw the body off balance and aggravate existing deformities.

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