

International Folk Dance Ensemble



Performing Arts Company Tour Histories 2004



Northern California, Belgium, France, Switzerland

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Letter from the Editors

The following pages are the much-awaited tour histories from both Mid-Semester and Summer Tours 2004. As we have compiled these histories (through blood, sweat, and tears), we have whole-heartedly enjoyed reading your descriptions of our adventures at home or abroad, on the land or the seas. We wanted to thank you all for your input and the time you spent writing them for each person's benefit. In assembling the histories, we have refrained from making too many changes to your written text. Thus you have the natural character and voice of all of the members of PAC for your eternal libraries to look back on when mortal memory fails us! We hope these find you all healthy and happy, making a true *reflection* of the experiences tour has given us! And we encourage you to remember to use your talents, whatever they are – to be involved in blessing the lives of others.

Dieu soit avec vous jusqu'au revoir!

Peter and Abby Lamb

**BYU International Folk Dance Ensemble
Mid-Semester Tour—Northern California
March 12-21 2004**

**Friday, 12 March 2004 (Gregg Crockett)
Provo, UT to Lovelock, NV**

Once again it's tour time, and the time was early. 6:00 a.m. and the bus was buzzing or was it just "zzzzzzzing." When we finally got on the road we found out who had the least amount of sleep, considering that we all had to pack the night before. Blobby, Frenchy, and little Davis all decided that they didn't want to miss a minute of the excitement and couldn't rest until the tour started. The first time they got any sleep was when the bus was finally moving.

The morning drive was as uneventful as ever, Travis had brought a projector to see if we could hang up a sheet to watch our DVD movies that had been brought. Well as we know Travis can do anything and this morning he fried the fuse on the bus so that the bus had a few problems on today's drive. Travis is like our "tool man", he always wants more "power" but it doesn't always happen the way he wants it to.

Lunch time came and Ed made us all eat with our worst enemy on the team. It was a very quiet lunch ☹. The rest of the afternoon was spent doing our favorite activity on the bus—SINGING. Our fireside is happening soon and the songs needed to be prepared. There were individuals who were really focused: Willis, Dan, and Lane.

The Frisbee was out in full force for our first day—each stop had the Frisbee flying through the air. Even while we were finishing setting up our show the girls got a Frisbee and were doing trick throws out in the parking lot while the guys re-blocked the dances that our "superstar performer" wouldn't be able to be in.

Onto the stage for the blocking of the show—and that's when the "falls" started happening. First, Ty decided to go for a walk where there was nothing to walk on. He discovered what Christopher Columbus didn't—that a stage, unlike the world, is flat and you can walk off the edge of it. Then Frozzletoff wanted to be like Tom Cruise and slide in his socks in the changing room. The problem was that the band rafters were more slick than he had expected and he fell UP the rafters—quite the "feet." Next, Bob decided to see if he could find the way to Narnia by falling through a "hole in the truck"—he had no such luck and the fall then became pointless. Abby felt she needed a break while performing Nadiyaan so she took a rest by falling on her behind. Stitt was seen with his feet up in the air. Grandpa, (in Journey), was scared that a repeat of last year's mid-semester might happen when his stool was kicked out from under him, but there was no such mishap at this show. But, the tour is still young! Finally, Willis landed on Gregg's sash in Hopak during the back-hand springs, and Ty jogged Fritz's memory with his feet at the same moment.

Intermission was a nice break to try and get our composure again; it didn't happen because the last 7 seconds were on of the BYU vs. UTAH game. We sat and watched as BYU lost to their rivals in the MWC tournament. To finish the show, Ed decided to try a different trick step in Hopak to replace the "jack-knife." Instead of an amazing new trick, the guys performing it looked like Larry, Moe, and Curly's version of how to do a Hopak step. (I guess that one needed more practice.)

So it was just your normal average day on tour—new people in dances not sure what they are doing; individuals getting weak in the knees and can't stand up; lots of food before a performance; and an announcement that the show would start a half hour earlier than expected.

Quote for the day:

“For a brief moment someone finally understands me and what I go through!”
—**Crystal Robinson** (in reference to Ty's fall)

Saturday, 13 March 2004 (Aubree Walker) **Lovelock, NV to Oroville, CA**

Saturday Morning dawned brightly on Lovelock and the BYU folkies. We met at the chapel and departed for sunny Oroville, California. We slowly wound up the Sierras, and were disappointed by the Utah-like snowy vistas; that is, except for our die-hard skiers, whose face-prints you can still see on Le Bus's windows. Our stop near Donner's Pass was great... we decided no trip to it would be complete without eating Trevor...I mean, playing Frisbee and taking pictures. Cat, Steve, Hill and Dan instigated a snow fight which the rest of us watched from the safety of the bus, laughing, as Cat totally kicked Steve's trash.

We made it to Oroville about 1pm, and loaded into the old Vaudeville theatre. Sure enough, everything we had heard was true, right down to the carpeted low ceilings on the stair cases and the funny dressing rooms. We could hear every footstep onstage from below.

Dave and the activities council announced the glorious arrival of Tour Assassin 2004 earlier that morning. During load-in and throughout the day, the time was punctuated by screams from the newest victims of “the game.” After all, water tends to be plentiful while on tour. Some people became a little too excited and picked victims to whom they were not assigned.

Today was the joyous arrival of the Hacky-sack, which superseded even the Frisbee in popularity. The girls countered with a rousing round of “Down by the Banks”, which the guys joined in on, and actually beat the girls (Solidarity, Morgan!) We had dinner outside the Oroville chapel in the gorgeous sunlight, and celebrated Scotty's Birthday with a round of singing in the key of “Q-flat.”

Hands down, the most exciting event of the show happened a half hour before the performance. To do justice to the story, here is Laura, the heroine of the tale:

“I was innocently preparing for the performance in my Mexican costume, adorning myself with a variety of gold jewelry, when I heard screams and a stampede outside my dressing room. I stepped out to see what was causing the commotion—when I saw “IT.” A blood-thirsty BAT! It was a huge winged terror, 10 feet across, fangs the size of my head, growling as it reeked havoc around the dressing room. From a safe distance I laughed as the other members of the team dodged the oncoming horror. My chuckle turned to panic when all of the sudden, the bat swooped towards me and approached me at full speed, eyeing my naked neck for a bite. I squealed in terror and sprinted to my dressing room, taking no thought for my actions, knowing my life was at stake. Little did I know that the rest of the team watched my encounter with death, my Mexican dress flying as I thrust open the curtain and literally dived into the dressing room to escape this

living nightmare. I have no recollection of what happened next. I was too frozen with terror as I crouched on the dirty ground, hiding from the evil fiend. Eye witnesses say that the horrible bat followed me right into my dressing room. I will be forever indebted to Bill Doolittle as he rode in like a Knight in shining armor to save me from this dragon bat. He was so heroic as he used his cowboy hat from his own head to snatch the bat and carry it safely outside. My life flashed before my eyes that day. Bill will always be my hero who saved me from the terrible blood-sucking monster.”

The excitement continued that night as Justin lost his chaps in Fandango, and Crystal and Emily Savage tied for the most items picked up from the stage. The second half was a celebration as Jasmine picked Bob in the Stick fight, and though the crowd cheered, the team cheered even louder as Bob ran through the hall shouting, “I won!”

**Sunday, 14 March 2004 (James Frazee)
Oroville, CA**

Today was our day of rest. It was a wonderful Sabbath Day. We were split between two wards in Oroville. A few of us attended the 9:00 am ward, while most attended the 11:30 am ward. In the 11:30 ward, all the Folk Dance Ensemble members present were asked on the spot to sing “I Am a Child of God.” Bryce, Alan, Hillary and Aubree got pulled aside to sing for the Young Women of the ward they attended. And we thought we were dancers!

Today was the first time the guys wore our acorn pants. Ooooh, scary!! *shudder* A few quotes regarding our wonderful pants. Tappy told us that “I feel fat.” Stitty called them the “tight bum pants.” Bob expressed that he is “a little self-conscious today about my pants.”

Bryce had a very interesting experience at their host family’s home. During the afternoon, several kids wanted to do science experiments. They first tried a corn starch solid/plasma substance. They were seeing how hard they could hit it (it would act like a solid in that case) and it wasn’t quite cured so it exploded all over the bathroom, and all over the kids. Later, Bryce went back upstairs and the kids were parachuting Barbies with plastic bags.

Several people got a tour and/or description of the Oroville Dam – the tallest and longest earthen dam in the US (over 1 mile across the top, over 700 feet tall). It was quite the sight!! Later on the bus we began discussing dam tours. Gregg told us about some friends of his by the last name of Dam, that sell Dam Good Water.

Peter, James, Abby and Katie had the great privilege of going with the Stake President to visit a shut in and bring her the Sacrament. It was a wonderful experience. We sang “I Stand All Amazed” and then distributed the Sacrament. Sr. Carlin was kind enough to share her testimony of how she joined the Church.

A few people discovered a slight blunder when choosing the guys’ multi-colored tie. We wondered, if we are students at the Y, why our tie says “U of U of U of U of U of U . . .” from top to bottom, and even in red and white.

This evening we had a wonderful fireside for the youth of the Gridley Stake. To begin the introductions, Ed had several groups stand up according to who is a dance major, who is an RM, who speaks a foreign language, etc. The last groups were the most special. First, he had all

engaged people stand up, and then he asked only those engaged to someone in the group to remain standing (yea Fritz and Abby!) He then had all married people stand. Finally, only those married to someone in the group remained (yea Nate and Morgan!).

All our hard work in 278 RB and on the bus finally paid off as we sang “My Shepherd Will Supply My Need” and “The King of Love My Shepherd Is.”

Several people were asked to give short testimonies throughout the fireside. Brent Austin spoke on seeking first the Kingdom of God (Matt 6:38). Marie Sonnenberg spoke on embracing the gospel (2 Nep 31:17-21). Tranjo bore his testimony on giving our whole souls (Omni 1:26). Em Green gave a wonderful testimony on the happy state of the righteous (Mos 2:41), Travis Wertz spoke on the Atonement telling a story of a group of guys lost at sea being guided back to the shore by the headlights of a father’s car.

Cat told us of her saga trying to protect our stuff from getting stolen during the fireside. She had stuff stolen during a fireside in New Zealand, and was very worried about all our bags being unguarded during the fireside. So she ran around like crazy packing stuff away and keeping on eye on it. When the fireside started she got Scotty Horman to watch our stuff. What a lifesaver!! Thanx a bunch Cat!! ☺

Monday, 15 March 2004 (McKenzi Williams)
Oroville, CA to Turlock, CA to Modesto, CA

First of all I wanted to start out by saying that Cat is the most fun roommate! The two nights before Cat had accidentally broken things at her other host homes so it was fun for me to watch her “walk around on eggshells.” Then in the morning she freaked out because she had thought that she had woken us up late. In the morning we realized that she had broken her destructive pattern, but not her unlucky one. The night before our family’s cat had slept in the car and Cat sat right where it was sleeping and got tons of white cat hair all over her black Capri pants. She certainly made my night at the Hagberg’s so much fun!

Today was the team’s first of two school shows on this tour. It was a very small school in Turlock and the kids were so happy to have us there. Probably the highlight of the program besides Hopak, was the band’s rendition of Sponge Bob Square Pants. The kids went crazy as soon as they heard Nate’s best pirate voice.

On the way out of the school some kids were watching us load the truck, and some kids asked some of the team member how we knew to come to their little town. A little girl asked our sponsor what she had done to deserve such a show.

The show that this team does touches so many people. At our night show one of the stage hands came up to many people on the team afterward and told them that the hair on his arms were sticking up throughout the entire show. This team is such a good representative of our school and our faith. I love everyone of you, and you do such a good job. Thank you!

Today was a great day!!!!

Tuesday, 16 March 2004 (Scotty West)
Modesto, CA to San Jose, CA

We met again at our usual time of 8:00 am at the stake center in Turlock. The almond farmers in Turlock say “amonds” instead of almonds and the locals say, “There are almonds on the trees until the farmers shake the ‘L’ out of them and then they’re amonds.” Ed demanded our hour of silence during which most people fell asleep until we hit traffic while trying to get on the 238 which woke everyone up. From the 238 we were able to get our first view of the Oakland Temple on the hill. Following the directions we were given, we took the scenic route across the San Mateo Bridge (the bridge that Robert Redford goes across in “Sneakers”) We also found out that somehow all the pictures from the day before had been deleted off the camera. ☹ The front of the bus decided to entertain themselves by playing a game called props with a buckwheat pillow.

After winding through the hills just short of the Pacific coast we came to a stop at Pinewood High School. The beautiful sunshine and nice grass field called for a game of Ultimate Frisbee. Almost all the guys played and a couple of girls joined in while the rest of girls took the opportunity to tan themselves. Unloading wasn’t too much of a problem except Ed decided to change the show ending up with a couple of people having to dig out some other costumes.

There was also the problem that the sound board was under the lighting trees in the back of the truck.

Our stage was the gym but our changing room was the weight room, which provided nice box seats for watching the performance through some windows. Many of us took the opportunity to work out a bit and Ed was yelled at by Terri as he started to do some bench presses (because of his bad back). Ed’s only comment to the scolding was, “I feel fabulous.” Luckily the room had a huge fan which we took full advantage of.

The show went off without too many problems. Linsey Davis and Aubree substituted in for Nadiyaan (they did an awesome job). The band did a great rendition of “The Devil Went Down to Georgia” with “Sponge Bob Square Pants.” The students in the audience didn’t know how to react.

James was a little too anxious in Hopak and took off a little too early to join his Hopak partner. LT and Steve had a bonding moment as LT hung a “loogie” over the side of the banister above Steve and let it drop, which Steve then caught with his eye. Bryce was asked if he was a freshman, and Bryce replied he was a senior. He was then asked where he was planning on going to college the next year.

On the way out Alan and Scotty taught a couple of guys how to do the “four-man butterfly.” To entertain us as we rode to the next venue Cat, Steve, and Lane had a bluegrass jam session in the back of the bus. Some others also joined in to sing along.

Soon we arrived at the San Jose Center, the biggest venue thus far. We had actual, very large, dressing rooms up stairs. Set-up didn’t seem to take too long but Hillary took full advantage of the situation and killed four people in the stair well leading up to the dressing room as she offered to help them carry their stuff. After a short nap time (for some) dinner was served outside in some beautiful California weather. In preparation for the show, some of the guys decided to lighten

their load but came into a problem as they became trapped in the stall because the door wouldn't open. Four different fellows fell into the trap.

While setting up for the show Alan tried to head butt a pipe above him but lost the battle.

The venue was almost sold out with 2200 tickets sold. This was a great relief for our sponsor, Kathy, who was worried about ticket sales the week before. FYI: The year before the young ambassadors only sold 1300 tickets.

For the first time ever Bob and Morgan didn't tie the knot in Mexican. To keep it still in its shape Bob held the knot by the middle when they held it up. Irish was an interesting experience because we actually had room to dance which ended up with a flawless victory for the team. While coming off after drums Justin managed to find the spotlight for Hillary with his leg, which was a relief for Matt who was afraid it might get lost. Willis was the "walking dead" during the performance having a constant glazed over look on his face. During intermission, the T-shirt people were entertained by Michael Flatley himself, or maybe it was his brother, as a man tried to do some Irish hard shoe to the music provided by the band. The end of the show ended with a bang—that is the bang of Scotty's behind on the floor as he tried to catch Dave with his chin during the toss.

The load out was quick, but not quick enough to beat the record. Everyone received their host families, though some almost had none. And on the way home Hillary, Laura, and Linsey Davis almost got in a car wreck as their host mom tried to change lanes.

**Wednesday (St. Patrick's Day), 17 March 2004 (Hillary Boeing)
San Jose, CA to Oakland, CA**

Our day started out with the girls getting green eye shadow makeovers from Emilee Savage to celebrate the holiday that's turned into nothing but wearing green socks, hats, bracelets, or fruit snacks stuck to your shirt.

San Francisco for an hour provided ample opportunity to walk around, maybe buy something, and then get right back on Le Bus.

Our show this evening was in the building right next to the Oakland temple. Picture taking beforehand caused some stress due to the sun being perfectly at eye level and a nice sister missionary not yelling "Three" loud enough for any of us to hear. Good thing we're specks in the picture so no one will be able to tell anyway.

McKenzi Williams surprised us by showing up with a ring and a fiancé! They are another adorable addition to our engaged people club, and Jared gets props for entertaining Ed's interrogations.

Bob somehow got some butter on the sleeve of his Mek shirt sometime earlier. That evening after doing the dance, he proceeded to chat with Gregg during Hopak. Much to Justin's enjoyment, he was left to do the one man butterfly while Bob had his social hour. Improvisation of one "prysiadka" kick and an exit by each of them improved the choreography very much. Jasmine has been keeping Willis and Bob on their toes in Gypsy by whom she'll choose at the end of the stick fight.

“Super Stage Manager” was raging at everyone and making the girls cry for being on the stage after the show and for not going through “That door, Right now!” Katie thought he was kidding, but actually, nope, he was just really serious.

Thursday, 18 March 2004 (Peter Lamb)
Oakland, CA to Reno, NV

Well, there are always rewards for the righteous. And the early. The first arrivals at the church building where we were to meet the bus had about a half hour of good, solid Frisbee playing...in a parking lot. It was OK, though, because this parking lot offered multiple levels and varying amounts of shrubbery to hide behind, throw over, and, of course, lose the Frisbee in.

At about 8:30 we were off, and this time out of state. We headed all the way back over the pass to Reno, Nevada. Our performance site was right downtown, which offered a few the opportunity of taking in the lights, glitz, and glamour of a generally smoky, dirty, over-rated downtown gaming hotspot.

Our theatre had visibly been home to numerous Broadway touring groups, as evidenced by the show logos and signatures all over the walls backstage. The name of the BYU Intl. Folk Dance Ensemble would later grace those very same walls.

The stage itself was quite unique, in that it was situated quite a distance below street level, and the loading elevator was a huge machine capable of holding nearly all our equipment in one load. The union hands were generally quite willing to help out and also to let us operate as usual, as long as we didn't touch too many red buttons or levers ☺.

Once setup was completed we crossed the street and were provided a very large, scrumdiddlyumpicious dinner of 6-foot subs, chips, cookies, and water. Oh precious water. We also had the opportunity to roam the downtown area a bit, with some looking in jewelry shops, others seeking out barbershops, and many others simply enjoying the outside air and bustle of a gaming town.

The show went off wonderfully, and strike was incredibly fast, as well. It may have been the fastest strike of tour, due largely to the generous helping hands of the theatre crew. The massive freight elevator provided quite the forceful, “Armageddon”-like emersion from the ground for many aboard – truly an unforgettable experience.

Friday, 19 March 2004 (Jasmine Wakamatsu)
Reno, NV to Eureka, CA

Today was such an early morning!! We had to meet the bus at 6:30 in the morning. Needless to say, we were all exhausted. Quiet time lasted for almost three hours, during all of which everyone was trying to sleep in awkward positions.

Although we all appreciated the time we had to nap in the morning, we were all grateful to get off the bus for a while and stretch our legs.

It was a long bus ride today. We finally got to our venue at about three pm. The tech crew had almost everything set up already- they had been driving all night long and got 2-3 hours of sleep. Thanks guys!

Dinner was great. Lasagna again!! There were also big scoops of butter in bowls sitting on the tables; no doubt from Bob's costume. The peach and apple pie were delicious. The real treat, however, was the after dinner entertainment. Loading the bus to go back to the venue took a while because Scotty and Tranjo decided to have a wrestling match. Looking out the window from the bus we saw them going at it. Tranjo was trying to outsmart Scotty with his quick maneuvering. Eventually, though, Tranjo ended up sprawled on the ground. While everyone was applauding for Scotty, Tranjo jumped up and knocked him to the ground- Scotty was caught blind-sided.

The show went well. No major mishaps. At the end of the show Ed had the stake president come up (he was an old folk dancer) and dance for the audience. He loved it, and it was hard to get him to stop.

Laura and Marie gave a great devotional before the show. They came up with 10 ways to know if you've been on folk dance tour too long. They are:

10. You feel naked without sweat guards in everyday wear.
9. The more you embarrass yourself, the more you are rewarded.
8. Massages are worth missing anything...sleep, food, sightseeing.
7. Roller-skating eyes and fake eyelashes are no longer considered a fashion faux pas.
6. You would rather starve than eat another subway sandwich.
5. Men now believe that make-up is an art worth perfecting.
4. Your ego is boosted by autographing programs for 5 year olds.
3. You have discovered 171 positions for sleeping in a bus.
2. Body odor is now a new fragrance not worth questioning or fixing.
1. Dating/cuddling with as many people as possible in 10 days becomes the ultimate goal.

They also came up with a couple of reasons why it is worth it. You realize that sore calves are worth the smile of a child. You also realize that your teammates from around the country have become your brothers and sisters through sweat, sore muscles, tears and service. Thanks Laura and Marie!

Saturday, 20 March 2004 (Ryan Davis)
Eureka, CA to Sacramento, CA

Today our planned departure time was 7am which ended up being around 7:20am. Early in the morning, Crystal and Hillary spent the night with two lizard friends. At 7am, some of us, LT, Cat, Teri, McKenzi, & Savage, arrived in style—a red '39 Oldsmobile. After loading up on Dramamine (prevents & treats nausea, vomiting or dizziness associated with motion sickness, in case you didn't know), we took HWY 101 through the California Redwood forest into Sacramento. During the 6 hour tour through the forest's foggy, winding roads and by Clear Lake's shimmering waters, we visited the lovely town of Willits, CA for the second time,

watched Tarzan get his woman Jane, and saw Savage and I win the Chubby Bunny and Peeps Contest by stuffing our mouths.

The Sacramento Memorial Auditorium with the tilting floor was awesome. I don't know if anyone else checked out the restrooms down stairs, but they reminded me of a bathroom from "Hogwarts" down in the dungeon. There were no doors on the stalls and these archaic water flushers sounded like Niagara Falls every five minutes. Other than that, the venue was really neat! We took off for dinner at a nearby chapel and enjoyed our first taste of what the summer tour holds for us. Our delicious French Cuisine included stuffed tomatoes, couscous, salad, baked apples, and a granola vanilla pudding dessert. Oh, the highlight of the dinner was the kneeling picture with the famous Miss Elk Grove. "She's beauty and she's grace; she Irish dances with taste"—Oh, wait, it's Scottish dancing, Ed.

Anyway, the weather was great with a high of 86°F in Sacramento. Our show started out with a kiss of love from Cat to Steve during Texas Fandango. After this, the show went great, practically flawless, as Ed requested, until Alan decided he didn't want to have a functional left ankle anymore during Gypsy and sprained it. It wasn't too bad until Hopak as our back line switched partners a few times due to not knowing what to do in Alan's absence.

We redeemed any mishaps, though, in our load-out by beating our 45-minute record at 43 minutes! The day ended fabulously and we were all tired as this was our last show of the Mid-Semester Tour 2004.

Sunday, 21 March 2004 (Laura Bates)
Sacramento, CA to Provo, UT

Disclaimer:

*All facts written below may have been embellished or fabricated.

We spent the night in Sacramento with host families that are friends of Morgan and Alex. Most members of the team went to eat out after the show, getting to bed in the wee hours of the morning. On average, each member of the team got approximately 4 hours 32 minutes and 15 seconds of sleep which would account for the baggy eyes and zombie-like walk to the church building at the 6:30 am meeting time. We slept-walked into the chapel where we held a quick but inspirational sacrament meeting. The meeting commenced, and some eyes were closed pretty long—there must have been some deep prayers said. We then heard two wonderful talks first by Jasmine, then by Alan. Both talks were focused on the atonement and started our day off right for the Sabbath. What happens the rest of the day is in complete contrast to the church service we had a dawn. We piled into "Le Bus," cheering that it was the last day and looking forward to finally making it home. We had quiet time for about 2 hours during which most of us tried to catch up on the lack of sleep. Bob was feeling unusually trigger-happy with the camera and decided it would be funny to take pictures of people sleeping, much to the dismay of the sleepers when they awoke. There were pictures of sleeping beauties and drooling machines.

We then stopped at a Truck stop outside of Reno. Ironically we slept through the beautiful countryside of California and awoke for the plain, ugly desert of Nevada that drove us crazy all day. We tried to keep the Sabbath day holy as we tromped into the Truck stop, through the store, past a casino, past the trucker's showers and laundry room to the coveted bathroom. As we all walked in the door of Stop, dressed in matching clothes, following a straight line like lemmings

towards the bathroom, all the workers in the store stopped whatever they were doing and just stared. Their eyes followed us and mouths dropped as handsome boys and hot girls strolled by in formation. We had a desire to visit the water closet pronto, and we had a time limit. When we finished our business, we reluctantly got back on the bus.

The next 2 hours were spent socializing and trying to get as many cuddle partners on this last day of free love with no commitment. The social committee distributed papers that we passed around writing little love notes to each member of the group. They started with enthusiasm, writing long happy notes in big bubble writing and ended with 3mm size penmanship just saying “you’re great and you know it.” The papers were finally finished and we all gloried in the good things people said about us, inspiring happy weeping. Kleenexes were distributed to catch the flood of tears, there was so much love on this team. We reached Winnemucca and were given \$8 to eat lunch along with a quick time limit that no one paid attention to. We enjoyed the fine weather and tried to catch up on the tan-in-progress and then hopped on the bus. The ultimate killers of our group were announced as winners of our tour-long game of Assassination. Trevor was the ultimate killer with 7 victims, and Peter and Bryce in came 2nd place.

In keeping with our desire to remember the Sabbath we held a long Sunday school lesson by Ty, James and Aubrey. Ty talked about the importance of temples and temple marriage, James talked about Genealogy, and Aubrey ended with a study of overcoming pride. We were enthused by scriptorians on our team, people who know it all, and also some great story tellers. The bus ride was smooth and the speaking was gentle and many of us struggled with a strange eye problem that made us keep our eyes closed through the duration of our “church meeting.” Even Peter’s booming low voice exclaiming “Wake up” in the microphone did not stir those that really suffered from the closed-eye desire. Despite the petition put together to not stop for dinner, we were overruled by the tyrant Ed that also made us wear our church clothes all day long. We put up quite the ruckus with picket signs and uprising banners to show our unhappiness for wasteful time stuffing our already bloated bellies. Ed held us back with a fireman’s water hose, and in the end blamed it on the need for a new bus driver because LeGrand couldn’t legally drive after 10 hours on the bus. So we had to stop for an hour to eat dinner while we waited for the new driver. We walked into a CASINO (the ultimate ironic restaurant for a Sabbath day) for dinner on this blessed Sunday. We walked with eyes the size of golf balls as we witnessed people wasting their money away on slot machines. Of course we had to lead ourselves into the heart of Sodom and Gomorrah to eat at the “Raintree Buffet.” We quickly ate our food in quiet, praying for the souls of all those found within the vile place, including ourselves. We finished dinner, jumped on the bus, and excitedly anticipated the safe return to Provo.

We were then entertained for the next while by the movie “Remember the Titans.” We finally made it to Provo—all the engaged people made out with their significant others, while the rest of us (including me) ate a pint of ice cream claiming that one day I will find my Prince despite gaining 25 pounds on tour. We all slept in our own beds, (oh what a sweet sleep it was!) and woke up Monday morning with loads of homework and professors calling us to fulfill our educational duty. It was a wonderful tour, but we were all greatly relieved to make it home safely and finally step off of “Le Bus” for good.

BYU International Folk Dance Ensemble
Summer Tour 2004—Belgium, France, and Switzerland
July-August 2004
Lost in Translation

Monday, 5 July 2004 (Fireside)
The Nuttall home, Provo, UT

“All that is not given is lost.” *Nate Olson quoting an Indian philosopher*

“Be kind to people because everyone is fighting their own battle.” *Cat Larsen quoting Sis. Hinckley*

“...they *lived* after the manner of happiness...” *Jon quoting 2 Ne 5:27*

Wednesday, 7 July 2004 (Brent Austin)
Airport/Flying from Provo, UT to Belgium

The first day of tour—wow what a day! After an exhausting night of packing all of our final things for tour, and a very small amount of sleep, we arrived at the Richards Building at 5:45am. The bus was there awaiting everyone to arrive and load their bags. We then had a short trip to the airport. Here came the long, annoying wait of a line in order to check our extremely heavy pieces of baggage. Once we were checked in we then had to wait in another line to go through the security. By the time we arrived to our terminal, A-16 American Airlines flying out at 8:15am, we did not have to wait long.

It was on the plane when the delay came. There was some sort of liquid dripping from the underside of the plane. Due to this substance the pilot needed to get off the plane and make sure it was not a hydraulic, or gas leak. After one hour, we finally took off. Though it was late, we had no problem getting to our next flight in Chicago because of a five hour layover.

During this layover everyone got into groups and wandered the airport. While exploring the terminal, lunch was consumed, money was exchanged, and the post office was found. While Trevor, Ty, Scotty, Alan, and I were out and about we found the exciting and very beautiful tunnel that led to the C-Terminal. We got on the escalators and enjoyed the music and light show from above. Once at the end, we turned around and came back. But, we did not just go back to the other side. We went all the way back to the gate of our next flight. Here we pulled out a deck of cards and had a wild, and crazy game of cards. There was also another game of Phase Ten going on, some people were looking around the terminal, while others engaged in conversations. Soon it was time to load the plane for Brussels, and once we were on the plane many people fell asleep until dinner time.

—this, being the first day of our wonderful tour.

Thursday, 8 July 2004 (Alan Detton)
To Schoten, Belgium

“Rise and shine happy campers. We’re cruising at 3500 feet and it’s cold outside.” According to the overhead television screens that cold was roughly -45, too cold for me. Despite the unpleasant thought of needing to exit our plane in such conditions I must say that the view of a sunrise from the airplane was quite the sight to see. After a fabulous night’s rest we attempted to rouse ourselves and try to prepare for what was about to come. For some the familiar thought of Europe was welcome, for others it was the festival dominating their thoughts, and I imagine some were just hoping to get off the plane. The arrival to the Brussels Airport came soon enough and was thankfully fairly short.

After having gone through customs, showing our passports, and getting them stamped we congregated at the baggage claim. We then gathered our belongings and went towards the parking where we first met our tour guides; Thom, Ils, Karen, and Koen (Coon). It’s difficult to explain the first impressions of people who would later affect our stay so much with their love and helpful, friendly attitudes. I remember thinking that they definitely looked European, especially Thom with his dual goatee goin’ on. After a short welcome by them and a few representatives of the festival we loaded the bus barely cramming the last costume bag underneath and headed off towards Schoten. The drive from Brussels only took about 45 minutes which was very welcome after the dreaded rumors floating around of how long it would take. My first of impression of Schoten was that it was amazing!

One of the first things I saw was a large sign written in Flemish that welcomed us to “See the World in Schoten.” I later found out the family we stayed with had done the advertising and he thought about changing it next year to read “Meet the World in Schoten,” and I think it’s a fair statement to say that that was precisely what we did.

After driving down a long, tree-lined road, the castle that would become so familiar loomed in the foreground surrounded by the greenest water I dare say I have ever seen. We unloaded the bus and crammed everything into our future men’s dressing room and went to a meeting in the castle to be officially welcomed to the festival.

We were given drinks and bags with various things inside including; our blue name tags that we couldn’t dare part with, a map of Antwerp, and a magazine describing the different groups that would be involved in the festival. The welcome was given to us in Flemish and translated into English and we were very cordially welcomed to the wonderful environment of the Schoten festival. After the meeting we went outside and were introduced to our families that opened both their homes and their hearts to us. We all went our separate ways at this time and were able to either sleep, eat, sightsee, or stay up and get to know our family a little better. It began as a long day that seemed to not have an end in sight, but it ended with a tired group very excited to be in Schoten and begin one of the greatest adventures of their lives.

Friday, 9 July 2004 (Willis Pueblo)
Schoten, Belgium

Hello, I will be providing your tour history pleasure today. However, I refuse to write about events chronologically, because that is not the way I think. I begin with right now because that is what I am thinking. Right now I am sitting in “the hut” (as referred to by Tappy) and across a rain-filled quad the evening performance is drawing near the end. Somewhere a Russian danseur is gliding through the air in balletic prose, while the audience holds their breath and thinks, “wersd uifdh opgfen,” which might translate to “they are so amazing” in Flemish Dutch, but I probably just made that up. Right now a Greek danseurina is stowing her mocassin-like opankis for the next show, and the Trinity Irish dancers in exaggerated wig-lets are warming up for a great finish. And, right now, a duck is swimming in the green moat/pond around the old castle as well.

Now then, at some point in the day we performed Fandango in the square in front of the castle. The general consensus is that we American cowboys are very hot, especially in chaps, and oh yes, the hat line was absolutely incredible. The fighting looked very real and we succeeded in scaring the other groups so that they will not want to mess with our rough and ready physiques. This is our purpose, of course, other than to play Frisbee. So, we staked our claim to all the women and no one could deny that we were the men. I, however, have the most beautiful girl in the world (Kimberly) waiting for me at home so I was indifferent toward all the attention, but I did my best to help mi *available* buds shine up their duds, and appear to be studs.

After the Fandango performance in the square we began “animating”. In other words, the girls joined in and we taught some enjoyable square dances to our fellow dancers, host families, and other festival-goers. It was good times and high-fives for all. The other groups also performed in the square and taught simple dances from their cultures. Okay, enough said about this, I believe everyone remembers this event well enough, especially how the Russian men kept choosing the Trinity girls as their partners, and the women kept choosing the Fandango men. Man, some of our guys (like Gregg and Alan) kept wishing: “if only they didn’t smoke so much!” All the while, Trevor was eyeing the teenaged Trinity girls...but they were all very kind and extremely excellent dancers. It should be noted that the Russian group had a set of John Noll and Marsha Searle look-a-likes.

Between the dress rehearsal and the calamari seafood-rice dinner, we had a mighty-fine 4 on 4 game of Ultimate in the pouring rain and I believe I am coming down with a cold at this time. However, it was NICE! Not France. Katie should be very proud to know that her “hubbie”, Scott, made a fully-layed-out, extended one-handed, two-fingered Frisbee-snag running at top speeds and after catching it he slid for a good ten feet in the slick grass. Ah, that wonderful Belgian grass, perfect for Ultimate. Of all the grace and finesse I have seen at this festival, that grab by Scott truly takes the cake. Because after all, “Ed, I didn’t travel over 6,000 miles to watch some people dance; I came to play Frisbee!” Because we all know that we can’t play Frisbee in the US, or at least, the grass is greener in Belgium.

The BBQ lunch was fantastic, the dress rehearsal for Running Sets and Journey was particularly sloppy, while the performance was only somewhat sloppy; so it seems there is hope for us after all with a seemingly upward-sloping trend. Well, that’s my recollection of some important stuff. Good day.

Saturday, 10 July 2004 (Elise Burrell)
Schoten, Belgium

After a couple of days of “festivaling,” I think the group is starting to really get into the swing of things. Jet lag is wearing off and we’re making lots of friends. We started the day with breakfast with our families. If it hasn’t been mentioned already, it’s pretty much the norm to have sandwiches for breakfast. As Dan Villella would say, “if you’re not eating cold cuts for breakfast, what ARE you eating?”

This morning, all the groups in the festival had an “animation” in front of the castle. It’s been raining here in Schoten, so we were all wondering if the weather would permit us to do our animation, but it worked out—hooray!! We danced with the Russians, Greeks, the Belgians, and then the Mexicans before we left for lunch. I think, at least the girls in our group, preferred dancing with the Mexicans and as luck would have it, some of those Mexican boys were quite fond of our girls. The band played in the drinking area tonight directly after a Belgian-Celtic group. It was unsure if they would ever really stop playing (the Celtic band, that is), and our group endured a lot of drinking songs in a smoky, smoky environment—that’s true support right there!!

After the show every night, there is a dance party that goes on and on into the early morning. It was here that we experienced that age is not really a factor for a lot of people when you’re dancing. Although, I think that most people’s consumption of alcohol has something to do with that, but I’m not sure. We were able to see a lot of our friends that we had made earlier in the day, and I think we are making a good impression on them. A few of us ran into some of the Greeks who are a bit younger, but enjoying the “normal” activities of drinking and smoking which surrounded them. It was a good opportunity to remind them of how bad that stuff is for them. They took it rather well and said they’d been trying to quit, but that it was hard.

Some others from our group had similar experiences with their new friends. What a great thing it is to be here!!

Sunday, 11 July 2004 (Bob Gardner)
Schoten, Belgium

Well, today isn’t exactly what you might call your typical Sunday. There we sat—a bunch of LDS Americans dressed to the nines in outdated Civil War garb in the apse of a Catholic church in a Belgian suburb in the year 2004. Just as atypical was the church program. Instead of the average fifty-minute mass, we stretched it out to an hour and a half with musical presentations from every country represented at the festival.

Of particular interest to our group were three presentations: 1) The Russians sang a beautiful religious folk song. 2) The Trinity School of Irish dancers treated the congregation with a stirring rendition of a Beatles song. (After that, Willis didn’t feel so bad about clapping in church.) 3) The last number was our own—not a particularly stirring performance, but singularly different from any other. Thom, one of our guides, translated the second verse of “The King of Love My Shepherd Is” into Flemish and coached Bill on pronunciation. He sang. People stared. To some it was perfect, to the rest, beautiful.

To continue our “usual” Sabbath observance, Jasmine and I then went to the mayor’s house to “hob-knob” with the rest of the beautiful people. We were the natural choice for the event because of our fluent Flemish (wink, wink)! We gave the mayor a souvenir Brigham Young University wooden box. He, in turn, gave us something to “wine” about. Then we toasted to something in Flemish which, for all we know, was a traditional prayer for an abundant beer crop. Ironically, that’s probably the first time they ever ran out of OJ before alcohol during a formal toast.

After lunch, when Belgium finally decided not to “rain on our parade,” we “O Susannahed” ‘til the cows came home. The “Edmaster” was quite complimentary.

On a more spiritual note, Thom came to our sacrament service right after our Sunday show.

Now, the 11th of July is the anniversary of the Flemish victory over the French in 1302. To commemorate the event, Helmut Lotti, the Josh Groban of Belgium, gave a free concert in Antwerp’s main square. A few dancers happened to be in Antwerp for the event. Willis naturally won the ensuing rib eating contest at the Amadeus restaurant which happened to be conveniently situated in the prostitution district right next door to the “Erotic Shop.” A paradoxically perfect end to a day of worship and rest.

Monday, 12 July 2004 (Trevor Austin “Feivel”)

(I hope that this name doesn’t live on!)

Schoten, Belgium

Ok—today was our big show day. So that means that we had an 18 minute show!

Along with this show we had to do an “animation” afterwards that would go until two a.m. in the morning. “Animations” are where we get the crowd involved and we teach them some of our recreational dances that are easier to do. We shared the animation with Trinity, the Irish group from Chicago. We would switch off each half hour but, I think we ended up switching each hour for about four hours. Not to mention that the band from Trinity was pretty intoxicated, and they had invited people from every group onto the stage. It was cool—but “drunk” people dancing is a bit dangerous!!

So I’m going to mention who’s trying to be friendly with whom. . . Alan is the biggest flirt but can’t seem to convert. Gregg is the second biggest flirt but, he never follows through. Dave came out of nowhere for a third place bid. (Aren’t festivals just a great big melting pot of love???) I will say that the Trinity girls will miss us greatly, and that no matter what anyone says, you can be friends with anyone--that includes 17 year old girls!!! So—you all are great.

Tuesday, 13 July 2004 (Bill Doolittle)

Schoten, Belgium

Today was a day off from the festival and most people on the team went on excursions with their host families. A group of eight families went to the Antwerp Zoo which is famous throughout Europe and about which we learned in culture class. Others went to the mall in Schoten. Some

went to Brussels, although Nate and Morgan didn't get there until everything was closed so they had to turn around and come straight back.

Here are some of the things people did with their host families:

Ron and Leslie—went bowling and made an American dinner for their hosts

Brent, James, Katie and Scott, Peter and Abby, Alex, Laura, Steve, Tranjo, and Scott and Karen—went to Brussels

Ed, Vickie, Cat and Elise—went to Antwerp

Bill, Gregg, Bob, Jasmine, Lane, Bryce, Dan, Justin, and Willis—went to the zoo in Antwerp

Emilee Green, Emilee Wright, Marie, Crystal—went to Antwerp and Brussels

Scott West and Travis—went to a beautiful library in Lueven

Steve and Tranjo—also went to Waterloo

McKenzi, Summer, Aubree, Lindsay, Hillary, Linsey—went to Bobbejaan Land

“Tappy” and Alan—went horseback riding

In the evening there was a basketball game against the Russians. The Russians were a bit cocky because they had beaten the Greeks, as if that were something to be proud of. The Russians challenged us and we, trying to emulate the 1980 Miracle on Ice, slaughtered the Russians in three straight games to 30. Our team was made up of Ryan S., Trevor, Scott R., Ty, Scotty W., Peter, and Travis W.

In the middle of the game, one of the frustrated Russians exclaimed, “No wonder we can't keep up with these guys—they don't smoke!”

After the game there was a party at the pub across from the high school where most of the groups were staying. Ryan S, Trevor, Ty, and Scott West report that it was rockin'. It clearly violated Schoten's 'No noise after dark' ordinance, which was violated every night during this week. It was while they were clubbing that the Russians expressed to our guys that if the Greeks had beaten them, they would not have been able to be friends over it. “But, you Americans are different!” This was the beginning of a great friendship with the Russian group over the next couple of days.

In conclusion, this was a day of leisure, cultural interaction, and American domination.

(Director's Note: This Russian group, Vesenniye Zori, from Voronezh, is the same ensemble our group has been with at several other festivals—Confolens, 1987, and Drummondville, 1995)

Wednesday, 14 July 2004 (Alex Beach)
Schoten/Brugge, Belgium

We met early this morning at the HI and our guides led us on an excursion to Brugge. After a quick tour of the monastery and a stop at a Cathedral, Tom, Ils and Karen let us loose.

We then split up into smaller groups (so that we could more efficiently shop and avoid group think) and hit that medieval town- American tourist style. Everyone shopped for lace while enjoying Belgian chocolate and ice cream along the way.

The item of the day turned out to be—drum roll—lace baby blessing dresses! Yes, it's true folks—even Bill Doolittle jumped on the bandwagon and blew a significant sum of euros on a beautiful lace dress for his future daughter. Ahhh. When we had spent all of our per diem on *gaufres* and *smootenballen*, we boarded the bus back to Schoten.

Later, we found our favorite eating place and ate chicken sauce and frites (once again—it's a miracle we fit into our costumes), and of course we passed the bread and *fait des bisous* with our friends from Mexico (whoohoo Hillary), Senegal, France, and Bolivia. Then we rushed to change because tonight we performed first at the festival.

When the performance was over we started partying hard once again. (You know those Belgians love to dance all night long!)

Thursday, 15 July 2004 (Marie Sonnenberg)
Schoten, Belgium

Happy Birthday Morgan!!! Welcome Britney Wood!!! Oh what a morning in Schoten, Belgium. The clouds were hovering over our little park-eit place while dancers and musicians gathered inside with chocolate from their host families. Stories were told of the activities the night before but none could top the dramatic incident by Marie and Emilee Wright.

The night before they had needed to do their laundry so they asked their host mom for help. The mom was happy to do it for them but she would only be awake for one load. Marie and Emilee decided that they would watch how she worked the machine and when she went to bed they would stay up late and put in a second load. After a few hours the laundry was done so they transferred it into the dryer and started the second load. All was well until Marie noticed that they put the soap in the wrong container. Just to be safe they decided to put a second scoop of soap in the right one. With a push of a button the second load began. An hour later when Emilee went to check on the laundry she noticed that all of the power was off and the machine was full of soap. It was too late to wake up their mom so they decided to go to bed and pray that they didn't break the machine. The next morning when they woke up their host mom informed them that the machine was overflowing and flooding the floor with bubbles. She said it was like something you would see in a movie. Their mom informed them that if she hadn't gotten down there when she did that the whole downstairs would have flooded. Emilee and Marie were thankful that she was so nice and that they had been lucky that they didn't flood the whole house.

Our group was scheduled to perform at the Schoten retirement center. So after much confusion on who was doing what dances we loaded up and headed out. Our dressing rooms were in the bathing areas and our performance in their eating quarters. The performance was a blast and it was so much fun to mingle with the elderly. Many of them would talk to us in Flemish and even after their translators told them we didn't speak their language they just continued to talk. You could tell by their eyes and smiles that they were happy to have us there.

One lady, named Celina, told a dancer that she remembered the folk dancers when they came 20 years ago. She said that they sat by her wheel chair and danced with her.

Cat said that an audience member asked what group this was and a different lady said, "They are Mormons...that is why they are so nice." There were many different people of all ages. I believe there was even a lady who was 102 years old. It is amazing to think of the things these people have seen and been through. The leaders of the retirement center said that this was the first time that a festival group had interacted so much with the audience and made them feel so much apart of the program. We were honored to perform for them and enlighten their day.

After the performance the retirement center provided a lunch. During this lunch the folk dance ensemble honored the director of nursing for the retirement center. Jonathon presented a folk music CD and a letter of gratitude. The director then thanked us and gave us some spending money. Ed decided that it would be nice to take a break during the lunch and sing "Go Ye Now In Peace" to the elderly. Peter and Gregg were not finished with their meal and wanted to wait a little while but everyone had already started to leave. So—after we had all left the leaders thought it would be funny to hide their plates. Meanwhile, the rest of us all went down to where the elderly were eating and spread ourselves throughout the room. The song was beautiful and the spirit was felt by many. A group of people afterwards went into one lady's private room who could not get out of bed to attend and sang to her. I am sure that she was touched. When we all returned to the lunch room Peter and Gregg looked around in confusion as to where their plates went. After a while they were magically returned by Scotty and Karen.

Before our evening performance we brought together all of the guides and gave them a special tribute from our group. We provided a gift of Brigham Young University t-shirts, pins, key chains, and a group photograph. The guides were so thankful and many tears were shed. There were also gift exchanges to the different countries. We gave each country a photograph of the group, postcards, and a few pins. Many of us were assigned to be representatives that presented these gifts to these countries.

Today we also found out that our group had cleaned out the chocolate at the Schoten festival. Many of the dancers used all of their drink tickets to buy chocolate either for souvenirs or personal pleasure.

Before our evening performance Travis Wertz gave a great devotional on how he has been amazed at the peace felt between all of the different countries during this time of turmoil. Afterwards, Emilee Green realized that she was missing her Exhibition Square under skirt. All of the girls checked their name tags but Em's skirt could not be found. She decided to use Marie's and then Emilee Savage would give her skirt to Marie for Frontier Hoedown—very confusing...but it worked. When we got to our park-eit we found that the skirt was hidden in the Southern dresses slip box. Oh, the performance drama!

After the performance most people went back and started to pack up all of the props. However, some of the boys decided to stay behind and hang out with the Russian girls. Dave, Gregg, and

Justin willingly accepted fake tattoos from the Russian girls but didn't realize that there was no water to wet the tattoos. Instead the Russians used beer and poured it all over their arms. These boys also traded costumes with the Russian guy dancers. They traded them their Texas Fandango costumes and the Russians provided them with their sashes. It was hilarious to see the Russians doing cowboy kicks...they were actually pretty good.

The night was young and the party went on. The festival was coming to an end and we were anxious to take advantage of every moment with these groups. What a day it has been and so many adventures to look forward to.

Friday, 16 July 2004 (Bryce Shelley) **Antwerpen/Schoten, Belgium**

Bright and early at 8:15 (or sometime thereafter) we all met back at the Park-eit for our trip to Antwerpen. Some were more tired than others as we not only had some fun animations the night before, but, also had to pack and bring all of our luggage this morning. (Some got more sleep than others. I believe Lindsay Turner had the record with a 5:00am bedtime).

Our guides took us on a brief tour of Antwerpen's finer spots- the old castle, the statue of the Lange Wapper [lane'-gher whop-per] (where we learned that it is best to only have one lover if you live in Antwerpen.), Ruben's house, the Antwerpen Cathedral, and finally to a simple lunch of cold fish-chicken and salad.

The afternoon took each small group in their own direction. Museums, the grand train station, the diamond district, the Jewish section, and the ever popular shopping trips were the fare of the afternoon until 3:00 when we all returned home to practice a new version of Appalachian Patchwork, get photos and gifts for our families, and eat dinner.

We were the first to perform in the outdoor theater which (despite a cloudy morning) was open for an evening of blue skies. Performing in the open air was to be preferred considerably to the dark, smoky tent. Ils had an idea and asked Ed to have each of the guides dress up. (She then held Abby's dress so it looked like she was going to dress up with no intention of ever actually doing so. ☺) Karen got in a festival clog dress complete with make-up applied by Mrs. Emilee Wright. Koen was a western farmer, and Thom made a smashing cowboy with his wispy moustache and beard. We also dressed the announcers up in costume for them to announce the first performance, which was well accepted and which they enjoyed greatly. We must have started a trend because afterward, at the animation, some Mexican guides had on some very colorful dresses.

We watched the Russians do their bear dance and Povzunets. Trinity invited a few of our men to do a little dancing as part of "their" finale before the real finale began. During the finale, the aisles between bleachers were filled with dancers, the trumpets sounded from the castle with a kettle drum playing the Schoten festival anthem. We sang a song- Schoten cries a little- with everyone singing in their own language. (The tech crew heard bits and pieces as they loaded up the equipment on the bus hauling the luggage from the Park-eit to the stand that sold Schmoltebolen where the bus was parked.) At the end of the finale, there was a spectacular display of fireworks and everyone gave the white piece of cloth they had written something on to a member of the audience.

After the show, everyone met with their families and began to say good bye with pictures, exchanging addresses, and some tears. More than one host family told me that they were thinking about not hosting next year because we had been so nice, so polite, such perfect guests, always grateful, etc, that they didn't want to be disappointed by the next group. The animation consisted of scatter square, the Tennessee waltz, and a touch of polka on a very crowded dance floor, we packed up our costumes, loaded them, and met inside. There were some speeches, and Thom, speaking for our guides, gave us a medium box filled with things from which to remember Schoten. Included in the flower-child box were:

- dirt - "Dry dirt. I worked a long time to get that."
- rain bonnet - it rained all week long.
- disposable camera – to send pictures of us back to Schoten
- a white piece of cloth signed by our guides
- their green name badges
- chocolate candy bar- 'You can fight for it.'
- a bundle of spaghetti- – Thom: "I owe you one, Trevor, this is it."
- A rock from the paths that were made to avoid the mud – you girls will remember this.
- A small teddy bear holding a B (for Brigham Young University, we assume)

We went outside to our waiting host families and the General Secretary of the festival, Ulf Verbeelan (Son of Siegfried Verbeelan, founder of the Schoten Festival) who said that he would not speak long for there were not words to express what we had done on stage. He said that he had spoken with Jonathan and that we should mark the second week of July 2008 on our calendar to be back for Schoten's 50th anniversary. This will be the 8th time that we will have been invited to the Schoten festival.

We sang *Go Ye Now in Peace* to the group. It was not, by any means perfect musically, but it may be the best this group has ever sung it for the sincerity and emotion we felt. We then walked with our families to the bus and after a quick, tearful good bye and 5 minutes of waving at our new friends through the bus windows we pulled away. Said Ed: "I think it was just very noticeable how emotional people had become, how close, I mean, that there were a lot of very, very close relationships that had developed because people were so noticeably emotional at the departure."

And thus we left Schoten at 2 AM- on to new adventures in Paris.

Saturday, 17 July 2004 (Morgan Olson) **Schoten, Belgium to Paris, France**

Our day began with about 6 hours of trying to rest as we traveled all night on our bus to Paris. Housing assignments seemed to take forever. It was about 8:00 am when we finally arrived and the day turned out to be full of emotions as we experience this awesome city. But there were a couple of problems that developed.

We all took our things up to our rooms, showered and headed out to the streets of Paris. After buying our two day metro passes and figuring out the maps, everyone headed in different directions.

A lot of people headed to the Louvre, while another group went to Musee D'Orsay. Both were amazing. The Louvre was spectacular in its size. When you are outside looking at the building,

you can't believe that there is even that much art in the world to fill the whole building, not to mention all the thousands of museums around the world besides that one. We all saw the Mona Lisa and the famous Venus De Milo statue. Many of us were thinking back to the *Da Vinci Code* and trying to imagine the scene where everything took place. The downside to the Louvre is that there is almost too much to see. It is so overwhelming. Musee D'Orsay on the other hand was so wonderful. It had some famous Monets, Manets, Renoirs, Van Goghs and Degas, all the impressionist paintings. I have to say that I enjoyed this more than the Louvre.

Some other places that people visited were Notre Dame, Arc de Triumph, Saint Chapelle, and some even went shopping. The leadership reported that they had had a really nice dinner in the Latin Quarter where escargot was the *aperitif*. I, personally, was very satisfied with Paris. I had heard it was big and dirty and not that great, so I didn't have very high expectations, but I was very pleasantly surprised.

At 3:00 pm we were all supposed to meet at the Church Institute building to head out with some of the institute students so that they could show us even more of Paris with a guide. Unfortunately, there was a problem with our directions, and not everyone made it to the building on time (or at all). So that was problem number one. (Problem number two will come later on.) A lot of us were really tired, but unfortunately, there wasn't time to go back to the hotel to sleep.

Some of the local institute students from the church had arranged their day to meet us, and then take us anywhere people wanted to go in Paris. Many went to Sacre Couer. This was a beautiful site. The Cathedral was on top of a grassy hill. The Cathedral was actually very strict on who they let come in. You had to be dressed nicely, and no cameras. Scott Rynearson actually got "kicked out" because of his camera. Around Sacre Couer is an area called Monmarte where many artists go to paint portraits of people or of the scenery of Paris. They were all so good.

And now for the second problem of the day—in the evening, we were all SUPPOSED to meet at the dock by the Eiffel Tower to get on a boat for a night time cruise. Unfortunately, only about 20 out of 45 of us made it to the right place at the right time. There was apparently some misunderstanding as to the time and also the place. It was a very unfortunate disappointment for each of us. The leaders were upset when people didn't show, and the students who missed the boat were upset as they were left on the shore. However, the next day we talked through the mishap and at least were able to come to an understanding that will hopefully help us not to make the same kind of mistake again on this tour.

But, let's not relive that. In speaking as one of the people who did make the boat tour—it was beautiful, and very romantic. And we were all happy to hear that many who missed our boat, went ahead and took another. We all were asked to be back at the hotel by midnight. . .

—and that was pretty much our day in Paris.

Sunday, 18 July 2004 (James Frazee)
Paris, France to Lyons, France

Today was a rather long day. We started the day by trying to have a group Sacrament Meeting in the basement of the hotel. However, no room could be found, so we simply discussed some tour policies (as referred to in this history, 17 July.) After the bus was loaded, we were released to explore Paris for a few more hours.

Meanwhile, James, Laura, Elise and Tappy went to a French ward on the east side of Paris. It was a wonderful experience. It is always wonderful to see that, regardless the language or the place, the gospel and the Church are the same wherever you go! That is a true testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel and the Church. For James, it was very wonderful for him to see some of those people he knew on his mission.

We all met back at the hotel at 2:00 p.m. to leave for Martigues. As many of us had not had lunch yet, we gave some good business to a kebab sandwich shop just around the corner from the hotel. Though not French, they are very good sandwiches!!!

Before leaving Paris, we went to take a group picture in front of Notre Dame. The picture was taken fairly quickly, to the great relief of the guys' knees. Kneeling on gravel is not the most comfortable place to be!! As we were taking the picture, our group became the photo subject for a group of Japanese tourists. They took both pictures of our group in front of Notre Dame, as well as pictures of Britney taking pictures of our group.

Jon, Gregg, and some others bought the group some water. Not realizing what they were getting, they bought some bottled water with a hefty extra dose of salt, as well as some other minerals. We still love you guys!!

The rest of the day was filled with a bus ride to Lyon. The bus ride was uneventful. Most of us slept most of the way to recover from the late nights we had in Schoten. We stopped at a Casino Cafeteria at a rest stop. It was a good buffet style dinner. We then stopped in Lyon for the night.

When we got to the hotel, Alex realized she had left her tennis shoes under the bed in her room in Paris. Ooops!!

Monday, 19 July 2004 (Dave McMullin)
Lyon, France to Martigues, France

The day started off with a bang as we left Lyon around 9 am to go to the beautiful city of Martigues for our next Festival. Little did we know what kind of adventure awaited us (ooh ah ah ah).

Ok, well, it wasn't that bad. It actually started off really well. After an hour or so of driving we pulled over at a rest stop/park to hold our very own sacrament meeting. It was nice to be outside to enjoy the partaking of the sacrament but, instead of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir to welcome us to this park, we had the *beautiful* singing of the Cicadas. What a welcoming sound! In order to drown out the sound of the cicadas, Ed thought that it would be a good idea to do a little singing of our own, so he suggested that we sing "God be with you 'til we meet again" in French. Now that was a fun experience! I'll just leave it up to you as to which sounded better, the choir of cicadas or us!!! Then onto our next adventure at the famous American restaurant, Mc D's, mmmmm yum. Ed said that he hadn't eaten at a McDonalds for ten plus years. It's never easy when you have to feed 50 hungry Americans. For entertainment, while waiting for everyone to finish their food, we had games of sipa and Frisbee. What a sight we are!!

Well—on the road again we went, and I think those burgers had something in them because the front 'o the bus was having way too much fun with their traveling pillows, trying to play...Ring

the Neck!! I claimed Willis the champion due to having the goofiest face while doing it. For those who missed it—your loss, for it was quite entertaining and provided a few good laughs. One thing that we weren't prepared for was the HEAT! It was wicked hot, especially on a bus with a broken AC stuck in traffic. Oh happy day! In attempt to avoid the traffic/road closures Vincent decided to take a more *scenic* route. In the outskirts of France we ended up passing the road we needed. So all the macho guys who wanted to, got off the bus, unhooked the trailer, backed it up, then Vincent reversed the bus to turn it around, and off we went. Yippee!! We were on some of the smallest roads ever and it made the ride more of a rollercoaster ride—giddy-up! It definitely was the scenic route. It was pretty and reminded a lot of people of little villages in Mexico or something.

Then it happened! While we were driving, some dude honks and then cut us off making us stop. I found that kind of funny considering the size of his car compared to our double-decker bus. Then the guy gets out of his lil' ol car and starts to chew Vincent out. At least this was the interpretation from the top of the bus. But never fear Willis is here, along with 20 other men ready to regulate. The dude then slams the door and leaves. It's a good thing too!! What that was all about is yet to be determined.

We finally arrived in Martigues and what a beautiful little city right on the Mediterranean Sea. Is this heaven? No it's southern France, and its blazing HOT!! We had a delicious dinner which everyone agreed was much better than the Schoten food, and then we went to the festival "village" for animation with all the groups and their bands. It was great to arrive safely, and even a few of us got interviewed by the radio while we were dancing. I don't think anyone knew how well Scotty could get down and shake it fast with those Tahitians. It was a fun evening and we were all anticipating this new festival and the week ahead. Peace!!

Tuesday, 20 July 2004 (Lane McMahan)
Martigues, France

Tour clothes: warm ups and swimsuits

Today we went to the beach for the first time. . . or maybe I should say that those of us in Martigues went to the beach for the first time. The beach was fun, and though the time was short we had fun swimming about in the water and playing Frisbee. In fact, a group of us swam out to the boundary buoys where we had a short pow-wow and swam back. If I remember correctly, there were a couple of pairs of swim trunks being waved above the heads of the owners out at the buoys. It was too far away to see who it was, but the trunks definitely weren't on their bodies. Thankfully, the trunks made it back onto their bodies somewhere between the beach and the buoys, probably about half way back. While we are on the subject of swim suits, and for the record, the French one-piece swimsuit is much less than the American one-piece.

Sometime that day we ended up waiting in the dinner line. This was the first night that all of the singing and dancing began in the food line. At first, the tall guy from somewhere strange got out and did shabby continuous kicks, maybe 3 or 4. Fancying himself the uncontested champion, he got back in line. However, the high fives, pats on the back, and mutual, male-buddy rejoicing was cut short. Hillary, in a hoe-down dress, jumped the bar and put the man to shame with a set of perfectly executed, straight-legged, respect-demanding continuous kicks. Did I mention she was wearing a hoe-down dress? Yeah, I bet he was really embarrassed. I'm pretty sure that he felt the same way because he spent the rest of his time in line trying to make up for the lost

ground. Moral of the story: Don't expect to win a dance competition when Hillary is around—you will be greatly disappointed.

If you think I have left stuff out, feel free to add your own tour experience in the following space
_____ o.k. that's enough.

Wednesday, 21 July 2004 (Emilee Savage Wright)
Martigues, France

Today was another fairly relaxing day in Martigues. Many of us started out the day at the beach in Carro for a few hours, playing Ultimate Frisbee or catching a few rays... and z's. Some started out at the market that is set up in Carro every Wednesday and Saturday which had everything from jewelry to baby clothes, to fruit and veggies... something for everyone—except for Willis, he thought it was dumb.

The Carro group met the rest of our group for lunch at noon or so, only about an hour after most of us ate breakfast... eat, dance, sleep, eat, dance, sleep, sightsee... sound familiar? So we then had lunch followed by a festival rehearsal at the floating stage. Although good timing for laying out, three o'clock in the afternoon is not always the ideal time for rehearsal in the afternoon sun.

Dave thought he would cool off by being thrown in the canal during the Texas Fandango hat line – the first dancer ever to be thrown in the canal at this festival! After rehearsing that a few times, a few dips for Dave, we moved on to Journey and tried to sweat as little as possible – yea right! A water fight between Emilee and Trevor was sure to follow, but Emilee definitely won out in the end!

Free time followed our hot rehearsal. Because we all looked “soooo good”, we wanted to grace the city with our presence! Of course the “maneater,” aka. Hillary Boeing, seduced our guide, Guillem, for the majority of the free time... what would Nico think about that?!?

After visiting a few *patisseries* and other fine shops, the crew got on the bus for dinner – eating again! Dinner this evening was some fine rare steaks... some call it raw hamburger patties. We also enjoyed a good roll (as in bread) game and a South African dancer whispered in Emilee Green's ear that he loved her. That, of course was after Stevo gave the roll and kisses to one of the South African male dancers—Steve... we never knew?!?

We promptly got back on the bus and then went to the show. Stitty showed us his modern dance capabilities in the opening ceremony of the festival and Linsey Davis enjoyed being wrapped in Saran Wrap as she walked off stage. The audience went wild when Dave was thrown into the canal—many at first thought it was an accident and gasped as the water splashed.

Although the reaction was not as dramatic, Lou Turner also gave quite a show as she attempted not to topple on stage, and instead crawled on her hands and feet with her booty in the air—that's all part of being a “twelve-year old Appalachian clogger” right?

Oh, and one more thing... don't forget that NATE LOVES POMPLEMOUSSE—Britney wasn't about to forget as she challenged all the girls to yell it on stage... four or five succeeded. As for the other dancers, all of the groups are amazing—they are all so unique and exceptional. Argentina is definitely a favorite!

An after-party followed. We all got to meet Scotty and Brent's host parents who are more like hippies from the Woodstock era. Some stayed and partied for awhile... others went home around midnight. Regardless, the day was a success! We love Martigues!

Thursday, 22 July 2004 (Linsey Davis)
Martigues, France

The day began with a show at the Oil Refinery where we performed for the workers as they ate their lunch. It was only on mornings like this, when we had performances, that our bus was on time to pick us up from Carro, yet whenever we had free-time it was always at least 30 minutes late if not longer. We started the Performance with a Band Number, Orange Blossom Special, followed by Old Dan Tucker into Exhibition Squares (short square danced). Appalachian, Southern, and Journey were then performed along with some other band numbers (sorry band, I don't remember which other band numbers were played other than Shady Grove). The workers were not very responsive other than a little clapping occasionally. Some of the workers had their back to the performance. They were facing everyone that was standing along the back...I hope they enjoyed the show!! After performing at the Oil Refinery and eating lunch there, we headed off to the high school to change out of our costumes, have devotional in the hallway outside of the boy's dressing room, and have some free time before we went to the square to do animation.

We had some free-time before the animation while the band set up and did a sound check. The animation was a success as we interacted with the people and performed. We decided to add some variety to the heel toe polka, waltz and scatter squares by doing country swing and line dances. Gregg was the caller while Ed was at a meeting. The men performed the end of Appalachian (slap dance). We also performed Exhibition Squares and it was interesting without having skirts for the girls to hold on to because it is so natural to reach for them. Emilee and Gregg were the only ones in costume so they could do their Festival Clog duet. The line dancing was also fun for the people. Laura, Dave and Linsey were up on stage demonstrating the line dance while Gregg helped lead down on the ground.

After animation we went to dinner. As we finished dinner the boys played their usual games of hakky sak and Frisbee while others sat in the shade. After dinner we returned to the high school for some free-time (we had a lot of free-time at this festival!!) before going to the Tahitian show. The show was good but it was a lot of the same dancing in different costumes. Near the end of the show, Vincent had to go home so many of us had to leave the performance to get our PAC bags off the bus. We felt bad leaving during their dancing and didn't want to be disrespectful but at the same time, many felt relief. After that, we went over to the village for a short time before the bus to Carro came to pick us up. Some people were going to stay and go home with their host families, but Ed wanted everyone to go home on the bus and get some rest because we were in charge of animation the next night. Those who wanted to stay were disappointed because the only time we really got to interact with other groups at this festival were at the after parties; but it was wise to go home and get our rest so we would have energy for our animation the next night.

Friday, 23 July 2004 (Travis Hall (Tranjo))
Martigues, France

This morning we had a presentation for the people in the community square beside the cathedral on the island. Ed introduced several of the dancers with examples of American traditional clothing, and the various styles of step dance from different parts of the world. Nate, Lane, and I showed our unique instruments and playing styles from the United States. It was a nice experience for the community.

Another group of dancers taught children some of our traditional dance styles. In the afternoon the band did a performance in the local cathedral. We played several of our slower, more thoughtful songs. I gave the band prayer before going on and asked above that we might share a portion of the Spirit with those in attendance. This prayer was answered more than we expected. My host mom came, and while we were playing a hymn I saw that she was crying. After the show she said that the music really touched her.

Directly after that Bill Doolittle led a double quartet in singing several of the fireside songs at another church in town. Bill said, "It sure was nice". That evening we did an animation for the after-show that went from 11:30pm to 2am. It was a very full day, the highlight, in my opinion, being the first band show in the cathedral.

Saturday, July 24 2004 (Dan Villella)
Martigues, France

This morning our bus with the leaders on it had a problem finding the right McDonald's so we had a late start. Most of us went to the beach. It was super windy and all who were at the beach felt the sting of sand whipping against bare skin (some more than others, wink wink). There was a market there where several of the girls on the team bought wrist watches for 5 Euros.

Instead of going to the beach Nate went to the laundry-mat with his host, George, aka Little Napoleon Bonaparte. George used to be a jockey in the states, something he said he never could have done here in France because he was not a part of the right family or social clique. George said that in the U.S. nobody stops you from accomplishing what you want to do.

We celebrated the 24th of July by eating strawberries at our devotional and by singing "Pioneer Children". The band was asked to play "Wichita" while dancers from several different groups pranced around an artificial campfire while smiling at each other. Crystal was nearly kissed by one of the dancers from another team during the rehearsal but, she's extremely talented at foiling such attempts.

Sunday, 25 July 2004 (Elle T (aka Lindsay Turner))
Martigues/ Vitrolles, France

2 Nephi 33:1 “...for when a man speaketh by the power of the Holy Ghost
the power of the Holy Ghost carrieth it unto the hearts of the children of men.”

With team members spread between Martigues and Carro, and no planned festival schedule for the day, most of us found ourselves sleeping in and spending time with our host families this morning. The leaders staying at the infamous AFPA joined some of the families in Martigues for a well-prepared home-cooked lunch. Nate and Morgan Olson joined the band boys (sans Lane) and their host family for swimming (ooooohhh, busted!), barbecuing, and good ‘ol bluegrassing. The families in Carro organized a French-American barbecue with an extravagant salad bar, Gregg Crockett’s family marinade, Alice’s Chocolate Macarons, and All-American Peanut Butter Chocolate Chunk Cookies. The hours of preparation our hosts had devoted to this afternoon have been the greatest gesture of hospitality and love toward our team members I have seen to this point. I catch myself thinking, “these people *really* love us...and I have no idea why. We haven’t done anything to deserve this.” In an inadequate expression of gratitude we sang our best unpracticed rendition of “Irish Blessing”. Bonds of friendship were strengthened and hearts were opened, both French and American, in preparation for the approaching evening activities.

We then all hopped on our “double-decker of delight” and drove to the Vitrole Stake Center to prepare for our evening fireside. We enjoyed beautiful sunny weather today, but even as we progressed through the evening, from the bus to the stake center, the importance of air conditioning could not be overestimated! The fireside was in a small chapel that filled up quickly with church members, host families, and other friends made through the festival. We were especially happy to have two girls from the Kamchatkan team, who are also staying with Lane and Alan’s host family, join us for the evening. Ty quickly befriended them and took the opportunity to practice his Russian translation skills throughout the fireside.

With the help of an experienced couple within the stake, the entire meeting was translated from French to English, which not only increased the length of the fireside, but also added a few complications for the speakers...namely breaking their sentences into smaller fragments without their thought processes being broken down at the same time! But each of our students faced the challenge of speaking to a foreign audience with unprecedented grace and poise. ☺

Ed began the fireside with a quick introduction of the group after which we sang “My Shepherd Will Supply My Need”. During the first song I noticed Nicolas, a nine-year-old boy fighting back tears. I could tell that he felt the Spirit – possibly for the first time – and couldn’t identify exactly what it was, but was slightly uncomfortable at the induced crying. I personally didn’t perceive the strength of the Spirit in the room until I noticed this boy. He reminded me of how grateful I am for the great gift we have that we so easily overlook. Watching the change take place in others is such a powerful testimony of the truth of this work.

This strength of Spirit continued throughout the rest of the evening through the messages of the speakers, the beauty of the musical pieces, and especially the final testimonies of a number of our students in French. I believe that the personal dedication of the team members in concert with the prepared hearts of the people we met with, fostered an environment where the Spirit could bear the truth of our message of Christ, hope, love, and the atonement. Although each individual took

away his own thoughts and meanings from the fireside, one cannot dispute the Spirit that was present or the truths that it bore witness of.

I am personally thankful for the experience I have had this evening to be surrounded by such strong witnesses of Christ, to feel of His Spirit, and to bear witness of His love and grace to our friends here in the south of France. I love each of you dearly!

Monday, 26 July 2004 (Emilee Green)
Aix en Provence/Martigues , France

The day started out with a bang or lack thereof. Those of us staying in Carro, La Couronne, and Sausset were to be picked up at 8:15 a.m. The plan was to be able to go to Marseilles to take a boat ride out to Chateau d'If. When the bus didn't show up by 8:30, our cute host families jumped into action. They shuttled us to a central location so when the bus did come only one stop had to be made. A myriad of time wasting procedures were put into place while we waited for the bus. Some of us attended to postcard needs, some slept, and others chatted with host moms. The bus pulled up around two hours late, so we didn't make it in to Martigues until around 11:00. A fun site awaited us as Tranjo and Cat were playing their instruments on top of the Elbo bus. Disappointment of missing the opportunity to go to Marseilles was lessened when Jonathon told us the wind was too strong, and the boats were not running. An excursion to Aix en Provence was arranged instead.

The first big site of Aix was the fountain in the middle of the roundabout. Everyone was given 10 euros per diem to eat, and we were let loose on the town. Mostly the time in this French town was spent eating and shopping. I ate with a group at a little patisserie where a *fougasse* was the favorite item. A *fougasse* is a fun filled bread/sandwich. Just before loading the bus around 1:15 p.m., Jonathon performed an amazing yoga trick and fit himself in a tiny little carriage on a carousel. The girls joined him on the various horses and ponies for a picture. Leave it to the folk dancers to find optimal photo ops.

Upon our return to Martigues, 8 couples were asked to go to a rehearsal for the finale of the show tonight. We joined Mexico, Poland, and Kamchatka in running on stage to American fiddle, waltzing to Polish music, and running off with a wave to the "publeec." Rehearsing with the other countries is an awesome opportunity to get to know them. I love trying to communicate with them and joining together to dance on stage. Each country danced their type of waltz, and we ripped it up with a quick Spanish waltz. The man who choreographed was efficient in getting the job done, and we finished in a little over an hour. Only one major incident occurred during the rehearsal. One of the moves was to reach up and around the person next to you. Alan didn't see me standing right next to him and accidentally laid one on my eye. Not to worry because Katia came to the rescue with some ice from the kitchen. It was a little awkward holding a liter bottle full of ice up to my eye during the rest of the rehearsal. *C'est la vie!*

On the way back to the bus, Willis received a nice little present from the sky and quickly wiped off the white *doo doo*. Jean Lurcat Lycee, the local high school where we keep our costumes, has become our local hang out when we need to pass some time. We had devotional by Trevor, sang a hymn, and ended with a prayer. Everyone had some time to sleep or read. Dinner was at the Pagnol and consisted of pasta, tuna and a sauce, or beef and a sauce, salad, fruit, and a drink.

The show began at 9:30 p.m. We were second right after Poland in the first half and did our American Suite: Old Dan Tucker, Exhibition Square, Frontier Hoedown, and ending with a big splash as Dave went into the Canal during Fandango. Second half we were last and performed Appalachian into Journey. The wind was really stiff especially during Journey, and it was an adventure clogging through it. Some of the Mexican girls helped us make our quick changes backstage. After the show Hillary and a Mexican girl switched costumes. It has been wonderful seeing the mixing of groups and building of friendships. A group of us talked to the Kamchatka girls before the show and found out their pants are made of Caribou fur, and they have little white animals hanging from their tops. The different groups have brought a wealth of culture to our understanding of the world and its dance forms.

Afterwards, we went to the village party until 1:30am. Everyone enjoyed some food from ice cream to pita sandwiches to pizza purchased with our Festival Monopoly money. For some it is hard to say goodnight, while others wished to go home earlier. Each part of the festival has added to the overall experience.

Thanks guys for making this an awesome day and taking care of me with my hurt eye!

Tuesday, 27 July 2004 (Ty Jones)
Martigues, France

Our last day in Martigues was a very eventful one. We had a rehearsal for the finale in the morning, and somehow, the bus from Carro managed to be on time for the first time. Other days we had waited many hours, but on this day, we arrived bright and early to the rehearsal. They did not even use us until eleven, but when all was said and done, it was good to be on stage with all of the other groups.

Later that afternoon, we took pictures on the stage and on a little side street. We were continually interrupted by cars driving up the street, but we were able to get some good pictures taken. After pictures, we gathered at the village for dinner and prepared to do a show we had been notified of earlier that afternoon. Ed appeared to be a little frazzled, but everything turned out ok. The highlight of the show was the spotlight of Karen because it was her birthday. They brought her up on stage and called her daughter on a land-line phone and put the voices through the speakers. It was very cute to hear birthday wishes exchanged over the speakers as Karen spoke with her daughter and granddaughter.

At approximately 8:30 pm, we prepared to do our final parade in Martigues. I personally was not really dreading the parade, but by the end of the short parade route, which was only from the village to the stage, we were all reminded again of the lack of support given by character shoes. I know that I was very grateful to take my shoes off.

We performed fourth in the evening show which consisted of the Waltz Round and Festival Clog, and we even successfully did Festival Clog by doing showdown first, which had been a hot topic of discussion the night before. The finale was also interesting for a couple of reasons. Right before the finale started, Bill got stung by a wasp which left a good-sized welt on his arm. It was also interesting to dance around on the stage as fireworks began to explode overhead and debris began to rain down on us.

After the show, we went to the village for the final party of the festival. A lot of ice cream and other food items were bought with our “coupons” and the band played an awesome 45 minute set. Hillary also had a romantic Latin encounter with Nico. I, personally, was very proud of her. After the band played, most of us left on the bus for Carro, but a handful stayed a little longer, and this would prove to be a decision they would have to pay for. Not long after the band had gathered their things from the backstage area, Trevor discovered that some of the PAC bags were missing. After a long night of searching, all of the lost bags were found with passports intact (this was a huge miracle), but cameras and wallets were missing for Lindsey Turner, Trevor Austin, Allen Detton, and Scotty West. They all had a long night at the police station and looking for their bags, but all were grateful that they had at least found their bags with many of the personal items still in place.

During our stay in Martigues, we were also able to get to know a couple of the girls from Kamchatka who were housemates with Allen, Lane, Bob, and Jasmine. They had come to our fireside on Sunday and seemed to enjoy it. We gave both of them a copy of the Book of Mormon before leaving Martigues. Even though this day was very busy, it was great to be a part of our second festival which allowed us to meet people from all over the world. Even though the festival ended with the unfortunate event of the stolen bags, it is such a blessing to be in Europe representing Brigham Young University, the Church, and most of all, our Savior Jesus Christ. We are all very blessed.

Wednesday, 28 July 2004 (Justin Keyes)
Martigues, France to Toulouse, France

We all woke up bright and early today and said goodbye to our host families. We met at about 9 am at the community center in Carro. After singing *Go Ye Now in Peace* and *God Be With You 'Till We Meet Again* (in French) we said what we thought would be our final goodbye's. There was a lot of emotion. Tears were shed by the families and by us. One of the host family's kids, Nicolas, was bawling. I have this wonderful image in my head of Alex hugging this little boy. I think that even though there was a language barrier for many of us here in Martigues greater than what we had had in Schoten, we became just as close, if not closer, to these families than we did to the families in Schoten.

We rode the festival bus to the school where our costumes were stored, only to find that some of the people from Carro had come to see us off from there as well. While they waited, we loaded all our costumes, props, and tech equipment. Then we gave gifts to Katia and Guillem and actually said our last goodbye's to the people of Martigues.

Then we were off on our “6”ish hour drive to Toulouse. The bus ride was relatively uneventful. Most people read or slept in the morning. After about an hour or so we stopped at a big supermarket so that Jonathan could buy us all water. While there, Jonathan decided that since there were a few places to eat we would all get off the bus and have lunch. Many of us went to the cafeteria at the supermarket which actually had very good food. Lunchtime was when we discovered the Pamplemousse Mentos.

One of the funniest and most embarrassing things on tour happened to James during lunch. He went into the pharmacy at the supermarket to get cough drops, but ended up asking for a woman's bra. Apparently the words in French are somewhat similar and James in his dazed state got the two mixed up. After lunch we got back on our way to Toulouse.

We took one other notable break during our travel. We stopped in the medieval town of La Carcassonne. This place was awesome. It had a waterless moat around it and big fortifying walls with little openings in them for the archers to shoot out of. Inside, however, the city was different. It was like a tourist trap. Tons of little souvenir shops, cafes, and even a medieval torture museum—but the basic structure of the medieval city was still there. It was actually quite charming and it was fun to take our break there.

We finally arrived in Toulouse in the evening. After unloading the equipment from the bus and trailer into our rooms we were set loose to find some dinner. I had a goat cheese and honey pizza for dinner that I enjoyed very much.

We got back to the hotel at 9:30 for a meeting and reviewed the schedule for the next day. We were going to split up into two groups. One was going to go to a square in the city and do a street performance. The other was to go to a school and do a performance for children with the possibility that the local media was going to cover the event at the school. Jonathan got a phone call during the meeting telling him that we did not have a permit to perform in the public square. So, that group got off the hook. You'll have to see tomorrow's history to see how the other group ended up.

Thursday, 29 July 2004 (Vickie Austin)
Toulouse, France

Today didn't quite turn out as the saints in charge wanted things to turn out. There has been a lot of resistance to our church in this area and the Folk Dancers were there to try and soften hearts. The dancing in the square and the trip to the elementary school did not pan out. It was disappointing for those in charge. Therefore, the day was fairly free until it was time to set up the stage. The show was in a big hall and the stage was large. The entrances and exits were a challenge to figure out. Dinner was a glorious event prepared by the members. There was chicken and lots of salads, fruit, bread and delicious goodies and plenty of drink. There was so much food that the missionaries were invited to partake after us and there was still some food to munch on after the show. President and Sister Pratt, the mission president and his wife, met us there. They will be with us several times as we perform in their mission. We discovered that Sister Pratt is Ty Jones' cousin.

The show was attended by a couple of hundred people—smaller than the locals had hoped but they did say that a large number of them were investigators—so that was exciting! The show had some exciting added elements to it this night particularly when Fandango came along. Trevor had loaned his chaps to Guillem in Martigues and hadn't worn them since. As he was dancing they weren't fitting correctly and he was fidgeting with them to get them right. This wasn't wise to do during the fight scene as it through off the guys' timing—particularly Peter and Trevor. Peter took his normal swing at Trev and to both their surprise he connected and truly knocked Trevor down (and maybe out for a brief second as he didn't get up very fast.) The other guys were wondering why he didn't get up for the next part and when he did, he was holding his nose and his chaps as he ran off. Ed commented that "the fight scene really looked real tonight." The hit had split the side of Trevor's nose and gave him a great black eye. He was undaunted as he came right back on for Journey with a Kleenex and a bandage to keep his nose from bleeding. Peter felt really bad . . . but since he's an Austin too . . . it's all good.

Other than that the show was a success and the audience really enjoyed and appreciated the talents of the students. Afterwards there was a very nice reception for some of the students and some invited guests. The others enjoyed eating leftovers and then we all walked back to our hotel.

Friday, 30 July 2004 (Matt Lund)
Toulouse, France to Ville-Franche Sur la Mer, France

Driving, checking in at Antibes, skinny-dipping in the Med, loading the stuff down a winding cobblestone driveway behind the citadel, a chintzy little stage that we changed around fifty times, playing fly's up Frisbee over rose bushes and amidst garden sculptures, dignitaries arriving for the show, a pizza dinner with apple pie for dessert, dancing under the Med moon with twinkle lights on the boats out on the bay, Tappy cutting his head open on a rusty door frame and having stiches courtesy of President Pratt, civic leaders attending the show as organized by the Meunier family (a stalwart strong family in the church that helped get people to the show whose influence could help improve the Church's standing in the community, the post-show cocktail party on the lawn, staying in a boat-cabin motel with porthole windows where you can sit on the toilet and shower at the same time.

(Directors Note: This was probably one of the most beautiful settings that our group has ever performed in. The "chintzy" little stage was located in the ruins of an ancient citadel overlooking one of the most beautiful scenes on the French Riviera—and as we started the show, the rising of a glorious full moon was stunning. What a blessing to be here.)

Saturday, 31 July 2004 (Katie Rynearson)
Nice, France

We had a wonderful Saturday today (even though every day feels like Saturday on tour). We began the day with a journey to Monaco and were there just long enough to hike up and down hundreds of stairs to see the changing of the guards at the palace. It is fun to say that we have seen even another country, and it was a beautiful place. After setting up for the show, most of the group spent the afternoon swimming in the Mediterranean, and man did it ever feel good to cool off in the water. After weeks of constant sweat it was very refreshing. The rocky beach can't quite compare to the beautiful beach in Carro, but we still had a good time. Cat and Tranjo even went parasailing and got a better view of the city.

The Relief Society gave us a delicious lunch at the Nice Ward building and we were once again amazed at the generosity of the members of the church here in France. The show tonight was wonderful! We had an overwhelming turn out and the audience really got into it. The band performed some numbers for a pre-show to warm our audience up. It is crazy to think about only having one more show after this, so we each really enjoyed our time on stage. Before the performance we presented gifts to President Pratt and his wife, as well as to Jacque and all those who worked so hard in Nice. Everyone was truly grateful that we were here and they shared special stories about how they know we are touching many lives. President Pratt's wife shared that President Hinckley had told them earlier in the year that, "a light is shining on France." She felt that our presence and performance in Nice was one of the manifestations of this. It is very rewarding to feel like we are making a difference.

Because of a very strict timetable for our strike after the show, only a few people were allowed to go into the audience. However, LT said that the people she met were so touched and were very grateful that we were there. Her host family from Martigues even came to watch. Linsey Davis mentioned one man who told her that he closed his eyes during Mek and it sounded like just one person was performing on stage. What a compliment to those boys! We loved performing on this incredible stage, and in such a beautiful city. There were people who waited outside the gate to see if they could get in, and at the end of the performance we received a standing ovation.

On a lighter note, we could officially title today as “Engagement Story” day. It all began as Willis told his exciting tale about the “belly button-lint thing.” We are all glad that Willis has found a girl that thinks his technique is completely romantic. We also heard romantic stories from Jasmine, Em and Em. Speaking of romance, we had a rousing game of truth or dare where we learned that Leslie Nuttall was first attracted to Ron’s fabulous chest! Sorry Stitt, you’ve got some competition. Scotty even stole a quick kiss from Marie to add to the fun. It is all of these silly moments that makes our tour days so memorable.

Ty concluded the day well with the following quote, “You know you have been on tour too long when you can smell yourself in your own clothes!” That about says it all...

Sunday, 1 August 2004 (Crystal Robinson)
Nice, France to Geneva, Switzerland

The day began with a church meeting in Cannes. The members there were very sweet to us the whole time we were there and the meeting on Sunday brought many tears. During the meeting we learned that Elder Haight had passed away.

We sang “My Shepherd Will Supply My Need.” Many hearts were touched—of both folk dancers and the members. A French woman sobbed openly in the back, and in the front sat some smiling children with bright countenances. A woman sitting with them said to us, “merci,” as we sang the ending words. It was clear that the Spirit and the music communicated the message of the song when the language may have not.

A few of the folk dancers bore their testimonies, and a few of the local members were able to translate others into English, so there were times that the whole team could understand. Alex and Bill stood up, and Alex did very well translating for Bill, but when the words “visiting and home teaching” came up, a missionary took over. A few more bore their testimonies, and all listening were strengthened. There are many people here in France that members from Utah, where one can cross the street and be in a different stake, can learn from. And, on the other hand, it’s a comfort for those in these areas where members are sparse, to know that many others throughout this world share in their testimonies of Jesus Christ. This was our only opportunity to attend a Sacrament meeting in a chapel with the local members this tour.

As we drove away on the bus, we continued our testimony meeting. A few took the opportunity to share some thoughts about tour, the gospel, and the team.

Our first stop was for lunch, then there were a few more for gas. At one of the stops, Jonathan, our wonderful “Horse walked into a bar, asked for a drink, but first, why the long face?” joke telling tour manager, bought ice cream for everyone and made sure no one missed out, not even

Lane. (Someone ran back from the bus and got him one after everyone else had had theirs. This was not due to any begging on Lane's part, but only because Jonathan—even though he did tell the same horse joke almost every day of the tour, and got dog piled and an attempted duct taped mouth for it—tried hard to take good care of us.)

He bought us ice cream because: 1) the bus ride was, “hotter than _____!” (Trevor Austin or Ty Jones or Ryan Stitt, or someone in the back of the bus); 2) someone felt he had, “died and gone to _____” (Justin Keyes); and 3) the bus ride was labeled “Purgatory on wheels” (Trevor Austin). The air-conditioning was just fine . . . according to Vincent. It was pretty hot.

Memorable moments on bus ride included the Zerbert game (please see Summer Wilson, Dan Vilella, Lindsey Turner, Steve Frandsen, Hillary Boeing, and Trevor Austin for details).

Also memorable were the fireworks all throughout the area as we drove into Switzerland.

Upon arrival, we had a team meeting in the youth hostel, which was a very nice one. Then, some went to bed, some stayed up and talked or walked around, and that was the end of the day we drove to from Nice, France to Geneva, Switzerland.

Monday, 2 August 2004 (Summer Wilson) Geneva, Switzerland

August 2nd - First full day in Geneva, Switzerland

8:00 a.m. The truly motivated begin to get up

8:45 a.m. The rest of us start getting up

9:00 a.m. Breakfast ends (rolls with jam, cereal with warm milk, yogurt, and orange juice...which in my opinion was nasty)

9:30 a.m. load the bus then free time

-shopping

-sight seeing: Jet d'eau

sometime: U.S Mission (not to be confused with an LDS Mission or an embassy)

Hallelujah for clean bathrooms, soap, paper towels, and nice cold glasses of water with ice. Ron commented “I went to the bathroom where 28 Presidents have gone to the bathroom.”

The show (band numbers, Indian, Mehk, journey, and singing) took place in the main conference room. Recently negotiations for a WTO and Arms treaty took place. Apparently the last 28 Presidents have all negotiated in that room, and yet those in the audience still commented that we were much better/more exciting than what usually happens there.

Other comments from the audience were along the lines of that room and those people had never experienced that kind of joy before. The lady in charge said that she hoped that the joy and energy would soak into the walls and floor and come again during negotiations. The best was that so much “condensed joy” had never been in that room.

McKenzi met a guy from Spain who was so excited that she was getting married that he got the address for the hostel to bring her a present. (On the 4th he actually brought her one. It's a gold 20 cent Swiss Frank from 1949.)

After: more free time

-more shops

-food

-naps

-sight seeing

4:40 p.m. Met to go to the Mission home (this time the LDS one)

President and Sister Nadauld (former Young Women General President) invited several important political figures to the mission home for FHE, including:

Ambassador Naela Gabr from the Permanent Mission of Egypt, and family
Ambassador Omar Hilale from the Permanent Mission of Morocco, and family
Ambassador Gyan Chandra from the Permanent Mission of Nepal, and family
Ambassador Mohammed Elhassan A. Elhaj from the Permanent Mission of Sudan, and family
Ambassador Charles Kashasha Mutalemwa from the Permanent Mission of Tanzania, and family
Ambassador Kweronda Ruhemba from the Permanent Mission of Uganda, and family
Premier Secretary Aklilu Skiketa Ansa from the Permanent Mission of Ethiopia
Charge d' Affaires Fatimatou Mansour from the Permanent Mission of Morocco
Premier Secretary Obeid Ghassan from the Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of Syria
Premier Couseiller Usman Sarki from the permanent mission of Nigeria

A lot of people had the opportunity to spend time with these people:

Crystal and many others were able to get to know a woman with the Moroccan group. She had an amazing life story. She had been transported to Cuba for her education, been brainwashed, and then trained in military skills. She was separated from her family from the time she was 8 because of a movement with aims to create a new state in Morocco. She was always told that her family was fine and that she didn't need to see them. They also taught her that Morocco was bad. She had to secretly copy her diploma so that there was record of her education. Most people's diplomas were stashed and not handed out. She is now working as a diplomat.

Bob was able to get to know a Turkish guy who was helping with the shish kabobs.

Jasmine discussed the fact that the Ethiopian dance group was unable to attend the Martigues festival with the Ethiopian group.

Summer, Emilee Green, Lindsey Davis, Laura, and a bunch of other people got to know the Ambassador from Tanzania. We were able to have a conversation about religion. The Ambassador commented that religion should encompass every aspect of life, that it is not just something for Sundays.

Laura, Linsey Davis and Lindsay Turner helped serve dinner with a guy named Sam. He didn't speak English they didn't speak French, but it didn't matter – they still had a great time.

Someone in the audience commented to Sister Nadauld, "Can you see what's in their faces?"

Overall the show was a success and a lot of people wanted to come to the show the next night.

Someone from Laura Bates' grandma's ward was there and so was Aubree's roommate.

Night time: A group, including Peggy, went to the carnival by the lake to go on a ride. A few groups, one of which included Peggy, went swimming in Lake Geneva...way to go Peggy!!

Tuesday, 3 August 2004 (Catherine Larsen)
Geneva, Switzerland

It's hard to choose the one magical experience of the day that encapsulates the feeling associated with doing our final performance of tour. It could be Ed singing his inaugural, and likely final, version of the Dressing Room Blues. Or it might be Lou bounding through the rows of costumes-changing folk dancers while sporting about 15 curly wigs on top of her head. It could be Tranjo and Cat conning eight people (Jonathan, Britney, Morgan, Laura, Peggy, Emilee, Bill, and Alex) into spending 10 bucks each to ride an enormous jackhammer ride at the local fair just prior to the ride being shut down due to inclement weather.

It might be a number of team members taking a midnight swim in Lake Geneva, not doing so to impress anyone with their swimming abilities, per se, but just to enable them the rights to brag to their posterity that they swam in sewage and lived to tell about it. It might be President and Sister Naduald speaking at the final devotional, offering words of encouragement and gratitude for our performance while wearing matching pink outfits. Maybe it could be walking to a nearby park to find members of the church ready to treat us to a picnic dinner. It could be Alex attempting to "catch a train" in her sleep, inadvertently tripping over every PAM bag on the floor. And speaking of bags, it could be everyone's efforts to pack their bags in a way that would allow room for \$250 worth of tour clothes PLUS multiple small German-made clocks, meters and meters of Belgian lace, and more kilos of chocolate than one can find on the shelf at their local Costco.

Likely, it was the combination of all of the events of tour and the entire last year that caused hearts to open, friendships to solidify, and memories to form as we sang, "God be with You 'Til We Meet Again" and "Go Ye Now in Peace" in the dressing room to those leaving the team and then, in the show, to members of the audience. Trying to describe times like these is like trying to depict the Eiffel Tower by night, illustrate fields after fields of sunflowers just in bloom, or express the feelings associated with belonging to a trusting host family. In a word, it was magical.

Wednesday, 4 August 2004 (Ryan Stitt)
Geneva, Switzerland to Zurich, Switzerland

Well, I almost made it through three entire folk dance tours without giving a single devotional or a single day of history. Almost. But on Aug. 4th I was slammed with both. Ouch. And true to Stitty tradition, I murmured and complained about it... hee hee. The day began with a GORGEOUS drive from Geneva to Bern. The rolling hills, farms, and wineries were absolutely beautiful. It was probably the most scenic drive we have taken yet this tour. We stopped in downtown Bern for lunch and MORE sightseeing/shopping. We waited in front of the world famous clock in the center of the city for fifteen minutes to see the amazing display of moving parts and sound. At five minutes before the hour a rooster on the clock made a little noise. At two minutes before, some little animals moved around in a circle. And after great suspense when

the clock finally stuck two, we heard a BONG BONG... and that was it. Almost as big of a let-down as walking a half hour to see the bears at the bottom of a big concrete pit... ha ha. The view of Bern from the bridge by the bear pit was worth the walk though!

We then drove up to the Swiss temple and spent a few minutes relaxing and taking pictures. When it was time to leave and we were backing up the bus, Vincent almost had to have a throw-down with an old lady. She came out of her apartment yelling, "You can't park here, it's a bus stop!" And Vincent politely replied, "Well... what is this? A bus. And what are we doing? Stopping." It's a good thing we have Vincent around to regulate.

We then continued on to Zurich where we checked into our pimped out hostel (newly refurbished) and headed downtown to find dinner. After dinner, a few people walked over to the lake and took a refreshing dip. Crystal really wanted to jump in, but didn't bring her swimsuit...hmmm. So Lane did what any true gentlemen would do... he traded her capris for his shorts. Who would've thought Lane looked so hot in women's capris? And who would've guessed that he's a trim size 8?

Thursday, 5 August 2004 (Ed Austin)
Zurich, Switzerland to Provo, Utah

Today was the big trip home. Everything went very well and we traveled safely home. During the day I asked each of you to share some of your final thoughts or impressions about our tour experiences. I would like to share them at this time, including one of my own. They are in no particular order.

While in Schoten, Belgium, I realized why it is difficult for many Europeans to accept religion as something to devote one's life to. After years of oppression and corruption, the churches have not done much to make these people better off. It has been the cause of war and sadness. I know the people we were with felt the spirit, and I hope they realize that pure religion is not the religion they have been exposed to. Our way of life is not limiting or restricting, but liberating and rejuvenating. It gives us hope that there is more than just this life, and that we can find eternal joy. It is through our Redeemer that we can be saved. I hope we shared some of this light. It makes all the difference.

--Ryan Davis

I gained a stronger testimony of the gospel and the universality of truth. Tour has brought me closer to my savior. I loved meeting people from around the world and learning of different cultures. Sharing the gospel with the Polish dancers was the sweetest.

McKenzi Williams and I became the closest friends. It was wonderful to have someone who understood what I was experiencing in missing Bry. I also gained a stronger love of dance and music and their ability to cross language and cultural barriers.

Thank you tour of 2004

--Emilee Green

On this tour I have been reminded that we really don't know the extent of our influence. I have watched as people have been inspired and hearts touched by seemingly insignificant words and acts. This is a great reminder to always be about the Lord's business.

--Leslie Nuttall

Tour really helped refresh my memory of how wonderful people are wherever you go and how much kindness is needed to be shown to everyone. All of us as human beings feel the same things inside. Relationships are what this life is all about.

--Ron Nuttall

Tour intensified my understanding of the impact one person can have on another. There are opportunities every day whether we are in Schoten, Martigues, Provo, or gorgeous Carro! It's up to us to open our eyes to them. I learned that even on sleepy nights when people might be on their last string, a little smile and "thank you" go a long way. There is definite value in what we do on these tours.

--Abby Lamb

I was reminded of how much work we are able to do in the area of teaching people more truth about "Mormons." Many people have learned false notions about the LDS people in general and we can do much on these tours to give our new friends a clear and more accurate understanding of who we are and what we believe in. It is likely that they will spread what they have learned to their friends and families. I can't think of a better way to spread the "good news."

--Ed Austin

The most amazing thing that happened to me was the immense gratitude that filled my heart while in the Catholic Church in Schoten. I had such gratitude that I knew the truth—the whole gospel of Jesus Christ—to the extent that I understand it.

With this gratitude also came some sadness realizing that the congregation didn't know what they were missing. They are good people with good hearts and are doing the best they can with the knowledge they have. But, they don't know that there is so much more to the Gospel of Christ than what they have. I'm grateful for that knowledge and pray that our friends will soon find that truth and let it lighten their lives so that they may enjoy the full joy of Christ.

--Gregg Crockett

I gained several things on this tour. First, I strengthened my testimony in Europe of how God lives and is aware of all of his children. I also learned to count my blessings every day, and to never take anything for granted, especially ice! But the things I will always treasure from this tour are the friends I made—all 50 of them. Thank you everyone for making this experience so special for me.

--McKenzi Williams

The most amazing thing about tour was being able to see the hand of the Lord among people from all over the world. It's true that the majority of the people we came into contact with do not have the gospel, but the light of Christ can still be seen in their eyes, and a lot of their spirits seemed to recognize the truth that we carried. It was great to be able to see the good in people from all over the world, to know that people from different cultures can come together with no problems, and to see Heavenly Father's love for all of us.

--Summer Wilson

We were very fortunate to attend two festivals this year—the Schoten festival in Belgium, and the Martigues festival in France.

I was very excited to be in Schoten. We have been trying to set up this return visit for over ten years. Upon our arrival, the committee in Schoten immediately honored us by stating that we were the only group to ever be invited back seven times to their festival, our last visit being twenty years ago in 1984. Jon Wood, our tour manager, spoke with some people who knew members of the family where his father, Russ Wood, had stayed back in 1968.

The festival was well organized. Rain, almost everyday, made our last and only outdoor performance, with the picturesque Schoten castle as a backdrop, even more exciting and memorable.

Martigues was also memorable. Our main performances on the stage floating on one of the beautiful waterways that intersect the coastal town must be added to our top ten list of stages for uniqueness and beauty. Our greatest challenges stemmed from our group being separated into three groups for separate housing; and the lack of flowing information from festival to guides to invited groups. The phrase, “lost in translation,” had real meaning to our group and should always bring some smiles to our faces whenever it is heard.

The most beautiful setting for a single performance on this tour might possibly be the citadel in Ville Franche-sur-Mer, where we overlooked the Mediterranean. The rising of the moon was incredible. Or it may have been at the mission home in Geneva. Beauty of a different kind penetrated this historical event for the Church in Switzerland as each of you received ambassadors from around the world with a very simple and sincere performance.

The most memorable event within a performance might have been the “staged fight,” when one of our dancers (Trevor) actually took a full fist (Peter's) in his face. It was the most realistic punch I have ever seen. At the time I didn't comprehend what had actually happened, but now I understand why it read so well from the audience.

Or it may have been the throwing one of our dancers (Dave) off the stage into the canal in Martigues, (a first for the festival). What a wonderful reaction of surprise from the audience!

Then again, it was a bit unusual sitting in the ruins of an ancient citadel, overlooking the beautiful Mediterranean and watching President Pratt stitching close a bloody gash in Tappy's head just before a show. "Does anyone really know where the President got that needle?"

As for me, the most memorable show came in Nice, France, at the beautiful outdoor amphitheater seating about 2700 people. As the venue became filled to capacity, many people, determined to locate themselves outside the venues walls where they could situate themselves to only listen to the performance. Then, our beginning announcement surprised most of the audience as they learned that they were about to experience a performance sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. From the apparent shock of the audience, I was preparing myself for many to actually get up and leave. But, standing in a place where I had stood 18 years previous, I watched as our Heavenly Father used each of you to quickly soften the hearts of the audience. As some of you were able to go into the seats at the conclusion of the concert, I observed as the audience enthusiastically embraced you. Many of you were noticeably overwhelmed with their response. Each of you felt their sincere warmth as they offered you a standing ovation.

I am so thankful for my opportunities over the years to work with this singular group. Each of you have left your mark—one that has influenced the lives of those you perform with, and of those you perform for. Thank you for accepting this opportunity to share the light of Christ, which you carry, with others. Thank you for your testimonies of the gospel of Jesus Christ and for your support of His work.

Great works do come to pass through humble servants who believe. It's great to be home.

Ed Austin
Artistic Director

Favorite Immeasurable Superlatives

How many...

- books were read on tour (especially Angels and Demons)
- times people hit their heads on the TV in the top of the bus, or the sun roof
- flavors of Mentos exist (we've found Pamplemousse!)
- people asked about Dave knowing whether or not he'd be thrown in the water
- bags of "schmouttebollen" did Jon eat, or "fritten" for that matter
- people liked mayo dumped on their French Fries? (which are actually Belgian in origin, they'll have you know!)
- days we waited for the bus driver in Carro (and what we did to entertain ourselves)
- dollars/Euros Willis saved on tour- 400% return rate? Gotta love per diem!
- directions were given on how to arrive at the Institute building in Paris or the boat ride on the Seine
- seconds it took for an engaged person to get to an internet café as soon as break times were declared
- blue drink tickets one ended up with at the end of the Schoten festival hoping to spend them on chocolate
- bars of chocolate were eaten and bottles of water drunk
- kinds of chocolate exist in Europe
- Belgians speak Dutch—NONE—they speak Flemish!
- Trinity, Russian, or Mexican dancers got a little somethin' somethin' from an American Cowboy or Cowgirl
- times we played "The Roll on a Fork" game
- people jumped on Alan during his birthday dogpile
- people would have as good of an attitude as LT did after having her bag stolen in Martigues
- times Cat played "Cowboy Take Me Away" or "Back in Wichita" to calm down the girls in the dressing room after a show
- different ways found by Nate-O to play a fiddle (i.e. European Ambulance, Star Wars, BYU Fight Song, Farm Animals)
- people in Belgium know "Country Roads"? More than Americans!
- kinds of deli mystery meat one can eat for breakfast
- diet Cokes LT and Savage drank
- times the horse "walked into a bar..."

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