

Grandma's Irish Bedroom

My bedroom is complete except for some tweaking, which will be an ongoing thing. Most of the pictures and things are from Dingle, my favorite part of Ireland. It's been a wonderful project and now I can just lay back and enjoy the Irish ambience. It's nice to share memories with my friends. Thanks for looking and sharing this trip down memory lane with me.



My Claddagh door knocker. Am thinking of painting the door red since the Irish believe that a red door will ward off ghosts and evil spirits. Can't hurt and it sure would add a dash of color!



First view from the doorway. Notice the green "grass" leads your eyes to the window.



The focal point of the room...my window that looks out onto the hills of Dingle. The hills that I could see from my hotel window. It is a film that I got from Quickwrapz and was the answer to my prayers. I spent a lot of time and money trying to find some way of putting a transparency on the window. One night when I couldn't sleep, I found Quickwrapz on Amazon and not only got my transparency, but made a new friend.



This is the beautiful runner I got from Oscar Isberian Rugs. Note the fairy door on the wall. This is from the June 10, 2012 Fadd Gram.

My carpet runner for my Irish bedroom arrived this week. It is spring green and has short, silky threads like a shag. It feels better on your skin than silk underwear. I told the Monte grandkids that my new runner was made of air grass. They said they'd never heard of air grass. I said I'd never heard of it either. "Then," they asked, "how did you know what it was?" I replied, "Because it is as light as air and it looks like grass." Another shake-your-head-about-Grandma moment for them.



The vase is made of olive wood and is from Tuscany. It holds the tin whistle and wooden spoon. The spoons "clack" and are used for percussion.



To the left as you come in the door. This is the "mantle" shelf I had made to cover the washer pipes and the dryer vent. (I can't haul clothes up and down the stairs so I have the washer and dryer in my bedroom.) The picture of the window was my original focal point for the room. When I'm in bed, it's on the wall I'm facing. The frame is 27" x 36".



Now we're turning the corner to the window wall. The picture on the left is a journal entry and photograph of Dingle by Danielle Hughson after she returned from a trip to Ireland. It expresses my thoughts exactly. The other frame has pictures of me and my dear friend and traveling companion, Sandy Williamson. The top and bottom are in the Benner's dining room in Dingle. The middle one is one of us on our first trip to Ireland in 2002. We're in Galway.



Below the pictures above is my faerie door. Not everyone knows about faerie doors so I'll tell you.

First of all, you have to believe in faeries and if you do, the faeries will bring you good luck. If you don't, well, believe what you will, but don't say it out loud lest they hear you. Faeries won't visit you without an invitation so you need a fairy door. Fairy doors do not open from this side. They can only be opened by the "wee folk" from "the other side" and then only when they want to enter. It's their portal from their world to ours.



I left my heart in Ireland

I've been feeling odd this morning:
discombobulated,
disoriented, filled with a sense of confused
yearning.

I woke up in my own bed for the first time in
two weeks, and yet I feel less like myself, as
though a piece of me went missing.

It's in Ireland, of course. I left it on the
shores of the brilliant Antrim Coast, tucked
it into the inlets of the Dingle Peninsula,
sprinkled it over the top of Carrauntoohil.

It's with the rolling
verdant pastures, the patchwork of stony
fences, the ruins of so many castles. It
wanders among flocks of sheep, flaps in the
wind of a sudden ocean squall, shines in the
burst of an
unexpected rainbow.

Today, I ache, for a piece of me is still
there, and always will be.

- Danielle Hughson

Reprinted with her permission



The corner on the other side of the window. The pictures on the wall are of Dingle. (See below) On the bookcase to the left is my prayer place. It has a glass cross and three battery-operated votive candles. The black in the back has the candle prayer from St. Mary's Church in Dingle. The globe has a three-way light that casts a warm golden glow to the room.

CANDLE-LIGHTING PRAYER

Lord, may this candle be a light for you to enlighten me in my difficulties and decisions.

May it be a fire for you to burn out of me all pride, selfishness and impurities.

May it be a flame for you to bring warmth into my heart towards my family, my neighbor and all those who meet me.

Through the prayer of Mary, Virgin and Mother, I place in your care those I came to remember, especially

.....
I cannot stay long here with you in your church. In leaving this candle, I wish to give you something of myself.

Help me to continue my prayer into everything I do this day. Amen.



Prayer Card from
*St. Mary's Church
Dingle, Ireland*



Pictures on bottom row... Benner's Hotel, Dingle. The view from my room, the hotel entrance, the street in front (the hotel is about half-way down on the right) and the court on the side.

Scenic pictures on top row...



Dykegate Lane runs along the side of our hotel. We took this route every day. The aqua house had lace curtains in the windows and red geraniums. The Phoenix Theatre is known worldwide for its film festival. We went to a special program there.





The pillows are not “crisp” because I just got off them. Above the bed is a four-foot piece of metal with pictures in magnetic frames. I even put two packages of seeds in the frames. The quote in red on the bottom is from Gregory Peck: *I feel drawn to Dingle, I feel a sense of coming home. For me that is what it is.* It hangs over the king-size bed.



To the right is the cross and my quilt rack. The cross is made of resin, but it looks like it is carved and weathered. On the rack is my bodhran, an Irish drum. Learning to play it is on my bucket list. The chair in front is proof that God likes my room, too. I went down to Second Time Around and they said they had no chairs. I was going to find an old one to paint red. Just as I was leaving, I spotted this one. It looked like it was part of a dining room set, but it wasn't. It has a lyre in the back and the harp is the national symbol of Ireland and it has a red velvet seat. No need to paint. And, best of all... it was only \$5. Don't tell me that wasn't divine providence.



Most Irish cupboards or dressers have a curtain on them. The bottom shelf has my post cards in a wooden box, my fairy books, a milk pitcher, and a drawing of a fairy by my friend Sandy. She drew it while we were in Dingle in 2009. It's just lovely. The shelf above has a harp music box, the pottery bowl from Dingle, my wooden box of bog wood from Galway County, Ireland, and my Belleek teapot. The top shelf is a diorama of a forest with a fairy door on the tree and fairy figurines sitting on real reindeer moss. The top of the cupboard has miscellaneous items from Ireland, including a bag from the Guinness Brewery and a bag from Butler's Chocolate Cafe.



I dislike bifold doors, so my closet has lace curtains that match the ones on the window. There's the “cupboard” to the right and we've come full circle back to the door.



This small wooden box was purchased on e-Bay from Gillian Cunningham. She lives in a small town east of Galway. Her grandfather kept his watch in it and we're pretty sure it's made of bog wood. One of my treasures.



Learn more about my beautiful, blue pottery bowl on the next page. In front of the teapot is a box shaped like a cottage and it contains Irish Turf Incense. The bottle on the right is holy water from St. Mary's Church in Dingle. On the left is a blue box that contains my Irish ring that I bought in Galway. It is a silver band with Celtic symbols on it.



As you leave, look up and see the fairies waving goodbye.

Thanks!

This has been more than a project: it has been a journey back to Ireland and this time I got to take lots of friends.

My special thanks to Sandy Williamson for sharing the journeys and the memories. To Karen Enevoldsen and Betty Sabin who jumped in and helped with the things I wasn't physically able to do. Loved their enthusiasm and encouragement. To my son Scott and his friends Tim, Jeff and Kariani for putting down the beautiful floor. To Chuck Bissett who did all the carpenter work and made my ideas work. To Randy Miller at Quickwrapz for the window and to Derrick at Mind Your Business for all his help. To Lyle, my husband of 50 years, who is used to my crazy ideas and doesn't get excited when I go off on a decorating tangent. And...to everyone else who listened to me as I talked of very little else during the three-month project. Well, until I got the flu and then I talked about my misery for five weeks. Thanks to all of you and remember that God loves you and so do I!

..... Grandma Jean



These beautiful pictures were drawn by Cicely Mary Barker. She lived in the early 20th century in London and because of ill health was educated at home and taught herself to draw and paint. Her Flower Fairies made her famous. I have most of her Flower Fairy books. Her flowers were painted with complete botanical accuracy and she used the children from her sister's school room as models for her graceful fairies. Her poems and pictures are beautiful to read and to behold.

Louis Mulcahy



Louis Mulcahy has been potting for nearly forty years. Having won first prize for pottery in the National Crafts Competition in 1975, Louis decided to move his workshop from Dublin to Dingle.

Sandy Williamson and I were blessed to not only visit his workshop, but to throw our own pots. After they were fired, they were sent to us. We thought (and still do!) that they were absolutely perfect. So...I contacted the Louis Mulcahy workshop. Here is what transpired. ----->



E-MAIL

From: Jean Hoidal

Sent: 05 December 2009 21:16

To: Kristen Durkan, Mulcahy Pottery

Subject: Trying our hands at pottery

Thanks so much! We had an awesome time.

Received our pottery a couple weeks ago and after looking at them, we're curious as to why Louis hasn't called us to join his artisans. Our bowls were PERFECT!

It was a wonderful experience and John, who led us through the process, was very, very nice. Tell him hello from us.

Thanks again to all of you, especially you and John. May you all have a blessed Christmas season.

Jean Hoidal and Sandy Williamson

E-MAIL

Reply from Kirsten

December 7, 2009

Hi Jean,

Thanks so much for your email. It is great to hear that you enjoyed the experience. **Louis was indeed wowed by your pots as they came out of the kiln, and is currently demanding that you return to the workshop and take up residence as master potters!!**

Happy travels in the future.

A very merry Christmas to you, Sandy and your families....

Regards,
Kristen