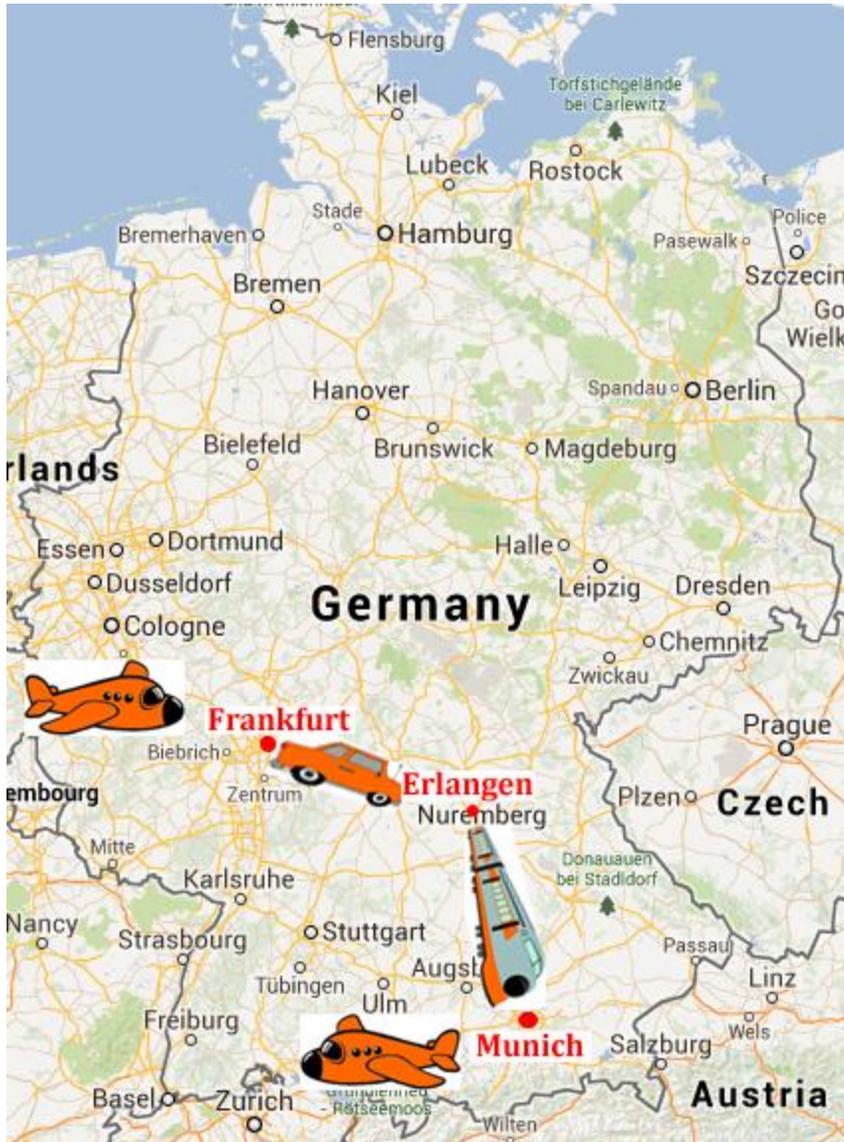


# Germany 2013

Frankfurt (Idstein), Erlangen, Munich



A memoir of how Gordon & Ursula, joined by Jennifer & Winston, went to Germany to be with Monica, Toby, and Benji. Toby had won an academic competition for a working visit to Italy and Germany.

# Introduction

February, 2013: **Toby** wins the Bavarian Graduate School of Computational Engineering Student Paper Prize at the SIAM CS&E Conference in Boston. As reported on the website of the University of Texas' ICES (Institute for Computational Engineering and Science:

## Isaac wins international paper prize



Tobin "Toby" Isaac, a student in ICES' Computational Science, Engineering, and Mathematics graduate program, won an international prize for his work simulating the movement of polar ice sheets.

The Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics Conference on Computational Science and Engineering awarded Isaac the Best Student Paper Prize for his paper and presentation entitled "Advanced Simulation of Polar Ice Sheets: Meshing, Parallel Adaptivity, High-order Discretization, Robust Scalable Solvers, and Inversion for Basal Boundary Conditions."

Isaac is part of a research team led by Omar Ghattas, professor of geological sciences and mechanical engineering and director of the Institute for Computation Engineering & Sciences Center for Computational Geosciences. The team is trying to figure out the dynamics of ice sheets in Antarctica, and how it affects sea level rise. "As the climate warms, glaciologists have observed that the flow of ice into the ocean has been speeding up in West Antarctica. Why?" he says. Their work was recently featured by the [National Science Foundation](#).

Here's the news as presented by the Bavarian Graduate School of Computational Engineering:

### 4th BGCE Student Paper Prize

The [4th BGCE Student Paper Prize](#) has been awarded at SIAM CS&E on March 28, 2013. Out of eight finalists who well presented nice work, Mr. **Tobin Isaac** of the University of Texas in Austin won the prize with his presentation on "Advanced simulation of polar ice sheets: meshing, parallel adaptivity, high-order discretization, robust scalable solvers, and inversion for basal boundary conditions".  
Congratulations!

This was not Toby's first international conference. He presented a paper at the **IEEE International Parallel & Distributed Processing Symposium** in Shanghai in May, 2012, and has also spoken at several international conferences in American settings from Alaska to the Atlantic coast.

The recent Prize included travel and accommodations to make presentations, and visit with interested researchers, in Italy (Padua) and Germany (Erlangen and Munich). He brought Monica and Benji along, and they asked if we'd like to join them. We couldn't manage the full two weeks, but did decide to join them for the second week, in Germany. And Jennifer and Winston were able to come along as well.

Toby made a formal presentation at the **SIAM Conference on Mathematical & Computational Issues in the Geosciences** at the **Universita degli Studi di Padova** (in Padua) before we arrived in Germany, and had informal discussions and presentations in Erlangen (at FAU, the **Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg**) and in Munich (at TUM, the **Technische Universität München**). These activities kept him busy during weekdays, but he was able to be with us most evenings and weekend days.

Our neighbor Dean Jue took us to the Tallahassee airport for a very early-morning flight to DC, and we enjoyed some time with Jennifer & Winston. Winston was working, but we were able to have a salad lunch at **Sweet Greens** in the Reston Town Center, then enjoyed gelato for dessert at nearby **Pitango**.



Dinner was at the **Alamo Drafthouse** in the new Loudon 1 center in Ashburn, north of Dulles.  
Movie: **Man of Steel**, in 3-D.





Winston was still working (from home), so we brought some takeout back from **Einstein Bros. Bagels**. Not long after, we took a cab to the Washington-Dulles airport (IAD) for our 5:55 flight to London.

After going through Security, we settled in at **Vina Volo** near the gate, and enjoyed an early supper with flights of wine.



The weather was fine outside, beyond the wide wings of the Boeing 777-200.

It was cozy inside, with Jennifer and Winston in the two seats in front of us.



We landed at Heathrow's Terminal 4, and walked. And walked. And walked to Terminal 1, where we had to prepare quickly for another trip through Security. After that there was a waiting area for all international gates, where the gate numbers are posted shortly before boarding. While waiting for the (delayed) posting of our gate number, Ursula had time to do a little shopping at the **Harrad's** outlet for gifts.

The flight to Frankfurt was on a smaller plane, we had four widely separated seats, and Winston and I had no place to put our carry-ons...but we managed for the flight that took only a little over an hour.

Customs at the Frankfurt airport was a breeze, and we were met there by Martin, Irina, Gabi, and Hannelies. Claus packed us into his Skoda, and drove us to his (and Gabi's) home in Idstein (about 23 miles west of the airport). There we enjoyed a big German brunch of meats, cheeses, breads, and more...with Claus & Gabi, their friend Beate, Hannelies, Martin and Irina, and Horst.



After the brunch, we had a very welcome nap in Claus & Gabi's sleek and modern house.



They have an incredible flower garden in back, a pasture across the street on one side, and a large hole in the ground (for a house to be built soon) on the other side.



In the evening, Claus and Martin drove us to the Italian restaurant **La Grotta** in nearby Hochheim. We had a long table for 16...Claus & Gabi; Gabi eins; Martin, Irina, & Manuela, Sabine; Lutz, Barbara, Joachim & Michael (and Nathalie); and the four of us. The huge platter of appetizers in the picture was just one of three. Dinner was leisurely, fun, delicious, and filling.



Dinner was leisurely, fun, delicious, and filling—even if we were still a little jet-lagged.



After another big German Breakfast, Claus and Martin drove us (and Gabi, Irina, and Manuela) to Erlangen.

Jennifer, Winston, and I enjoyed a fast and fun drive on the Autobahn. Ursula took a tranquilizer. We all arrived in fine shape



Along the way, we stopped at a large rest area on the Autobahn—complete with observation deck, gift shop, restaurant, and, of course (this is Europe) pay toilets.





We were ready for a walk, and decided to visit the **Botanische Garten**, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile north. Claus, Gabi, Martin, Irina, Manuela, and Ursula went for ice cream at a nearby cafe.



We walked about a mile to the **CreativeHotel Luise** in Erlangen, where we met Monica and Benji. Benji was shy with us at first, but soon warmed up.



Meanwhile, Monica, Benji, and I relaxed in the grass, and Benji also explored the path around a nearby fountain. He seemed to love the feel of the gravel on his hands, but we wouldn't let him sample the taste of it.

Claus & Gabi, and Martin, Irina, and Manuela left to go back home, and we joined Toby at the Hotel Luise. Benji demonstrated his crawling ability, and enjoyed a luscious strawberry.



Toby got recommendations for restaurants, and we set off. Ursula and I were a little behind, and quickly got lost.



With the help of texting and GPS (love that modern technology!) we finally made the 1-mile trip after about 2 miles of walking and joined them at the **Kitzmann BräuSchänke**, on little Südliche Stadtmauerstrasse, for local specialties. Benji was eager to try everything.



The breakfast buffet at the Hotel Luise was varied and delicious. A highchair was available, as it was in every hotel, cafe, and beer garden we visited. Benji continued to explore his food options.



After breakfast, Benji enjoyed crawling around and exploring... and making loud noises on Mama's leg.





Erlangen is relatively small, about 100,000 population. It is said—and may be true—that about a third of them are connected with the University (**Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg**), and another third with Siemens (the large German industrial company). The city is clean, pleasant, and walkable. Bike paths (red brick in the picture) and greenery (see the roof-top garden on the large building at left, on Beethovenstrasse) are everywhere. The buildings are a mixture of new/modern and very old, sometimes side-by-side.



We walked half a mile to a shopping area on Nürnberger Strasse and had lunch at **Wiegärtner's Bäckeria**, a combination bakery/deli/cafeteria.



Then we crossed the street and visited a toy store (**Lebenshilfe Laden**) and a place for decor and accessories (**Kunsthandwerk**). I enjoyed holding Benji outside the store, as he observed every passing person and vehicle. Big busses were his favorites.



Ursula kept up with her morning student contact (late afternoon in Germany) via the web. Benji kept himself amused.



For dinner, we tried the cafe near the Botanische Garten that had good ice cream the day before. It was closed, but we found **Gaststätte Römning** nearby on Apfelstrasse, about a mile from the Luise. We passed through the arched entry to the interior biergarten. They had specialties from Bohemia (in the Czech Republic) and Franconia, a small region of Bavaria around Erlangen and to the north. As usual, Benji needed to climb onto the table to check it out. No food? Gnaw on the utensils. Or go exploring.



Toby and Monica had a room in the main hotel building, but the rest of us were in rooms in an adjoining building, connected by an enclosed walkway that was surrounded by gardens. Our room had a small balcony overlooking the gardens.



The room itself was relatively spacious, and besides the double bed and large desk had a small day-bed and an easy chair.



The hotel lobby had a Benji-level window.



When we booked the rooms, the Hotel Luise was unavailable for the 3<sup>rd</sup> night, but Winston had found rooms in the **Boutique Hotel Villa-Soy**, about  $\frac{2}{3}$  mile north. We checked out of the Luise Tuesday morning, and took our baggage to the Villa-Soy (in a light rain). Leaving Ursula and Jennifer to relax with coffee at the hotel's adjoining Italian restaurant, the **Parmigiano**, Winston and I walked back to the Luise.



Later we regrouped at the Parmigiano for lunch, while Monica and Benji took a bus to the University site north of Erlangen where Toby was making a presentation.



The Villa-Soy was more *compact* than the Luise, but Ursula could still do her web-work.



That evening we gathered at the **Gasthof Strauss**, another place recommended to Toby, on Rückertstraße near the Kitzmann BräuSchänke. It was a  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile from the Luise, and just  $\frac{1}{3}$  mile from the Villa-Soy.



We got a large table away from most of the crowd. The room behind Benji wasn't being used.

After dinner, Benji and I walked around the quiet street outside, looking at the shop window displays, while the others finished up. It was a damp but fine evening.



After a leisurely breakfast, we hauled our baggage from the Villa-Soy to the train station, about half a mile to the west. We had lunch near the station, at a cafe called **Der Beck**. Toby and I walked about a mile back to the Luise to get their baggage.



From the main station area we went downstairs, outside, around a corner, and up a ramp to our Track 4.

After about half an hour on the platform, we saw our silver ICE (Inter-City-Express) train approach...next: Nürnberg, then non-stop to Munich. The Red trains were generally slower and made more stops.





Monica and Toby had reserved seats, so we walked around looking for empty seats near them. The nearest were a couple of cars away, where we settled in.

However, during a stop at Nürnberg some people near them left. Toby came to tell us, and we moved over to be next to them. Benji really wanted to crawl onto the table.



We arrived at Munich's Hauptbahnhof (main train station), bought some tickets for the U Bahn (the Underground train) and departed on the U6 line northeast to the trendy Schwabing area of Munich. Our stop was at Nordfriedhof (Northern Cemetery, although no gravestones were visible). Toby's hosts had provided a room at the **Melia Inside Parkstadt Schwabing** (we called it the **Innside**), a little less than half a mile from the stop. We had been able to reserve two of the last three rooms available, which happened to be spacious suites...plenty of room for Benji to crawl around when he visited us on the first floor (one floor up from the main floor), or Winston & Jennifer on the third floor. Rolling the wastebasket was fun too, after Winston showed him how.

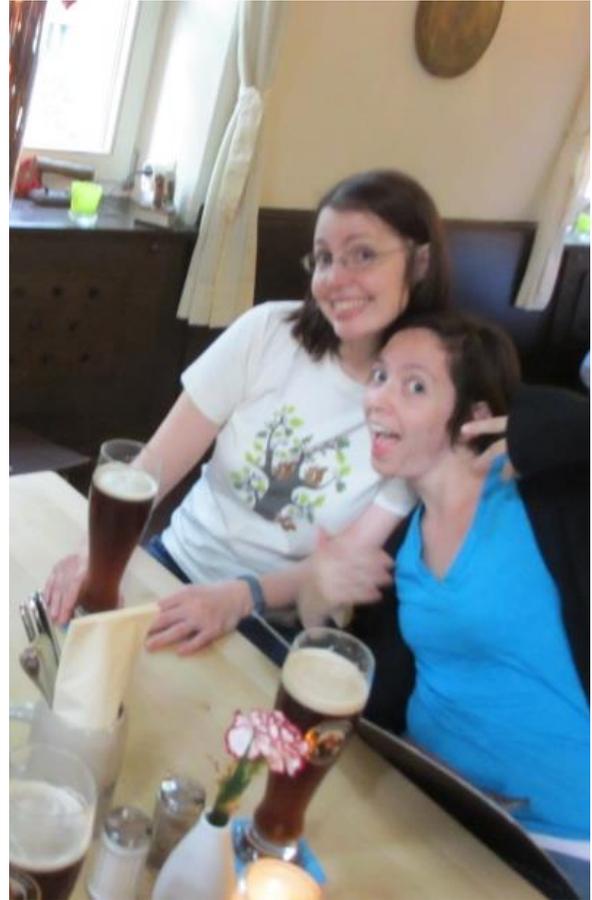


A little relaxing time was welcome.

After getting settled in, we went off down the path to the streets that led us about  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile to a biergarten recommended by the front desk.



As we approached **Zum Brunwart**, we saw crowds of people and masses of balloons outside. We were afraid it was filled up with a party of some sort, but we got a large table inside. Relieved to get a table, and relaxing from the trip, we were in a good mood.



I had the best schnitzel ever: *Münchner Schnitzel, Schweineschnitzel mit Senf-Meerrettich mariniert in Butter gebacken dazu Rostkartoffeln und Salatbouquet* (Munich-style schnitzel, pork schnitzel marinated in mustard-horseradish sauce, baked in butter, and served with roasted potatoes and a side salad).

The breakfast buffet at the Ininside was outstanding, in both variety and quality. We got there just before the Isaacs, and saved them places, but I was too busy eating to take a picture of them at the table. The servers bringing coffee were friendly, and enjoyed greeting Benji. He returned the smiles, but didn't understand why his new friends would quickly leave again.



Back in the suite, Benji again explored, and Ursula checked her email. The red mark is not a bruise, but a lipstick print placed by Auntie Jen.



Soon we headed out toward the U Bahn stop, to go into the **Marienplatz** area...the center of the old city.



In the New Town Hall at the center of the Marienplatz is the **Glockenspiel**, the rotating (several times a day) carousel of figures at about the level of the main roof line. Benji was not impressed.

The ladies wanted to do some shopping, so we headed west on the pedestrian-only Kaufingerstrasse toward the fancy **H & M** Department store. Lunch was at an Italian sidewalk cafe, the **Italian Connection**. At the Fan-Store nearby, we got a "lederhosen" onesie for Benji.



The H&M didn't have restrooms, so we went back toward the **C & A** store—which did. They even had a baby changing/nursing area.

DAMEN	Blusen Jacken / Mäntel Leder Kostüme / Kleider Party Trachtenmode Umstandsmode XL-Shop Your Sixth Sense	LADIES	Blouses Outerwear Leather Suits / Dresses Party Bavarian Maternity XL-Shop Your Sixth Sense
KINDER	Baby Gr. 42 - 92	CHILDREN	Baby
SERVICE	Wickelraum Toilette	SERVICE	Nursing Room Toilet

At 4:00 we were outside the Spielzeugmuseum (Toy Museum) in the Altes Rathaus (Old Town Hall) to meet Toby, his university host Tobias, and Diana Hipp. She was a German tour guide from Stattreisen CityWalk, booked by Tobias to give us a walking tour of the center of Munich. It rained off and on, but we still saw and enjoyed a number of sights...from south of the city center to the Odeonsplatz at its northern edge, and back.

At the start, at the entrance to the Toy Museum at the Old Town Hall, with Diana and Tobias.



The reconstructed St. Peters...the architectural details at ground level are old tombstones mounted on the wall.

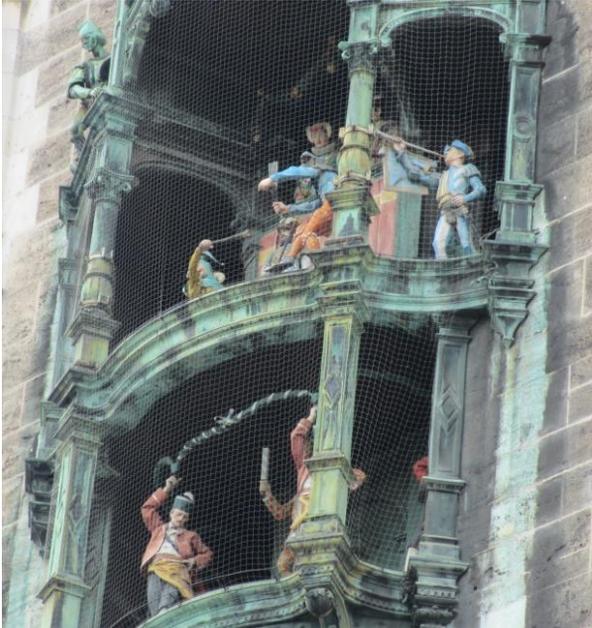


View from near the Viktualienmarkt of back to the Old Town Hall (the tower in the middle).

The Maypole at the Viktualienmarkt.



The Glockenspiel at the new City Hall in Marienplatz. The rotating figures perform only three times a day in summer, once in winter.



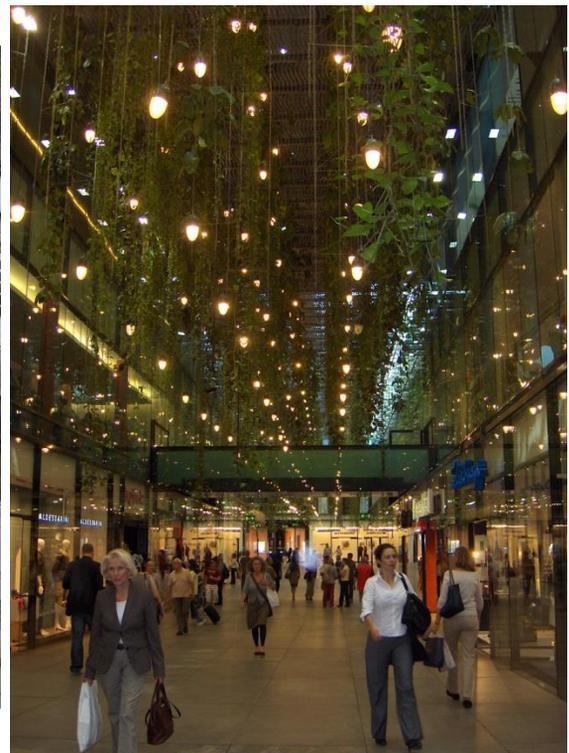
The plague-spreading dragon of medieval times at the corner now occupied by the Münzinger sports apparel shop.



At the re-constructed Frauenkirche. Much of Munich was destroyed during WW II, and then rebuilt pretty much as it was originally. Benji is listening carefully to the guide.



Inside Fünf Höfe...new and large indoor shopping center, with hanging gardens.



Theatine Church, near Odeonsplatz.



A construction site across from the State Opera featured two giant boxing robots.



Last stop: A tour (and shelter from the rain) through Dallmayr's, the famous purveyor of fine food. It began raining more heavily, and we were near our beginning point, so the guide suggested we disperse from there. We were to return a couple of days later.



After the tour, Toby went off for a pre-arranged dinner with his hosts. Winston used his iPhone to find a highly recommended restaurant nearby, the **Nürnberger Bratwurst Glöckl am Dom** (the Dom part refers to the nearby Frauenkirche). The main floor was filled, but we took some tight stairs up to the first floor, where we had a big table, good food, and good beer. After being carried around all afternoon, Benji was ready to move!



More Inside pictures...

Our suite had four floor-to-ceiling windows, all with blinds that went up and down at the touch of a button. The two translucent windows in the middle opened like doors, from the left, but only for about four inches. Great for fresh air, but a bit noisy from the nearby busy street.



The mini-bar near the door was restocked daily at no charge, if requested. The slot at the left of the door holds the room key card. Remove it, and all power to the room is immediately shut off.



The "living room" part of the suite.

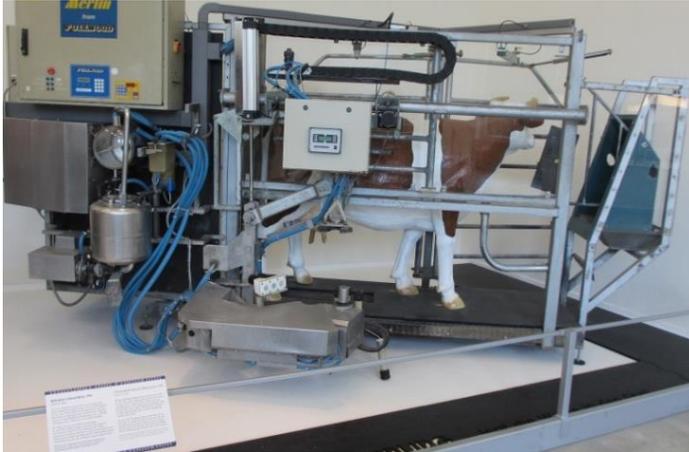


From the sofa, one can see the TV (that swivels) and the bathtub (always on display).

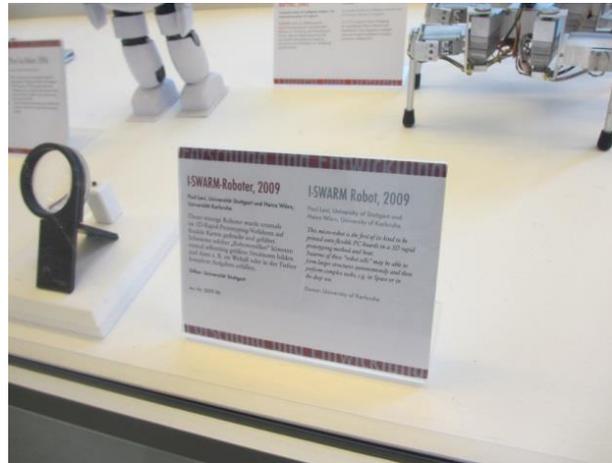


The toilet stall did have an opaque door (left), although the shower door (right) was transparent.

After breakfast, we split up. Toby went to the university, as usual, Winston and I went to the Deutsches Museum, and the others went shopping.



Among the robotics exhibits was this automatic cow milker. The cow walked into the stall and the machine took over. It never went into production.



Another robot: the fly-sized object behind the magnifier, intended to be part of a swarm that can assemble larger structures. Winston once did a project at Harvard on related computational software.

Among the computer exhibits: two things I've used in the (distant) past: an IBM 360 mainframe and a manual card punch.



Here's my self-portrait, using the Museum's infrared imaging camera in the new technologies area.



Meanwhile, Ursula and Jennifer enjoyed lunch at a cafe on the Kaufingerstrasse near the C & A.



When we all got together again in the early evening, we walked from the Innside to the **Chinese Tower** beer garden in the **Englischer Garten**.





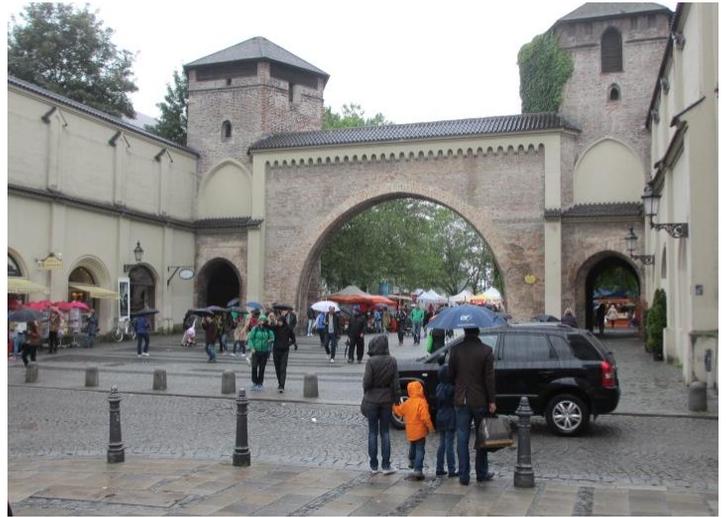
It's been fun, but it's time to head back.



Ursula and I had lunch at the **Ella**, an Italian restaurant attached to Lensbachhaus. The cafe was completely full inside, so we went outside...it was cool, but we were sheltered from the rain.



We then took the U Bahn to the Sendlinger Tor (the old gate at the south side of the city center).



From there we walked to the Asam Church, a very narrow but ornate church that was originally a showcase for church architecture by the Asam brothers. There we met up with the others.

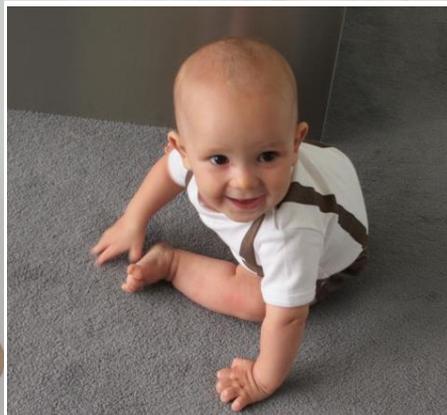


Nearby was Pylones, a gift shop with many strange and whimsical items.



From Pylones we walked to Dallmayr's, the high-end deli. We picked out fixings for a picnic supper, and took them back to the hotel via the U Bahn.

Back in the hotel, there was a fashion show of new dirndls, "lederhosen," and a Tyrolean hat.

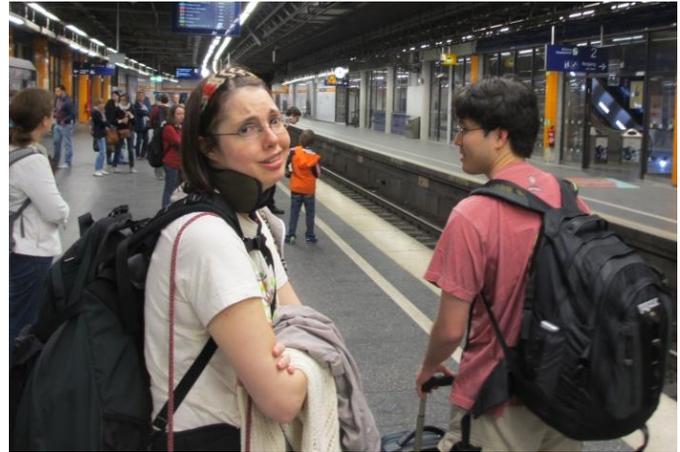


Ursula set out the Dallmayr provisions. We collected glasses and saucers from our three rooms, Monica had some plastic forks, and Winston did some cheese cutting with a room key card.



It was a fun way to end our last full day in Germany.

One last pleasant breakfast at the Ininside..and then Toby, Monica, and Benji left for the airport. Toby let us know after they arrived that it took longer than expected, so we left before lunch for our late afternoon flight. We took the U6 from the Nordfriedhof to the large station under Marienplatz, where we waited for the S8 (Suburban train #8) to the airport. It was the longest wait for a train that we had in Munich, more than 10 minutes! Most trains came within 3 or 4 minutes.



The airport is far from the city center, and took more than half an hour to reach. The ride was pleasant, however, and the scenery mostly green farmland.

The Munich airport is large and modern, with many amenities. We had a late lunch at a cafe, **Wiener's-Der Kaffee**, which had a variety of German and international dishes. And beer. Every restaurant in Germany has good beer. I ordered a chicken schnitzel, which they deep-fried at the counter so it was sizzling hot when I got it a couple of minutes later.



The flight was uneventful, even anti-climactic. We got goulash for dinner, and a "Bavarian hot dog" (weiss wurst in a pretzel roll) for a late snack shortly before arrival. We had four seats across in the center of the A300, and most of us stayed awake for the entire flight (which arrived at 7:20 pm Washington time, even though it was a 9-hour flight.)

Back in Reston, we got up early in the morning (early afternoon by German time, of course). While Winston was working, the three of us relaxed and recalled our favorite activities in Germany. We all had lunch at a nearly deserted Kalypso's at the Lake Anne Village Center.



That evening we tried a new place, Tavern 64 at the Regency Hyatt in the Reston Town Center.. It specializes in locally-sourced food, and gets the "64" from the year (1964) Reston was founded.



After a somewhat late start, Ursula, Jennifer and I had our traditional brunch at **la Madeleine** in the Reston Town Center while Winston was at work.



We re-packed, with two checked bags. We didn't check anything to go to Germany, but had crammed our bags full for the return...and borrowed some of Winston's backpack space too.

After another uneventful flight we arrived at the Tallahassee airport and got a ride home from our neighbor Dean Jue. We didn't collapse when we walked into the house, but we were definitely tired...and happy.

