

Brigham Young University International Folk Dance Ensemble



Estonia - Latvia - Lithuania - Canada
Including Mid-Semester Tour
2006

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Tour Participants 2006

Dancers

Melanie Grace
Stacey Hinton
Michelle Hinton
Alicia Ingalls
Megan Keffer
Megan Leavitt
Ashley Oblad
Lindsay Ozbirn
Amber Pawlowski
Marin Peterson
Bethany Rawcliffe
Crystal Robinson
Marie Sonnenberg
Lyndsey Willis
Summer Wilson

Dancers

Jamon Andelin
Eddie Cha
Alan Detton
Nate Hansen
Justin Keyes
Josh Lamb
Adam Marriott
Dave McMullin
Jud Preator
Thomas Rawcliffe
Quincy Robinson
Rustin Van Katwyk
Benjamin Watson
Scott West
David Woolsey

Musicians

Elise Andelin
Deborah Bailey
Liz Davis
Lindsay Griffen
Adam Grimshaw
Jeffrey Tolsma
Russell Wulfenstein

Technicians

Amanda Beverly
Anthony Dunster
Matthew Neal
Sarai Stewart
Melissa Zanandrea

Tour Leaders

Ed Austin
Vickie Austin
Ron Nuttall
Leslie Nuttall
Mark Ohran
Marianne Ohran
Colleen West
Jeff West
Jonathon Wood
Britney Wood
Gene Ushinsky

Artistic Director
Chaperone
Athletic Trainer
Chaperone
Technical Director
Chaperone
Tour Manager
Chaperone
Tour Manager
Chaperone
Cultural Advisor

Both Tours
Summer Tour
Both Tours
Both Tours
Both Tours
Summer Tour
Midsemester Tour
Midsemester Tour
Summer Tour
Summer Tour
Summer Tour



Performing Arts Management

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INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE ENSEMBLE ITINERARY NEW MEXICO, TEXAS FEB 24 – MAR 5, 2006

<u>Fri, Feb 24</u>		<u>Provo to Farmington, NM</u>	<u>373.32 miles/6:47</u>
5:30 am	Meet at RB		
6:00 am	Depart for Farmington, NM		
4:00 pm	Dinner – by Institute students at ward building across the street (<i>potluck</i>)		
7:00 pm	Performance – Henderson Fine Arts Center 4601 College Boulevard Farmington, NM 87402		
9:00pm	Strike/load truck Home with host families		
Presenter	Henderson Fine Arts Center, San Juan College		
<u>Sat, Feb 25</u>		<u>Los Alamos, NM</u>	<u>198 miles/4:02</u>
7:45 am	Meet at Stake Building in Kirkland 4400 North College Blvd.		
12:00 pm	FREE TIME –		
1:45 pm	Leave for Smith Civic Auditorium		
4:30 pm	Dinner – (<i>Chicken Enchiladas, fruit, and dessert</i>)		
7:30 pm	Performance-Smith Civic Auditorium		
9:30 pm	Strike Home with host families		
Presenter	White Rock Ward/ Santa Fe Stake		
<u>Sun, Feb 26</u>		<u>Los Alamos, NM/ Lubbock, TX</u>	<u>350 miles/6:22</u>
8:00 am	Meet for rehearsal		
9:00 am	Sacrament Program		
10:15 am	Depart for Lubbock, TX		
12:00pm	Lunch—sack lunch provided by previous presenter		
1:00 pm	Sunday School on bus		
5:00 pm	Arrive in Lubbock Stake Center		
5:30 pm	Diner at Stake Center		
6:30 pm	Rehearsal for fireside		
7:30 pm	Fireside-Lubbock Stake Center Home with host families		
<u>Mon, Feb 27</u>		<u>Lubbock, TX</u>	
9:00 am	Meet at Lubbock Stake Center		
9:30 am	Depart for Texas Air Museum		
10:00 am	Free Time – Texas Air Museum (WWII) – Slaton Municipal Airport (<i>Bill Shannon and Jim Gibler</i>)		
1:00 pm	Depart for Lubbock Civic Center		

4:00 pm Dinner – *(BBQ catered)*
7:00 pm Performance- Lubbock Civic Center

9:30 pm Strike/load truck
Home with host families
Presenter Lubbock Texas Stake

Tues, Feb 28 Midland /Odessa, TX 145 miles/2:50

9:00 am Meet at Lubbock Stake Center

12:00 pm Lunch – sack lunch provided by previous presenter
Free Time
4:00 pm Dinner – *(BBQ catered)*
7:00 pm Performance- Lee High School

9:30 pm Strike/load truck
Home with host families
Presenter Midland Texas Stake

Wed, Mar 1 El Paso, TX 290 miles/4:19

8:00 am Meet at Tarleton Ward Building
Depart for El Paso. TX

11:30 pm Arrive in El Paso
Lunch – sack lunch provided by previous presenter
Free Time
12:30 pm Workshop with High School
Dance Teacher : Ana Moncada – (915) 937-2000

4:00 pm Dinner – *(BBQ catered)*
7:00 pm Performance- Socorro High School
9:30 Strike/load truck
Home with host families
Presenter El Paso/ Las Cruces TX Alumni Chapter

Thurs, Mar 2 Roswell/Hobbs, NM 230 miles/4:49

7:00 am Meet at El Paso Stake Center

12:00pm Arrive in Roswell/Hobbs, NM
4:00 pm Dinner – *(BBQ catered)*
5:00 pm Dance Workshop at Maciolek School of Dance

7:30 pm Performance – Hobbs High School

9:30 pm Strike/load truck
Home with host families
Presenter Roswell New Mexico Stake

Fri, Mar 3 Alamogordo, NM 189 miles/4:29

7:45 am Meet at Grimes Ward Building

12:00 pm Lunch – sack lunch by previous presenter

4:00 pm **Dance Workshop at the Academy of Ballet**

4:30 pm Dinner- provided by presenter at Ward Building (*Potluck*)
7:30 pm Performance – Flickinger Center

9:00 pm Strike
Home with host families
Presenter Flickinger Center

Sat, Mar 4 Deming, NM 134 miles/2:26

8:00 am Meet at Flickinger Center
Depart for Deming, NM
12:00 pm Lunch-Sack lunch by previous presenter

4:30 pm Dinner – provided by presenter at Chapel
7:30 pm Performance – Deming High School

9:00 pm Strike/load truck
9:30 pm Drive to Albuquerque
12:20 am Arrive in Albuquerque
La Quinta Inn

Presenter Silver City New Mexico Stake

Sun, Mar 5 Provo, UT 867 miles/ 9:54

8:00 am Walk to ward building
Haines Ward - Bishop Lowell D. White
9:00 am Sacrament meeting at Albuquerque Ward
11:00 am Depart for Provo, UT
10:00 pm Arrive in Provo
Unload and go home

“Ring...Ring...Ring!!!” Is it an alarm clock at 4:45 am? No way! It’s the Folk Dance tour calling tree! It did a fabulous job at waking everyone and getting them to the RB in time for departure. Well, almost everyone! Elise must have turned off her phone or possibly disconnected her service because she was no where to be found! Not to worry though because her ‘cuz, Jamon, and also Marie went and saved her from slumber.

Buddy, our bus driver, started the engines and we began our journey to Farmington, New Mexico. Joining us on our trip are Ron Nuttall and his wife Leslie, Colleen West and her husband Jeff, and our head technician Mark Ohran who is new to our performing group. As we began to creep along, we were treated with a really lousy joke from Thomas. I guess we can cut him some slack because it was his birthday and he did redeem himself when he introduced the “RAWCLIFFE RIDDLE” and ended by giving a wonderful devotional. Afterwards everyone was delighted to return back to their sleep.

We fell in and out of sleep for the next few hours until we all were awakened by that all too familiar voice of Ed. Once he had our undivided attention he told us that we were stopping for a break in Green River. We were fairly close, and he kept throwing in few details on the microphone when suddenly the bus made a quick turn and sent him flying. He landed right in Ron’s lap crushing Leslie’s yogurt! Eye witnesses took pictures of the smashed evidence. Buddy must have just been tired of Ed and wanted him to take a seat.

Before arriving in the luscious brown scenery of Green River we were assigned numbers for roll call by Jamon. It was a nice bathroom break at the gas station to stretch our legs. Roll call commenced when most of us were back on the bus and, well, it was disastrous: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 ... 4, 5 ... 5 ... “Who’s 6?!” ... “6. I already said it” (Nate) ... and that was just the beginning. The rest of that first roll call and a few after that were all too similar.

Passing the country through the “Hole in the Rock”, we did a Chinese Fire drill to get us all out of the bus and across the street in order to take a picture by the Wilson Arch! A bunch of us hiked up to the arch and then ran back to the bus before it left us.

We reached our destination for lunch ... but, nobody seemed to know where we were. Most figured out that we were in the city of Cortez. As for what state, we were clueless! Several of us finally figured it out after the hundredth car with a Colorado license plate drove by. Others got up the guts enough to ask, like Matt Neal, who asked the Subway worker as he purchased his lunch.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

The activities committee woke up after lunch and must have been feeling the side effects of Valentine’s Day and a whole lot of love! We took a love language quiz to discover what our love language is. The different languages included: Words of Affirmation, Quality Time, Gifts, Acts of Service, and Physical Touch. What’s your love language? I sure don’t know, but this has definitely been the running joke of tour. The activity ended beautifully with some sappy love poems. The love poems were kicked off by Liz who wrote an incredible love poem to Jeff (Plasma) that made him blush redder than his hair! Impossible you may say, but it’s true!

Ben was our last poet for the afternoon when he wrote a buggy love poem that was as poetic as a butterfly! To whom you may ask? Well, the girl who made him all bug eyes, Megan Keffer!

We were running an hour and a half to about two hours behind schedule when we arrived in Farmington! It was the first time at setting up our stage and we were being rushed. Thankfully everyone worked hard and quickly. It wasn't a smooth setup by any means, but for the first one and for being under pressure it went very well.

We then drove over to the institute building where dinner was waiting! Yummy meatballs over rice, and I think all of us were bursting at the seams as we left to go dance! Yikes!

We returned to our combined dressing room, and to all of our dismay, Ben could not find his Mexican costume. It was sadly sitting in his lonely costume closet at the RB. (But never fear the mailman is here and we should be receiving his costume any day now during our stay in Lubbock.) Along with Ben's missing costume Bethany left her leo. Fortunately, the girls have plenty to spare.

The show got off to an early start at 7pm. It was a fairly good show considering all the rush and mix up with costumes. The only real funny stuff happened when Adam came on for the band's Mexican song without his plug. So he had to walk off stage. Lyndsey W. lost her bow in Russian, and in throwing it off stage she forgot to hold tight to her scarf and threw them both off stage!!! I also appreciated at the end of Hopak when Marie and Amber kept saying my name during the bow to keep me from doing an extra one by myself!

We met our host families and Lyndsey W., Megan L., and Michelle had a very enjoyable time with Aunt Jean! She commented that she wasn't sure how any of us could get sleep on the bus because that "little girl" in the clogging number, (Alicia), was so incredibly energetic.

The rest of us also went home way excited. Why? Because it was Thomas Rawcliffe's birthday! Or maybe because it was the end to a very long and fabulous day!

Jamon Andelin

Farmington to Los Alamos

Saturday - February 25, 2006

Director's Note: Sour candies are given to a person for a mishap, or misconduct, while a sweet candy is given to those who notably do something very well. Some of the most noteworthy sour and sweets of the day included:

Sours

- Liz, Adam G - making it on stage on time for the band number
- Megan L - forgetting her Hopak headpiece, then "totally biffing it" in the dressing room
- Adam M - running down the hallway with no pants yelling, "I need my pants!"
- Crystal - knocking down a microphone
- Ed - not warning Ron of the stage

Sweets

- Scotty - the best Hopak dresser (for Megan K)
- Stacy - packing Alicia's costumes
- Summer, Amber - helping Crystal get ready for Irish
- Justin - running onto the stage for softshoe just in time
- Ron - sticking it out with us with four broken ribs
- Amber, Eddie - for cleaning up the high school really well
- Michelle, Josh - for cleaning up the high school really well

All the tech - making the show look really good
Colleen - telling funny stories about her chiropractor
Jamon,Scotty - getting out fast to strike set

The first morning on the road on tour came fairly early for us but, considering how little sleep most people got the day before, the 7:45 am meeting time was pretty nice.

Our rest stop, which turned into our lunch stop, was situated on a beautiful cliff overlooking a reservoir. At first everyone was just concerned with waiting in line to go to the bathroom, but soon we all found the joys of taking pictures on dangerous cliffs in various, creative poses.

After lunch a couple of people took the extra few minutes to throw the Frisbee around. Unfortunately this rest stop took our first casualty—the “beater disc” broke and became no longer.

After lunch, Ed gave us a number of notes about the show. One of them was about a step the men do in *Journey*. So instead of wasting time when we got to the venue to work on it Ed had all the guys get up in the isle to do the step a couple of times. I don’t know how effective it was to do it in the bus, but it actually seemed to work.

When we arrived at Los Alamos we waited on the scorching bus while Jeff West bartered for us to be able to get in early. Ben took the opportunity to work on the fireside music with us. The singing quality wasn’t the best, but the chance for us to review the words to the songs was very much needed. Jody, our host, came on the bus to greet us. She also told us about a little surprise we would have in our lunches. Many of us suspected that the surprise would be a piece of uranium ... the atomic bomb ... Los Alamos ... get it.

Once we got into the theater we all saw the great task we had ahead of us. The stage was very small. We had to re-hang the back curtains and the side curtains. We had to clear out a hallway so we could actually get to and from our dressing rooms. We then re-taped the stage so that it stayed down a little better and so that tape wasn’t sticking up everywhere.

While Anthony and others were working on the side lights they realized that the connectors used to plug into power were not compatible with the theaters outlets. Finally the house techs brought out six converters they had and that was just the number needed. The amazing thing is that these converters had OIT BYU stickers on them. Anthony talked with Scotty H. who figured they were left by Theater Ballet or some other group a couple years ago. It’s amazing how the Lord solves our problems sometimes.

While running up the DMX to the sound board the house tech told us of a tunnel they have from the stage to the back of the theater and suggested it might be better to run it through there. So Alan and I jumped on the opportunity to go into the tunnel with the tech (Ian). With some flashlights he showed us into the tunnel and where it led to other tunnels under the whole school into the rest of the town.

These tunnels were built for the Manhattan project, they were used to transport different bomb materials and even the semi completed bombs from different working stations throughout the city so they were never seen outdoors. It is really quite fascinating.

Anyway—Ian told us that the door into the rest of the town was always locked. There also were a bunch of motion sensors inside the tunnels so people couldn’t just go wandering around. However,

much to our delight, the door was unlocked (the first time Ian had ever seen it unlocked) and there apparently weren't any motion sensor alarms in the immediate area.

So we went up and got Megan K. and Summer and brought them back to investigate. Of course we didn't have time to go very far, but we did find a light on in the tunnel. It was a working clock that we later found out was a seismograph, one of many that are all around the city. We later came back with Marie and showed her around as well. When we brought Marie to the seismograph we started to take a video clip when to our surprise a very loud air compressor turned on scaring us out of our wits. Well, at least it scared Marie out of her wits. It was quite startling considering we were still a little worried about alarms going off.

Back to Show Preparation

Blocking on stage went well and then we headed off to dinner in the stake center. The food we were fed was so good. It was a New Mexico theme. The meal was a type of spicy green chili enchilada casserole with some rice with a really good fruit salad—strawberries, grapes, and kiwi.

During dinner the Bishop got up and talked to us a little about Los Alamos and the work that went on there. He talked about how the atomic bombs ended the war in the Pacific.

Jamon's Note on Nuclear Warfare: To say it won the war is not accurate. The war was won by the sacrifice given by thousands of thousands of soldiers of the Allied powers. It was also won by the civilians of those countries in striving towards a common goal in defeating evil. Also, the war in the Pacific theater was already in control by the US. But the bombs got them to surrender. Some can argue that the nuclear era has brought some amount of peace to the world even if that peace is brought by fear of worldwide destruction. But again, one can argue that people were going to discover the secret of the atom. It was a race, whichever country discovered it first would have the advantage. In this sense it is a very good thing the work in Los Alamos was conducted at the time it was so that the bomb would be in the hands of the more moral country. Now that I'm off my soap box I'll get back to tour history.

On the way back from dinner we were treated to another Rawcliffe riddle: *There was a man on death row and the day before he was to be executed the warden gave him a chance to live, he took him into a room with one light that was turned off and told him "in the next room are three light switches ... you will have one chance to go into the room then come back into this one to determine which light switch controls the light ... if you figure it out you can live."* How does he do it?

The actual show went quite well.

During the intermission a nice old man came up to Amanda and Sarai and was very courteous and complimentary about the show, but he was a little concerned about them following OSHA regulations with regards to the volume of the show. He was quite concerned that they weren't operating within the proper decibel limits. He asked if they had their decibel meter with them and when he found out they didn't he regretted not bringing his.

After the show the truck monkeys got the truck order sorted out and the rest of strike went smoothly.

Ron

One incident happened when everyone was leaving that really effected us all.

After the show, Ron was moving towards Ed who was in the audience after the show. He was going to jump off the edge of the stage—it was about a five foot drop. As he walked towards the edge he did not see “the gap” between the built-out stage and the metal railing. He ended up falling through the gap, hitting his chest into the metal bar.

I heard a loud thud and turned around to see Ron staggering to the floor while his wife, Leslie, was running over to him. Leslie was saying “he’s not all right!” Scotty, who hadn’t seen the fall, was worried that he was having a heart attack and yelled, “call 911!” (Ron apparently was grabbing at his chest and was having a hard time breathing.) For many people, myself included, it is hard to actually call 911 because it is accepting that the situation is out of control. But Nate did not let this slow him down until Ron told him that he wasn’t that bad—so Nate hung up the phone.

We were all so concerned for him, feeling utterly helpless and not knowing what to do. His wife checked to make sure he didn’t have any external damage to his chest. After laying there a while Jeff W and Ed helped him up the best they could. Ron showed his competence in being able to diagnose himself, telling us he had a broken rib, or maybe two.

I really felt helpless. I felt like a soldier I remember in *Saving Private Ryan*. There is a scene where the medic gets shot by a sniper and the other soldiers are asking him what to do—how to save his life. In the end, the medic died, because not knowing what to do they couldn’t work fast enough. We weren’t in as dire of a situation but I felt that terrible feeling that there was nothing I could do. Here was the man who takes such good care of us, yet we couldn’t fix him. Later that night, Ed and Scotty Horman gave him a blessing. In the blessing, Scott blessed him with the ability to continue on tour and continue his good work with the group. It is a great demonstration of Ron’s faith that he did stay, even with four broken ribs (he went to the hospital and got x-rays taken).

Directors Note: I haven’t seen very many people who were in more pain than Ron as we went to the hospital. Of course, it felt like we hit every bumpy spot in the road. In the end, the administering physician did what he could, but really didn’t know the best way to support Ron’s ribs ... so Ron instructed him.

It was a long, eventful day ... and night—one that will be long remembered, especially by Ron and Leslie.

Amber Palowski
Los Alamos to Lubbock, TX

Sunday - February 26, 2006

Today we woke up early to prepare for church. We presented the sacrament program in the White Rock Ward in Los Alamos, NM. Alan, Michelle, and Thomas spoke and did an amazing job. We also sang “Savior May I Learn to Love Thee”, and “Dearest Children”. The band also played “Come Thou Fount” and did a great job. After sacrament meeting and a quick stop at the restroom, we picked up the most amazing sack lunches ever. The stake had made us fleece bags to carry our lunch in. They are great bags, and could be reused for shoe bags. They also gave us TONS of food including a

sandwich, a wrap, two cheese sticks, carrot sticks, m&m's, a brownie, and up to 4 cookies. It was pretty much dessert with a little bit of lunch on the side.

Once on the bus, Matt shared with us the Love Poem of the Day which is as follows:

My left ear hurts as it pains to hear
Static crackles to let me know that she is near.
Her orders demand that I should roam
Away from stage left that I call my home.

Her funny way of talking makes me scratch my head.
It makes me check my vocabulary as if it were dead.
Her sass keeps me alert trying to avoid
That next remark that will make me feel so toyed.

Her frequent comments about this place she is prone to say
I often have to remind her, "Hey, Honey, in America we do it our way!"
Either way we love her just the same
'Cause without her the show would be lame.

(An ode to Amanda)

We also did "Sweet and Sours" today.

The rest of the afternoon and early evening was spent on the bus driving from Los Alamos, NM to Lubbock, TX. Michelle and Rustin conducted a joint Relief Society / Priesthood meeting during which time we talked about the Holy Ghost, and receiving personal revelation. It was a great lesson for those who stayed awake. Some of those who couldn't quite keep their eyes open included Marie and Adam M. (There were others as well). We were also able to watch our Farmington show during the long bus ride.

Once we finally made it to Lubbock we ate dinner (although most of us were not hungry at all), and quickly prepared for the fireside. The fireside started at 7:30 pm, and was AWESOME!!! The congregation was full and the spirit was very strong. We sang the two songs we had sung that morning as well as *Great Things and Small Things*. The men sang *Onward Christian Soldiers*. There were also two beautiful duets sung; one by Marie and Megan L, and the other by Lyndsey W and Eddie. They all did a fabulous job. There were also testimonies shared by Scotty, Amanda, Jud, and unexpectedly Megan K.

The fireside was very spiritual, but it also had a few light moments. One in particular was when Ben W. motioned for everyone to stand, and then had to re-motion for the women to be seated right before the men sang "Onward Christian Soldiers". It was pretty funny, and we all laughed.

Another light moment was the story that Judd told during his testimony about his Grandfather and slapping a cow in the face. Jud's story went like this:

Once, as a little Wyoming bean sprout, I had a great learning experience. I was out checking the cows with my grandfather when we came across a cow who had just struggled through a difficult birth. The cow had suffered what my grandfather called

being hip-locked. The cow was unable to get up and she needed our help. I knew that my grandfather, being the smart cowman he was would devise some brilliant plan to lift the cow off the ground.

Imagine my surprise when he turned to me and said: "Go slap her on the face." I thought for sure he had gone nuts. I was positive that the cow was faking and she would rush me and stomp me into a little spot on the pasture. Grandpa saw my hesitation and tried to reassure me with the comment that he would hold the cow by the tail so as she tried to get me, she would be pulled up to her feet. I sure loved my grandpa, but that was not very reassuring. I didn't, however, wish to anger my grandpa so I slowly built up my courage and I approached the cow.

The first few times were tentative at best. I tried making faces at the cow, yelling at the cow, and running away. None of those things worked, so I was forced to walk up and actually touch the cow. After touching and running for a few times I finally got enough courage to actually make the cow mad enough to stand up. Much to my surprise the cow didn't stomp me, but she was held back by my grandfather's strong hands.

The moral of the story: Our Savior has said he'll back us up in the things he has asked us to do. As we develop a love and trust for him we become empowered with the faith that is necessary to "take the bull by the horns" and conquer our trials.

After the fireside we all went home with our host families with whom we would be staying with for two nights. This was lucky for some, but not for others.

**Quincy Robinson
Lubbock**

Monday - February 27, 2006

Devotional: Russell Wulfenstein, Ether 6:6-9. He discussed how sometimes our trials are what actually take us to the "promised land." In other words, our trials often help us to progress in the way we need, and we need to "sing praises to the Lord," and be grateful during our trials.

Ben and Dave M.'s host family gave them each some solid gold. She helps with the gold leafing in the temple and gave each of them some solid gold "leaves."

There were seven girls that stayed in a house that was in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by cotton fields. The house had two antique tractors in the entranceway. They also had an elevator, and they had a baby grand piano that Deborah loved.

We began the day by meeting in the Lubbock Stake Center parking lot at 9am. Before hopping on the bus, we took a few pictures. Besides the regular group photo, a few noteworthy "couple" pictures were taken. The first couple to take a picture was the Rawcliffes. They took a "pregnant photo" where Bethany had a jacket stuffed into her shirt.

The other noteworthy "couple" photo was David W. and Alicia. After taking a few shots, somebody called out for them to kiss. So David dipped Alicia and went in for the kill. Right afterward, Brother Anderson (1st Counselor in the Temple Presidency) told Viddy that taking a photo like that in front of the temple meant one of two things: 1) they were engaged, or 2) they were almost engaged!!!

Then we hopped on the bus to go the Aerospace Museum. On the way there Ed, during his instructions, told us to “migrate in the brain of our brain.”

The museum was a lot of fun. There were discontinued planes and jets that had been used in the World War I and II, as well as in later wars. They let us climb up on them and take pictures, and there were some pretty fun pictures taken including some of people getting sucked into jet intakes and some inside the trial Gemini ship. Inside the museum, Ben was able to knock down the divider that separated us from the displays.

Then we went to the mall where we had dinner. While in the mall, three of the band girls (Deborah, Elise, and Liz) bought matching brown hats in the dollar store and got one for Lindsey G.

We then went to the Lubbock Civic Center and set up the stage. We had a lot of time—we got there about 1 or 2 pm and the show started at 7:30pm.

After setting up we had a great Texas barbecue, complete with roast beef and sausage, beans and real Texas toast. Then we ate apple and cherry pie for dessert.

After dinner a few guys went and played a fun game of Ultimate Frisbee. It was “sweaters” vs. “shirts.”

During the show (on the wooden floor stage), here were a few of the sours.

Sours

- Viddy- - standing while the rest of the men finished the last two *prysiadkas* during tag
- Viddy - laughing so much at Dave for messing up
- Viddy - stepping on his sash and began to topple (because he was laughing so much)
- Adam M - falling down in Keltatak
- Deborah - walking on stage in a gypsy costume during W’s Romanian.

Show Comments

An older lady told David M., “It was amazing!” with a lot of emphasis in her voice.

A lady, (who had seen Riverdance), said to Melanie, “you guys dance Irish better than Riverdance.” Paul Springer’s friend, (who is less active), said, “I felt something I haven’t felt in a long time.”

Paul invited about 40 physicians to the concert. Among them were a couple from India. The wife was from the Bhangra region. She said she felt very much at home when she watched our Indian performance. Ed spoke some with them and commented on how the husband (who is Christian) had a glow in his eyes. Ed asked him what had brought he and his wife to the United States and they answered that they didn’t know.

And to end— Bill Shannon, (coordinator for BYU groups in Lubbock), said that we are his favorite group.

Deborah Bailey
Lubbock to Midland

Tuesday - February 28, 2006

Tuesday morning couldn’t help but be off to a great start because we didn’t have to meet until 10:00 am. It was a beautiful morning of sunshine and love as we gathered around the temple for our daily

ritual of waiting 20 minutes for people to show up. Liz and Megan K. went to IHOP for free pancakes because it was national pancake day, and they still managed to be an hour early. We left Lubbock on time-ish, and Russell gave a great devotional about the important role of trials in our life as elucidated by the difficult crossing of the Jaredites as they were driven towards a choice land of promise. We then were favored with the “love song of the day” composed by Matthew B. Neal:

Deborah’s Song

sung to the tune of the Sponge Bob Square Pants

Oh, what was left on the stage for all to see

Deborah’s Fiddle

What stringy, amber, and curvy could be?

Deborah’s Fiddle

She went on stage during a dance

Deborah’s Fiddle

It happened the same day she just ripped her pants

Deborah’s Fiddle

She wants more sass in the Hungarian number

Deborah’s Fiddle

But she’ll never live down last night’s super big blunder

Deborah’s Fiddle

We only had a couple of hours on the bus to Midland, so after a relatively uneventful “quiet” time, another rendition of “sweets and sour” and a Rawcliffe riddle, we were in downtown Midland, following a truck driven by our presenter to the local mall. After about 20 minutes of heading in the wrong direction, we realized we were tailing somebody that definitely wasn’t our presenter, so we got to see a little bit more of Midland than we had intended.

It all turned out fine, and we were soon scattering to various restaurants, feeling lucky with our \$7.00 (somehow the message that we were supposed to get sack lunches from our host families didn’t get passed on- not that we were complaining). A bunch of us went to Cafe Rosas, an amazing Mexican restaurant with really good tortillas, fast service, and sanitary conditions—three things you usually don’t find together. After lunch, we still had some time to kill, so some people went to play ski ball at Chucky Cheese, Frisbee in the parking lot, or went to Target where the band girls added green shamrock shades to their growing assortment of ridiculous matching attire. It was around 80 degrees outside and beautiful.

We got to Lee High School at about 2:00 pm, and the stage was a sparkly wonderland that had to be cleaned up a bit, including moving the giant, glistening cardboard 2006 into the hallway. School was still in session so we couldn’t set up anything in the dressing rooms for a while. Another interesting twist was that the stage was a little too small to fit the band on the back, so they were thrust down into the pit of despair. Despite some temper tantrums, it actually wasn’t too bad. We stacked risers and used some of the band boxes to create some different levels and make Russell and Jeff look really short.

Once everything was put together, we headed over to the local chapel for a dinner that looked curiously familiar- smoked sausage, beans, potato salad, white bread and cobbler. The funny comment of dinner was Russell telling the presenter, “we had the same thing last night, and I still don’t get how we’re supposed to eat it.” That about sums up dinner.

Lighting and sound checks went relatively smoothly, make-up was caked on, costumes were readied and Jeff gave the devotional. The band headed out to do their first rockin' pre-show- they played a Celtic medley, a sweet gospel tune, and the Devil went down to Texas—the crowd was pretty darn enthusiastic. It turned out to be fun for the band to be closer to the audience and interact with them, though the entrances and exits were a little trickier since they were in front of the dancers. The back lighting for the band seem to blind the front rows of the audience for the first half of the show.

Some highlights of the show

- ❖ During *Calusarii*, the women's music accidentally came on and the mix of the two can only be described as "trippy." Amanda definitely got a tootsie roll for that one.
- ❖ The girl's Russian bows flipped all over the place.
- ❖ Jamon rolled his ankle pretty badly during Hopak
- ❖ The Cheromosh lift became the "falling tower of doom" and pretty much crumbled
- ❖ Russ and Jeff BARELY made it on-stage for Gypsy without time to put in their beloved ear monitors
- ❖ Ashley , despite protests, walked into the men's dressing room

Takedown was pretty quick tonight. We've pretty much worked it down to a science by now. We were soon off to our host families.

Matthew Neal
Midland to El Paso

Wednesday - March 1, 2006

8:03 am At the Lubbock, TX Temple, bright eyed Folk dancers, band members and precise technicians with their stalwart leaders meet to prepare for another day of travel. The Lubbock people were great to us, allowing us to stay two nights. For the most part everyone showed up on time and an uneventful departure took place.

8:28 am Adam Marriott took the microphone and with a cheery smile decreed that we would sing a song to prepare for our morning devotional. The song of choice was a tune from our childhood, Popcorn Popping on the Apricot Tree. Certainly there is no popcorn popping on the treeless plains of Texas. Adam spoke on the plan of happiness and led us into a discussion about what makes us happy. He also quoted President Kimball reading the quote, "He who takes offense when it is intended is a fool, he who takes offense when it is not intended is even more foolish." (paraphrased)

8:35 am "Food is scarce. We've contemplated cooking and eating one of the leaders for sustenance, probably Ed. We can't go on like this much longer." Actually, "food" is not scarce, but Colleen West just announced that for the third night in a row, we will be having Texas BBQ. So "real food" is scarce.

Note to ourselves: In the future when any of us host traveling groups, we need to think of the most unlikely food they will have—and make sure to give them that.

Colleen finished the announcement with, “Isn’t it a great day to be alive?” Yes it is, Yes it is!

In the next part of the journey, we passed through Odessa, TX, which is considered the twin city of Midland, TX. As we drove, all we could see were the flat oil fields of Texas. Apparently the big industry of Midland is oil.

Soon there after, we are treated to the filming talents of Edwin Austin. He decided that, in filming the show the night before, he was going to focus in on our facial expressions. A good time was had by all as we saw the bouncing smiling faces of the dancers and band members of the International folk dance ensemble. Eddie won the “fatigue award” in *Calusarii* looking like he had just crossed the plains on foot.

9:50 am A bathroom break came at a Flying J, one of our beloved truck stop companies. We decided to not join in on the break rooms that had showers and slot machines, but we did examine the Texas patches that were available to sew onto tour bags.

While waiting outside the Flying J, we watched Scotty West and companions engage in a game of hacky sack. Ed Austin approached Jeff West, Matthew Neal and others and exclaimed, “Hey guys, I just found out it is Mark Ohran’s Birthday!”

“How did you find out?” wondered Matthew aloud.

“I was holding Mark’s cell phone and his wife called. She was so excited because she wanted to tell the group it was his birthday with out him knowing.” Ed explained.

“I know what to do!” said Colleen West in a Canadian accent.

Shortly after the group resumed their journey towards El Paso, Colleen got on the microphone to explain something. “Everyone listen please, I have something important to say,” as the crowd comes to an attentive silence, waiting on her every breath to find out what pressing matter has emerged. “Someone from our group has been hiding something from us and it was wrong for him to do it. We now need everyone to know that ... (dramatic pause and escalation in voice) that today is Mark Ohran’s birthday!”

“Hurray!” Explodes the bus as the performers burst out into song.

Commenting on the song, Ben Watson said, “We’re not four year old men ... we’re adults. We can have fun, but it doesn’t mean we have to act like sunbeams.”

The band girls were deeply enthroned in a book they had acquired from their host family. The book *Fascinating Womanhood* by Helen B. Andelin was given to Elise Andelin because of a probable relationship, one to the other. It is definitely not a book that would be very popular today since it does promote the unconditional submissiveness of women to their husbands. The girls found it interesting to see how women were once taught.

10:30 am Spotted hills and mountains for the first time in three days were a welcome sight.

11:30 am Adam Marriott administered the color code personality test. The test consisted of 40 or so questions and made you pick between A, B, C, or D in each category. At the end you totaled all of your choices up and depending on your quantity, the test showed which color of personality you gravitated towards. The test proved what we suspected for some. Obviously we knew Alan would be a yellow. Ed revealed that he was a Red/Yellow mix. Just like the Love Language test, this one has been referred to several times since.

Shortly thereafter, Matthew Neal put on his best of Divine Comedy DVD which was enjoyed by all. Such skits such as Saturday's Ninja and Lord of the Engagement Ring were enjoyed by all.

1:19 pm ... or so I thought because we apparently changed time zones even though we did not leave the state of Texas. This caused some confusion later when we went to a location and they said, "You have until 2 o'clock!"

"8 minutes?!" I questioned.

"No Matt, we are now in Central time!"

So we really got to the Socorro High School in El Paso at 12:19 pm.

Several of the dancers, specifically those teaching Indian and doing Puerto Rican and Jalisco got off the bus to do a workshop with the Folklorico dancers at the school. The people from Socorro learned our recreational version of Bhangra. Then the Jalisco men were better instructed in their dance. Apparently when they are swinging their hats low the hats are actually supposed to brush the ground. This symbolizes killing snakes. Now they are more authentic Jalisco dancers.

Meanwhile, the remaining tour participants went to a mission on the other side of town. Not what I would call an authentic, traditional, 18th century mission, but a cultural experience none the less. We used the bathroom, walked around the graveyard, and those that spoke Spanish gave lessons to the rest.

2:30 pm When we arrived at Socorro High School P.A.C. (Performing Arts Center) we noticed on the Marquee the words "Welcome BYU Folk Dancer!" Apparently they thought only one was coming. The auditorium was very nice and the in-house students were very helpful. In fact, at the end of the show Ed gave them all t-shirts. Of course since we were able to see Mexico, the area was highly populated with Mexicans.

An incident that transpired on stage which may be slightly embellished for dramatic purposes.

The band talked casually as they prepared the equipment for the show. The topic turned to dancing and Lindsay G. began to tremble stating that she had a fear of being dipped.

"Why do you have this fear Lindsay?" inquired Jeff.

"When I was a child, I saw a girl fall in a dance and I have never allowed myself to be dipped since." She explained.

Testing this statement Jeff snatched Lindsay from her microphone cord and dipped her like she had never been dipped before. She stood up puzzled, as if she had just sampled the newest, most tantalizing ice cream flavor.

Jeff explained, "It is imperative that all women allow themselves to be dipped. It is a direct representation of their trust in man." Then, with lightning speed, Jeff grabbed Deborah, enveloping her in his arms. She spun and spun, with revolutions of a toy top. Suddenly, with the grace of the expert ballet dancer of the Russian National team, Jeff dropped Deborah into his arms. Deborah's leg was thrust into the air, straight as a pole. In the deepest voice that Jeff could develop he stated, "I live on the dance floor!" Deborah breathed, "So I can tell!"

Though still hesitant, Lindsay commented that she is now more inclined to be dipped.

After doing the sound check the band went outside and jammed with a Mariachi band.

Dinner arrived shortly, and as predicted was yet another night of Texas BBQ. To our delight though, the potato salad was not loaded with mustard. Matthew for no particular reason decided to eat his food in record time. He downed a roll, beans, meat, and potato salad in 4 minutes and 15 seconds.

7:00 pm THE SHOW ... the biggest stage blunder of the evening was the beginning of second half. Matthew Neal was back stage on headset. A local student, Leanne, was in control of the house lights. Fog was limited that evening because of the fickle fog machines. So it wasn't our normal beginning for the second half.

Amanda ordered Matthew to take the house lights down. But, there was some mis-communication about the lights and the curtain. Without warning, Leanne opened the curtains. To Alan's dismay, he was on stage with the curtains opening. Adam M. said, "Pssss, Alan, MOVE!!!" Alan, with the shocked look of an armadillo on a Texas highway picked up his stick and got out of there. Meanwhile, Amanda is freaking out. Of course, she orders the curtains to stop, but by now they are about a third of the way open. Then in equally panicked orders she hollers, "NO!!! You can't leave them half way open, go go go!!!".

And that's how we opened the show for the second half.

10:03 pm We all went home with our host families, some sooner than others. As for Eddie and Matthew, they arrived at their home to see twin beds, blue and purple walls, metallic exotic colored bead spreads with a gigantic novelty crayola crayon.

Other people took the long way home, specifically Lyndsey W. and Summer. They decided to have dinner ... IN ANOTHER COUNTRY! Yep ... an authentic, Mexican restaurant in Mexico. Then they went to the Juarez Mexico Temple which was also visited by Jamon, Josh, and Adam M. Our border runners soon made it to their abodes for the evening and all settled in for a good nights sleep.

By the way, the weather was like a perfect summer night when we left the theater. Ron is doing well, but the dancers are feeling the wear of tour; especially Ben Watson who now gets thrown out onto the stage at the beginning of the Ukrainian character dance.

Crystal Robinson
El Paso to Hobbs, New Mexico

Thursday - March 2, 2006

Around 4:00 pm in the lobby of a rather large high school Performing Arts Center, we sat down to eat. For the first few moments, we all stared at one another. "Aren't we in New Mexico?" Yet we were

about to eat Texas Barbeque for the fourth day in a row. We smiled and laughed and ate and said thank you. The providers had had no way of knowing. They did a good job, and the cobbler was amazing.

Well, back to the beginning of the day ... we met the bus early in El Paso at 6:45am in the morning. The sky was filling with light, and during the car drive to the bus, many could see Mexico on one side of the freeway and Texas on the other. It was chilling to see on one side of the border the neon lights of Blockbusters and fast-food restaurants and on the other side small houses with narrow streets and one or two outdoor light at each home. There was no doubt about the difference in the opportunities given children born five minutes away from one another.

Adam, Josh, and Jamon, and Summer and Lyndsey W. got on the bus still excited from seeing the temple in Mexico the night before. Many others had had a wonderful night going out for Mexican Food with host families in El Paso, and in the morning we met for a sleepy bus ride to Hobbes, New Mexico.

When we arrived at the theatre, we set up the lights, sound, stage, and costume rooms as normal and then went upstairs to the balcony lobby to eat. A few girls, Michelle, Stacey, Lyndsey W., and Ashley, went from dinner to a local dance studio called Maciolek to teach "Ceili Reel," an Irish Dance. Two girls took the older group of students, two girls took the younger, and they came back to the team with compliments on the students' abilities to pick up quickly. Michelle said the studio was small in area with many students who were perfectly disciplined, attentive, and ready to go, just like all of us when we meet for rehearsal.

Although we were all getting tired, the show went well that night, and the audience gave very generous compliments at the end. We packed up the show and came to the front of the stage. We all got a good laugh to help us through the rest of the night when Colleen called out the host families. At the beginning, everything seemed normal, Then we heard two names, such as, "A dam and Adam," then, "Rustin and Russell," which was funny, and then there would be a few more names, and then we heard her say, "Lindsey, Lindsey, Lyndsey, and Melanie." That one was the funniest. We were entertained until she finished it off with Alicia and Elise.

We went home with our host families who probably fed us too much, but made us feel comfortable and right at home. We really did meet very friendly and giving people on this tour to New Mexico and Texas. Although the towns were small, the audiences were large, and everyone welcomed us warmly.

Rustin Van Katwyk Hobbs to Alamogordo

Friday - Mar 3, 2006

Today we traveled to Alamogordo, NM. 'Twas a typical day on the bus going from point A to B setting up the show, performing, and then going our separate ways with our host families. Yet there were some events that made the day memorable.

For starters, at a pit stop we had made along the journey we were held back by a few stragglers. The last of them was our one and only Thomas Rawcliffe. It seemed that he had built a reputation for regularly being one of the last few to get on the bus, and there were some eye rolls to hear that he was the last one to arrive. Yet this time something was different about him. He had a smirk of satisfaction on his face as he came running across the street to catch the bus that was attempting to leave him behind in a reckless stupor. When wonder and amazement befell those of us on the bus as to why he could maintain a cool confident composure, we discovered his source of glee was coming from a rose

he held tightly in his hand for his beloved wife, Bethany. Any sneer or smirk of sarcasm that had come across any face on the bus were erased and traded for an “awwwww” or “how cute.”

We were jumping for joy as we found a potluck dinner that didn't consist of Texas BBQ since we had been entreated to the dish for 4 days in a row. A lot of us overate due to the excitement of having variety at our palate's....ummm...fingertips?

The venue was a small challenge to set up. A lot of lights had to be placed on the electrics by hand, but nothing was too difficult for the willing hands of all those willing to tackle a small and cumbersome stage. We were hosted by the Flickinger Center, and the majority of the audience were not members of our church.

Only one mishap occurred onstage. Stacey Hinton wasn't able to make a full rotation on her flip with Quincy. She made it about half way around causing her to land on her arm and shoulder. She rolled off the stage to assess the damage, realizing that her arm wasn't functioning properly enough to change into her clog shoes, so she asked the swarm of people around her to help her put them on so she could go back onstage in time to finish the rest of the dance. She suffers only sore muscles and some pain in her wrist, but her character remains intact. What a trooper!

Marie Sonnenberg

Alamogordo to Deming to Albuquerque

Saturday - March 4, 2006

It was a beautiful Saturday morning where we gathered outside of the theater to venture to Deming, New Mexico.

Today was a special day because we were able to go to White Sands which is 20 minutes outside of Alamogordo. As we pulled up to mounds and hills full of white fine sands we anxiously rolled up our pants, took off our shoes, and ran off the bus. Some of the host families gave us sleds to ride down the sandy hills. People were flying down the hills, doing cartwheels, dancing, and loving the fact that for a moment we were free from our bus seats. We took every photo imaginable from the boys taking off their shirts (*acting* masculine) to forming the formation of a “Y”. It was basically choreographed playtime for Ed. We had a blast! Before we could get back on the bus we had to go through the “bus Gestapo” (Ed) who made sure we weren't tracking in too much sand. He was checking our ears, hair, feet.... it was the “sand exam!”

We were back again on the bus heading towards the lovely town of Deming. On our way we stopped at Wal-Mart while people went in to get the necessities. Of course we go to Wal-Mart the day before we go home instead of earlier! J/K. It was still a good stop.

Once we got to Deming high school we unloaded the truck and prepared for the show. It was definitely the smallest stage we have had yet. It was about 14 ft. too short! Not only that, but setting up the lights was quite a task. They had to crank the system to lower and raise the lights. Ben had to get on top of a ladder that was on a table to reach the top of the lights and for the curtain. Also, the monitors on the stage were picking up the radio station. It was a very INTERESTING experience!

After working on the stage, the team left to go have dinner at the church building. When we walked into the cultural hall we all were overwhelmed with joy (once again) to see that the food was NOT BBQ beef but that it was a whole table full of different kinds of enchiladas, salads, and an array of desserts. It was the best dinner yet! Everyone loved it and we were so thankful for something other than beef (even though we still appreciated the beef...we are thankful for anything)!

Before the show we had a wonderful devotional by Lindsay Ozbirn. She talked about how after one of the shows someone came up to her and told her that he had so many adjectives to describe our show. She decided to make a list of different adjectives that described our “Performing Arts Company.” These include: Prayerful, Earnest, Righteous, Faithful, Obedient, Religious, Marvelous, Inspiring, Neighborly, Generous, Affectionate, Reviving, Teachable, Steadfast, Charitable, Optimistic, Mindful, Peculiar, Advocates, Nurturing, and Yearning. Then she shared some qualities that we should strive for in the scripture D&C 88: 123-126. It was a great reminder of who we are and the things we should be doing.

Let the show begin! It was our last show on tour with bitter – sweet emotions. The first half of the show was very fun and energetic. We were all surprised that Stacey did her flip in the dance *Last Night* because the stage was soooo small and her arm was still hurt. What a trooper! During intermission we had the usual braid train, putting props away, and hanging costumes. However, the only bad part was that when we were ready to begin the second half the curtain would not open! I guess the chains were tangled so Mark had to climb the ladder to the very top step of the ladder, and with a broom, un-tangle these chains. It was kind of funny...I have never seen that before. The only thing Mark said when he got down was....”You have got to get a higher ladder.”

We had so many wonderful compliments after the show. Megan K met a family who traveled 5 hours from Mexico to attend our show. They hung around the dressing rooms asking for autographs and meeting everyone. So sweet! Also, Melanie was talking to a lady who told her that she could tell we were dancing for the Lord. What a wonderful compliment for her and the whole team. The people at these shows are so amazing and we hope that we have made some kind of impact in their lives through our dancing, spirits, and smiles.

After the show we had to strike the set as fast as we could in order to get on the bus and travel five hours to Albuquerque. The girls were washing their faces and brushing their teeth while the boys were loading the bags....thanks boys! Once we got on the bus we said goodbye to Mark who would be flying home and Ron said a beautiful thank you to all of us who helped him since his accident. What amazing leaders! Then after much debate we watched “Pirates of the Caribbean”, snuggled up in our bus seats, and tried to get some sleep.

We arrived at the La Quinta Inn in Albuquerque and had to wait on the bus for a while because they had a mix up on scheduling with the rooms. Finally we unloaded the bus and went to our assigned rooms for a few hours of sleep. It has been an amazing tour and as we are getting ready to leave we realize how blessed we are and the wonderful experiences that we have had.

David Woolsey
Albuquerque to Provo, UT

Sunday - March 5, 2006

Ahhhhhhhhh ... our last day of tour. Because the bus driver was required to have 8 hours of sleep and we got in so late the night before, we got to sleep in until 9:00 am or so.

After doing our usual morning routines, we went and had breakfast. This was a smaller hotel and so they had a smaller continental breakfast. This meal was nothing to brag about. There simply weren't enough chairs to fit all of us dancers trying to get there at the same time. We felt bad for those other people staying at the hotel who had to deal with our large group. Because we slept in, most of us caught breakfast just as it was supposed to be over. I don't think this made the employees very happy. But hey, whatcha going to do.

After breakfast and loading up the bus, we headed out for our long journey home. After a little while of quiet time on the journey, we pulled over and had the sacrament. After the sacrament, we had some testimonies as this was the first Sunday of the month. The Spirit was felt on the bus as many shared stories of faith promoting experiences that they had had on tour. Before stopping for lunch, and after testimony meeting, David and Anthony went up and down the aisles of the bus collecting everyone's camera cards so the last pictures of tour could be downloaded.

For lunch we stopped at the Cracker Barrel. This place had some seriously good food. Many of us really stuffed our faces because this would be our last good meal before going back to the usual college food of frozen burritos, frozen pizza, and macaroni and cheese.

After lunch, we loaded back on the bus and Quincy and Stacey taught us a Sunday School lesson, *Priesthood and the Worth of Women*. It was interesting to see a lesson on the Priesthood taught by both an Elder and a sister. Each side got to see how the other viewed the responsibilities that come with holding the Priesthood. The same type of meaningful discussion also ensued for the second subject.

When the lesson was finished, the activities committee gave everyone slips of paper and had each person write down five facts about themselves that might not be commonly known to others. Each person would start with the most obscure fact and then make each fact more recognizable than the last. After all the slips of paper were gathered up, they were read to the bus and we all had to guess who the facts belonged to. Some of them were very interesting indeed, but the one that stuck out most was how many times Ed asked Vickie to marry him. After this game came more sleep and quiet time.

Our last stop before arriving at home came in Moab. We said goodbye to Buddy, our ever-faithful bus driver (sniff...sniff). We also picked up a new bus driver as well as some dinner. Certain individuals were extra eager to get home at this point...more specifically, the married couples with spouses waiting for them. The time spent on the way home would be quickly spent as we watched a slide show of the pictures from tour and "The Incredibles."

For some, arriving in Provo never felt so good. Amber would run and jump on John and give him the biggest hug and kiss of his life. Several others met spouses, parents, siblings, boyfriends/girlfriends, roommates, etc... It would be pretty late by the time we got back to Provo (I don't have the exact time). The bus was quickly emptied as we all went home to catch what sleep we could before having to come to school the next day.



Performing Arts Management

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Updated: April 25, 2006

INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE ENSEMBLE SUMMER TOUR 2006 BALTIC STATES AND QUEBEC

Mon, June 19 SLC to the Baltics

6:00 am Meet at RB
6:30 am Depart for Airport
10:13 am Flight departs for Chicago – Delta 0488
(Terminal 2; Flight Time: 3 hours 9 minutes)
2:24 pm Arrive in Chicago
10:05 pm Flight departs for Copenhagen, Denmark – Scandinavian Airlines 0944
(Terminal 5; Flight Time: 8 hours 15 minutes)

Tues, June 20 Vilnius, Lithuania

1:20 pm Arrive in Copenhagen
3:05 pm Flight departs for Vilnius, Lithuania – Air
Baltic 0164
(Terminal 3; Flight Time: 1 hour 30 minutes)
5:35 pm Arrive in Vilnius
Meet bus
Travel to hotel

Hotel: Hotel Sportas
Bistryčios 13
Vilnius, Lithuania

Wed, June 21 Vilnius, Lithuania

9:30 am Arrive at the American Embassy
9:45 am Welcome by American Embassy at American Center *(45 min)*
AM Sightseeing
1:00 pm Load-in
4:00 pm Dinner-Provided by Presenter at café on Gedimino Ave *(6 km from venue)*
7:00 pm Performance-Seimens Arena (3,500 Seats)
9:10 pm Strike

Thurs, June 22

Druskininkai, Lithuania

80 miles/1:30

12:30 pm Travel to Druskininkai
2:00 pm Load in
pm Dinner provided by presenter if Druskininkai
7:00 pm Performance –Druskininkai Summer Hall
9:00 pm After the performance - socializing of the two groups with refreshments

Fri, June 23

Kaunas, Lithuania

2:30 hours

FREE MORNING:
Depart for Kaunas
1:00 pm Load-in
4:00 pm Dinner-Provided by presenter (*at a café next to the venue*)
6:00 pm Performance-Kaunas Sports Hall (2500 Seats)

Hotel Hotel Takioji Neris
Donelaicio 27
Kaunas, Lithuania
Tel: 370 37205289

Sat, June 24

Nida, Lithuania

4:30 hours

7:00 am Depart for Nida
12:00 pm Arrive in Nida
1:00 pm Lunch provided by the festival
2:00 pm Installation of Sand activity with other groups from the festival
3:00 pm Animation—Municipal Square
4:00 p.m. Travel to Juodkrante.
5:00 p.m. Performance Juodkrante
7:00 pm Cruise with ship “Austeja”.
9:00 pm Performance (short set with all the other groups on the main stage)

Hotel Jurate Hotel
Pamario St 3
Nida, Lithuania
Phone: +370 (0) 46 952 618

Sun, June 25

Riga, Latvia

2:30 hours

9:30 am Depart Nida
11:00 am Attend church with Klaipeda Branch –Sing a musical number
Visit The Hill of Crosses
6:00 pm Fireside-Riga Branch

Hotel Hotel Riga
22 Aspazijas Boulevard
Riga, LV-1050, Latvia
Tel: +371 7044222

<u>Mon, June 26</u>	<u>Riga, Latvia</u>	
10:00 am	Learn Latvian dances (2 hours)	
2:00 pm	Load-in	
3:00 pm	Reception in honor of Folk Dancers in Riga, at US Ambassador's residence	
5:00 pm	Dinner by the mission (hot "American Sandwich")	
6:30 pm	Reception for VIPs (<i>Ed and Jonathon with some dancers in costume</i>)	
7:30 pm	Performance-Kongres Nams (1,500 Seats)	
<u>Tues, June 27</u>	<u>Riga, Latvia</u>	
AM	Sightseeing: old town, Jurmala	
PM	Evening with Young Single Adults (<i>Imanta Branch Building</i>)	
<u>Wed. June 28</u>	<u>Parnu, Estonia</u>	<u>2:30 hours</u>
9:00 am	Depart for Parnu	
11:30 am	Arrive in Parnu	
2:00 pm	Load-in	
6:00 pm	Dinner (Provided by festival at local café's)	
9:00 pm	Performance-Parnu Concert Hall	
Hotel	Lemmenranna (65 km from Parnu)	
<u>Thurs, June 29</u>	<u>Tallinn, Estonia</u>	<u>2:30 hours</u>
8:00 am	Depart for Tallinn	
11:30 pm	Arrive at 4 th of July Party for U.S. Embassy	
12:00 pm	Group Lunch at the Peppersack	
1:30 pm	Arrive at Ambassador's residence (<i>20 minutes from Old Town</i>)	
2:00 pm	Sound check	
5:00 pm	Performance-US Embassy 4th of July Party at the Ambassadors Residence	
Hotel:	Hotell Ülemiste Lennujaama tee 2 Tallinn Tel 603 26 00 Fax 603 26 01 sales@ylemistehotel.ee	
<u>Fri, June 30</u>	<u>Tartu, Estonia</u>	<u>3:00 hours</u>
8:00 am	Travel to Tartu	
Am	FREE TIME:	
Pm	Opening Ceremony	
Hotel	Ihaste Hotell Tartu Pallase pst. 25/27 Tartu, Estonia Phone 372 7 331 060	

Sat, July 1 Tartu, Estonia

AM FREE TIME
2:00 pm Performance—Gaedamus-Baltic Song and Dance Festival Town Square Stage
6:00 pm Performance—Gaedamus-Baltic Song and Dance Festival Town Square Stage
9:00 pm Band performance at the Town Square main stage(30 minutes)

Sun, July 2 Tallinn, Estonia 3:00 hours

Church in Tartu
Travel to Tallinn

7:00 pm Fireside-Tallinn Branch (to be broadcast to the Tartu branch)

Hotel Hotell Ülemiste
Lennujaama tee 2
Tallinn
Tel 603 26 00
sales@ylemistehotel.ee

Mon, July 3 Tallinn, Estonia

AM FREE TIME-Visit Old Town
7:00 pm Potential Performance

Tues, July 4 Baltics to Quebec

7:55 am Flight departs for Stockholm, Sweden – Estonian Air 0121 (Flight: 1 hr)
7:55 am Arrive in Stockholm
10:15 am Flight departs for Chicago – Scandinavian Airlines 0945 (Flight: 9 hours 5min.)
12:20 pm Arrive in Chicago
5:41 pm Flight departs for Montreal Trudeau, Canada – American Airline 1634
(Flight Time: 2 hours 4 minutes)
8:48 pm Arrive in Montreal
Met by Drummondville Festival bus and truck
Travel to Drummondville

Wed. July 5-Sun. July 16 Drummondville, Quebec Festival

Mon, July 17 Quebec to SLC

8:30 pm Depart for Montreal airport
12:40 pm Flight departs to Atlanta, GA – Delta 1179 (Flight Time: 2 hours 51 min.)
3:31 pm Arrive in Atlanta
5:45 pm Flight departs for SLC – Delta 0520 (Flight Time: 4 hours 13 minutes)
7:58 pm Arrive in SLC

Preface

The 2006 Folk Dance Summer tour to the Baltic States and Canada provided for some of the choicest memories any BYU performer could hope to capture. Following are a few of these memories from the perspective of one dancer—Ben Watson.

Nida, Lithuania: It is difficult to find another performing group from BYU who has had the opportunity to perform at midnight on an outdoor stage for an audience of hundreds of standing spectators who—when the show is finished—all yell in unison (and in English) “One more time! One more time! One more time!”—only giving up the chant when the performers leave the stage to greet the audience. Such was the case with the BYU International Folk Dance Ensemble at their stop in the small coastal village of Nida, Lithuania. The reception received from these wonderful people after the show would have made the unknowing bystander think that the Beatles had just performed! Indeed, this memory from the Summer 2006 tour will never be forgotten.

Druskininkai, Lithuania: The performance in this quaint, touristy town was one of those “adapt as you go” shows, beginning with the fact that the outdoor stage we performed on was rubber. That’s right . . . *rubber*. It certainly made for exciting muted versions of our Irish hardshoe and American clogging numbers. However, the memories from this performance don’t end with the Michelin-tire stage. After the performance we had the opportunity to spend the rest of the evening eating and chatting with Dunai—a local, Lithuanian folk music and dance ensemble. Although tired from the long, hot day and still not completely over their jet lag, the BYU folk dancers held strong, talking late into the evening with these new-found friends.

Tallinn, Estonia: Tallinn was one of those eclectic experiences with activities ranging from a performance at the ambassador’s residence (where some of the dancers had their first try at “caviar”), a day full of touristy sight-seeing, Adam Grimshaw making friends with a Russian street-sitter who played spoons while Adam played his banjo, Ben Watson chasing down a boy selling a bouquet of flowers so he could purchase them for a girl, and the Ensemble having the opportunity to perform in the city-square on cobble-stones—Indeed, Tallinn was an adventure every step of the way.

Drummondville, Quebec: The Drummondville Festival will best be remembered by the friendships with people from nations everywhere. Members from the BYU Ensemble became close friends with dancers from every group represented at the festival. The Slovaks took time to teach us a few moves from their dances, the Colombians were always good for a chat after shows, and the Turks became our biggest fans (and we theirs).

Our first all day rehearsal: At 9:00 am we met at the KMB. We began with working on a new American piece called “The Gathering.” Kathleen Sheffield and Ed are collaborating on the choreography; Kathleen with her more quiet expertise while Ed hopped around with his more enthusiastic approach (“Yadadadeedle deedle ya papa!!!”)

The band rehearsed separately with great anticipation for the release of their new CD. By 1:00 pm we were all famished and very tired. Ed finally gave us a break that lasted until 2:15 pm. In between rehearsal times some people busied themselves studying and finishing up their Spring term finals. That night we had a rough run- thru in the Richards Building with all the new costumes. We all got our nifty new costume cases and jam packed them full of folk dance goodness! It was a tiring and busy day, yet somehow we survived!

This morning some of our team joined Ed and Vickie at an early temple session. 7:00 am came very early this morning after working so long and hard yesterday.

The rest of our team met the temple group at 9:30 am for rehearsal in the KMB. We were all pretty tired and some were stressed—and it was showing. In addition to the all-day rehearsals, choreography, and preparation ...some were actually trying to finish their Spring term semester work.

We began with another tour meeting with Jonathan, Vickie reminded everyone to be on time for rehearsals (some people had been showing up significantly late the past two days). Ed reminded us that travel irons were not an option and needed to be purchased and packed in our bags. He then showed off his 1970’s avocado green travel iron – still very functional – though very ugly, only weighing about 1 pound. I suppose they just don’t make them like they used to...

The rest of the morning was spent finishing the Pioneer Medley with Kathleen. I think it turned out pretty good. The boys finally learned the “caveman dance” (the part where they’re in two groups staring each other down having a dance-off of sorts). Unfortunately a KBYU film crew who were there filming part of our rehearsal showed up before the “caveman” part was choreographed. So they got to film ... “We don’t know what we’re doing. But, let’s try to be funny and use Josh as a battering ram ... then drop him on his face.” I guess this was the perfect glimpse of true folk dance rehearsal life for our future television viewers.

Crystal and Dave then taught us the parade routine for the Drummondville festival. Despite the lack of “street” space and a bit of confusion that Ed jumped in and solved for us, it went quite well. A quick lunch break was all we had to recoup and prepare for our first real run-thru of the show.

With the room next door full of our new costume boxes, the band ready on the stage, and the chalkboard covered with the line up, we began a very rusty run- thru.

We had been informed earlier in the morning that we would be doing a show for President Samuelson at the visitor’s center garden—most likely doing *Southern Reflections* and *Appalachian Patchwork*. But when Southern fell apart during the run-thru, followed by a dismal Appalachian attempt, the line-

up for the evening show evolved drastically. When the run-thru was over, *Natyamalika* and *Eretz Hakodesh* were the winners for the evening's performance. Better do what we know we can't possibly screw up when dancing for our President. **[Director's note:** Actually the line-up was changed when it was realized that our stage would be grass – not conducive to heels and such!)

Unfortunately, we found later that evening, that there is no security for a perfect show. The garden performance, even though not perfect in the eyes of the dancers, turned out very nicely and was very much appreciated by the President and his guests.

Lindsay Ozbirn

BYU: Packing

Saturday - June 17, 2006

Upon arriving at the Richards Building at 9:00 am we began the tedious process of packing. Props, costume trunks, luggage, and technical equipment all had to be weighed in. Airlines recently changed the baggage weight limit to fifty pounds instead of the previous sixty. This presented a problem for many in packing luggage, especially for many of the ladies and surprisingly, Viddy. Though many attempts were made in packing the costumes, many went over the weight limit. In fact, only five costume trunks were under the weight limit. Congrats to Scotty and Lindsay O. for having the heaviest costume trunks in their divisions (ladies and gents!).

With the problem of overweight luggage, extra stress was placed on Ed, Jon, and Scotty (whom excellently orchestrated the luggage weighing procedure). After much adjusting, we were able to pack everything efficiently, which would later prevent extra fees for overweight baggage.

After a brief lunch break we dove right into rehearsing. It had been a long week of dancing, and many were exhausted and stressed. But we still worked at it and made it through the rehearsal with only a few technical difficulties. For example...we had to run through the entrance for Polka Quadrille several times, as the men were having some trouble with their chaps. Then there was the Southern music issue...sorry band, sorry dancers...we need better communication skills! Despite the glitches things went fairly well. Some of us even enjoyed a little bit of entertainment from Mark's little girl, as she sang her ABCs into the microphone—so cute!

Following rehearsal we were supposed to load the truck with costumes and tech equipment. But, it took a little longer than expected to prepare for loading. So, to kill time many watched the last part of the intense soccer game between the US and Italy (It ended in a tie—oh the suspense!). As the game came to an end we loaded the truck and concluded our four day rehearsal marathon.

Only one more day before we leave...

Anthony Dunster

Mary Bee Jensen's Home: Fireside

Sunday - June 18, 2006

Today was Sunday. After a wonderful Sabbath day, the only thing we were required to do with the group was to meet for the pre-tour fireside held at Mary Bee Jensen's home. It began at 7:30 pm.

We gathered in Mary Bee's living room and started by singing *I Need Thee Every Hour* followed by Matthew Neal offering the opening prayer. We then went around the group introducing the spouses and significant others. After some business Stacey Hinton gave her testimony/inspirational message,

and then we sang an intermediate hymn. Jeff then gave an inspirational message and related a story of a host family from the Southern States tour last summer. Following Jeff, Crystal spoke and related a story from summer tour 2004. She said that while she was at one of the festivals the music was really loud when she tried to speak to one of the other participants. So in an attempt to be heard she yelled, "I'm Crystal," and the man yelled back, "I'm Christian too!" in an excited voice. She then continued giving her message concerning what each of us represent while touring with this program.

Ed then asked the returned missionaries in the group to share ideas concerning the most important principals that helped them to become successful missionaries. Some of the ideas that were shared included: obedience, losing one's self in the work, prayer, and not being afraid to talk to other people. He then encouraged us to incorporate these same principals into our tour.

Mary Bee then offered the group some advice for tour. Some of the things she mentioned included: "Think it, don't say it." Don't be selfish. Don't think of yourself first and you will be happy."

We concluded by singing *I Know That My Redeemer Lives* and Lindsay Griffin gave the closing prayer. We then had root beer floats and took a group picture outside on the deck overlooking Provo as the sun was setting.

The evening did not go very long, and each person looked great in their tour outfits. Everyone looks excited to leave in the morning.

Summer Wilson

SLC to Copenhagen, Denmark

Monday - June 19, 2006

Good Morning and welcome to the first "real" day of tour!

Our journey began with a bright and early 6:00 am meeting time at the RB. After some last minute baggage weighing we were on our way to the airport. We got checked in with no problem. Of course, we were quite the spectacle in our matching outfits which afforded us the opportunity to explain to people in the airport about our group and where we were going.

The first part of the trip was a pretty short flight to Chicago (On Delta). Upon arrival, Jonathon, out of the goodness of his heart, elected to set us all free into the city for some excursion time during our 8 hour layover. A few people stayed back at the airport to eat while many headed to the CTA, which conveniently runs right into the airport for a 45 minute ride downtown. Another small group decided to grab a taxi and ride to Higgins Street to eat at Giordano's for some really amazing deep dish, yummy, Chicago style pizza. Ironically enough, everyone who left the airport ate at Giordano's, just at 3 or 4 different locations. Those that went downtown saw the Sears tower, a park, a giant bean, and other down town sort of things. Gratefully, everyone made it back to the airport in time and we didn't let Jonathon down. (See how responsible we are.)

The group that took the taxi to Giordanos rode the CTA back early which was lucky because they found their way to terminal 5 just to realize that Megan had left her name tag in the bathroom back near the CTA exit (some shirt drying had been taking place in the bathroom so the name tag was removed). Even after going all the way back to retrieve the name tag they still made it to check in early. If you ever have any questions about navigating around the Chicago airport ask Marie, Summer, Lindsay O., or Megan L.—they know their way around.

A cute little L.D.S. missionary was spotted looking a little frightened on his way to Armenia and a few BYU students selling satellite systems in Chicago also showed up. It's great the people you meet while carrying around a BYU bag and wearing identical outfits and name tags.

For the remainder of the layover people played Settlers or cards, and talked on the phone for the last time while in the US to loved ones, etc. Ben made friends with a Polish girl that was on her way back home after doing a study abroad in the U.S.

Finally, the time to board the flight to Copenhagen arrived. We flew Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) and it is now my favorite airline. Granted it did leave an hour late, but who cares about that when you have your own cool console full of movie and game fun to pass the time with. There were several movies to choose from and most chose to watch *8 Below* or *Memoirs of a Geisha*. One excitement was during *8 Below* when a giant leopard seal jumped out from behind a whale and Megan Leavitt screamed out loud startling everyone on the then silent airplane. Of course everyone watching the movie knew what the commotion was about, but everyone else was probably a bit confused.

That's about it for the 19th. It was a short day because of the time changes, and it was technically the 20th by the time we landed in Denmark.

Sarai Stewart

Copenhagen to Vilnius, Lithuania

The "Never-Ending" Monday

Tuesday, June 20, 2006

After a very long flight from Chicago, we arrived safely in Copenhagen, Denmark and shortly boarded our next flight to Vilnius, Lithuania. As we were boarding the plane, Adam Marriott's BYU bag got bumped, turning on his game, *Catch Phrase*. This started a high pitched ticking sound to emerge from his bag. He quickly explained to the flight attendants that it was only a game and started to frantically search the bag to turn it off. As he made his way down the aisle the ticking started to speed up & passengers were starting to give him weird looks. Finally Adam found the game and was able to turn it off before it blew up the airplane. On this flight most of us slept and slowly developed "cankles" (this is when you can't tell where the calf ends and where the ankle begins). Michelle also got hit on by some boys...

We arrived in Vilnius and all of us had to wait in line for ten minutes at the passport gate as Jon proved to the guards that we had health insurance. That is all of us, except for me, who showed the guard my insurance card and then spent the next ten minutes looking at the rest of the group while chuckling to myself. We all eventually got through and came to know the baggage claim area very well as we waited there for an hour hoping that half of our luggage would magically appear on the closed baggage carousel. After a while we had to report our missing bags so that we could meet our bus as well as some new friends: Romualdas Ambroževičius, leader of Dainava Folk Arts and Inara Jegina, Public Affairs Director for the Baltic States Mission. Jon also entertained us with the idea that there was a new international law that meant we had to fly back to Copenhagen and claim our personal bags. Maybe entertained is the wrong word...

We then hopped on the bus and went to a delicious Armenian restaurant. There we enjoyed fresh vegetables, grilled meat and the ever so entertaining vegetarian dish of the night. Many people tried the eggplant (we think it was eggplant) but not so many liked it. The meat, on the other hand, was amazing. Many of us also appreciated how the cook would stoke the coals in the grill by using a hair blow dryer. Megan Keffer enjoyed a refreshing shower of Sprite when the waiter opened her bottle for her.

After dinner we checked into Hotel Sportas and got settled in. We then all went to the local Maxima market and bought our first souvenirs; underwear and tooth paste as the majority of our personal bags were stuck in Copenhagen. Next, we walked back to our hotel in broad daylight even though it was 10:00 pm. This is due to the fact that we are here during White Nights when daylight is at its longest and it is only dark for about five hours a day. However, we all were quite able to fall asleep this night as we had been awake for 36 hours straight.

Benjamin Watson
Vilnius

Wednesday - June 21, 2006

0:00 (midnight) This day began right at 0:00 with Jonathon Wood, Mark Ohran, Ed Austin, Gene Ushinsky, Ron Nuttall, Ben Watson, and Rustin Van Katwyk all bussing to the airport to see if any of the 50 missing bags/boxes arrived on the midnight flight. When we arrived at the airport we discovered that 31 had indeed arrived, but that we would have to wait until later in the day to see if the rest of the luggage would eventually make it. Thankfully, the rest of the costumes arrived in time for our 7:00 show that evening.

The morning started out with a group breakfast at the hotel on Floor #2. The menu consisted of cheeses, sandwich meat, bread, juice, and some very nice pancakes with a cream and berry mixture to top it off.

We then traveled as a group (driven by bus driver, Alex) to downtown Vilnius – old Vilnius. Our first stop was the American Embassy. Under special reception by Tom Kelly, James Fellows and Sister Fellows (both BYU alumni), and Peter Kaufman we received an official welcome to the country and a 101 lesson on what it's like being a foreign service officer. Many in the group asked questions. Sister Fellows provided two cakes for the group (one was decorated with BYU's logo and the other with the flags of Lithuania and the USA.) Other refreshments were served as well. Total time at the embassy, approx: 1 hour.

Through the guidance of local Church Public Affairs specialist, Inara Jegina, we traveled as a group walking the streets and viewing some of the local sites. We ate lunch as a group and loaded the bus close to 1 pm in time to travel to our venue to load-in.

1:00 pm: Venue: Siemens Center (local hockey stadium)

The venue was quite large and offered an adequate stage akin to what might be used for rock concerts. We set up, blocked a few numbers, and then left for dinner before the show.

4:00 pm: Dinner:

Dinner was provided as a donation from a local restaurant, arranged by the director of the Lithuanian dance ensemble's director. Dinner consisted of borscht (beet soup) chicken-fried steak, and potatoes.

5:45 pm: Arrive at Venue Location, Siemens Center

The show started without much of a hitch. We were all set forward with good footing by receiving a devotional message from Ed regarding the doctrine of "endurance" and a prayer from Jamon. Following that, Ron gave us a much-needed warm-up session.

All-in-all about 600 people showed up to watch the show. Some highlights included the following:

- 1) David Woolsey in his rush to change from *Appalachian Patchwork* to *Journey* accidentally put on Nate Hansen's clogging shoes (several sizes too big.) Nate, subsequently, suffered the pain of squished feet while clogging in David's two-sizes-too-small clogging shoes.
- 2) Jamon took a nice fall on the entrance for *Keltatak*.
- 3) A very good "first" show with not much drama, really.
- 4) After the show we all went out to meet the audience and stayed especially later for the local members of the Vilnius branch. They were very excited to meet us (as were we to meet them). We all gathered together for a photo and then said our goodbyes.

In attendance were several member of Lithuanian Parliament, Tom Kelly (acting ambassador), the director of defense (and Co.), (a total of 80 ministry-level VIPS.)

10:20 pm: McDonald's

After leaving the venue we all left and traveled to McDonald's courtesy of Jonathon who agreed to spot us dinner if we were able to pack up by 10:15 that night. We met the request and he delivered on his promise. Good on ya', Jonathon!

11:30 pm: Elevator stuck and room swapping

Once we arrived at our hotel everyone was very tired. We were all ready for bed. However, the drama was just beginning. To begin with, a group of people got stuck in the elevator for an entire hour. This group included the following people: Ron and Leslie Nuttall, Thomas and Bethany Rawcliffe, and Alicia Ingalls. Eventually the elevator man showed up and saved the day.

Meanwhile, many people in the group who were staying in rooms without air conditioning were transferred to rooms with air conditioning. Ben and Rustin were transferred to the presidential suite which had a massive king size bed, TWO air conditioners, a living room with some couches, and a large bathroom. However, they were only moved in for about fifteen minutes when they were requested to move yet again to another room where they finally were able settle in for the night.

All were in bed by 1:00 am—a full day indeed, with many places seen, people met, and dramas to remember.

Mark and Marianne Ohran Vilnius to Druskininkai

Thursday - June 22, 2006

The day began with a drive to Druskininkai. The bus was really hot but, the view was gorgeous. The countryside of Lithuania between Vilnius and Druskininkai is very green with lots of forests and farmland. Megan Keffer commented that it looks a lot like eastern Texas. We saw some farmers plowing their fields with horse-drawn plows.

The first stop we made was at Merkinė Piliakalnis which means *castle on the mountain*. We climbed 179 stairs to a hill where a castle once stood. The castle is no longer there but apparently the castle was built in the 13th century to fight against German crusaders. Inara said that there were several castles built every 15 kilometers creating a fortress in which to defend the Lithuanian land. The castle overlooked the Nemunas river. It was quite hard for the Germans to cross the river in "all of their garb" and it took them 200 years to figure out a way to make their way across. The commander of the army in the castle saw that they were about to be taken over by the German army, so he killed his 300

men and himself to avoid being tortured and killed by the Germans. The castle stood until sometime in the 16th century.

On the eve of Midsummer's, which is this Saturday, there will be fires burning on all of the hills where the castles stood. There will also be floating candles and flowers on the Nemunas river in remembrance of all the people, then and now, who have lost their lives defending the Lithuanian land.

While descending the stairs down from the hill, we missed taking a picture of a quaint man driving his horse drawn wagon through the fields because Ed was making us take a picture on the stairs.

The bus was still hot and Jonathon took it upon himself to take our minds off the fact that we were sweating to death by telling us too many bad jokes. We then stopped at Gruta Park which is a place where they have taken all the Soviet statues down and displayed them in a nice setting. The statues were taken down in 1991 when the Soviet occupation of Lithuania ended.

We ate at a restaurant called Kavine. When we first sat down there was a refreshing looking glass of lemonade at each place. Upon drinking it though, we found that it was akin to cough syrup or a substance that could be made into candles. We later found out that it was a dessert drink that has been purposefully thickened for dessert enjoyment. Thank goodness they had sprite and coke to refresh us as well.

The dinner was tasty though with a traditional Soviet menu of beet soup and mushroom chicken. We quickly left the Gruta Park because we didn't have tickets to view the rest of the statues. We arrived at the Druskininkai Cultural Center to prepare for the show. The center was in the middle of a lovely park with beautiful flowers with paths running throughout. There were several shops and restaurants. We were shuffled off to eat dinner at Pusynus, a nice restaurant around the corner from the stage. Again there was good food. And the US soccer game was on the television, much to the enjoyment of the men and Melissa.

Preparing for the show was fairly easy. We only had to set up sound because there was a nice technician from the venue named Gitis setting up the lighting. He was very helpful and knew some English. His wife, daughter, and parents came to the show.

As we were waiting for the show to start we had a minor clothing emergency. We had to break out the shout wipes for Vickie who was pooped on by one of the several birds flying overhead. Thank goodness it landed on her pants and not in her hair.

The show was very energetic. We had an audience of around 400+ people. It started with *Dainava Folk Arts* performing some traditional Lithuanian dances and songs. They are the group that has helped host us here in Lithuania. Their director, Romas, has been very helpful in touring us around and arranging meals. Their group had all ages performing. They have around 150 people in their group but only about 40 performed at the show. They also have about 15 people who play in their musical ensemble. We then performed the American and Irish section of our show. It was very well received. The cultural center and *Dainava Folk Arts* thanked us for coming to perform and gave us a lovely picture.

Dave McMullin was sent after the show to talk with some people from Germany because he could speak with them in German. They had heard about the show and weren't quite sure what to expect. They didn't think it would be very good but thought they would check it out. They told Dave that they had enjoyed the show immensely and were very impressed.

There was a local TV crew there filming and doing interviews. The girls from the band talked extensively with two girls, Julia and Osta, who sang some Lithuanian songs for them.

After cleaning up, we returned to the restaurant and had a lovely reception with the dancers of *Dainava Folk Arts*. There was much socializing. Deborah learned some words in Lithuanian and a few of our men taught some of the teenage Lithuanian girls some American dances.

After the reception we drove back to Vilnius to sleep.

Marin Sweeney
Vilnius to Kaunas

Friday, June 23, 2006

We all got to sleep in until 9:45 am at Hotel Sportas. Our grand breakfast consisted of what we Americans call “a hot dog”. Liz and Melissa luckily got the vegetarian meal and were presented with some yummy crepes. We were all wishing at that moment that we were vegetarians. Two special people on the team were missing that morning, but no one seemed to notice (where were Marin and Crystal?)

We all got onto the bus after breakfast for a long day of sight seeing and shopping. The two hours were spent at Gedimino Tower, KGB Museum, St. Anne’s Church, and spending *litas*. Many people got some bargain deals as they shopped on the streets. After all the shopping was done in Druskininkai the best bargain bought was an original painting of the town which Marie bought for only 250,00 litas (with the help of Gene’s bargaining skills!). The top spender that day was Megan L. (325 litas) and Scottie (322 litas). The shopping ended with a down pour of rain.

It was quite the day with Megan L. almost being electrocuted by the hair dryer (so she chucked it), and having our evening show cancel. Scottie found some Polish money in the dirt, and Jamon almost sneaked up a secret staircase but made a run for it when he heard people coming. The castle tour was awesome. There was a neat twirling stair case that we all got to go down. We also saw a nine thousand coin pot, which in that day could buy six kilos of vegetables. Some of the band members took out a boat which was only three *litas* for 30 minutes. Liz, Elise, and Debra had a pleasant time rowing around, but then were rained on as they rowed their way in to the dock.

MORE SOUP FOR DINNER! We got to eat at a nice restaurant provided by our presenter. It was the fastest we had ever been served. The girls had worn the right color top to go with the bright PINK Borscht! After that borscht the rest of the group was ready to be through with the dill.

Jonathan was able to “sneak in” his famous joke twice today. Ron had an emergency call to the back of the bus to fix Allen’s “painful blister”. Amanda almost got hit by a motorist in the streets of Kaunas as he started swerving towards her. We got to see the White Swan building showing the three levels of architecture with Gothic, Baroque, and Classical. Eddie said, “I don’t feel safe here” as we continued to stroll the town of Kaunas with our free time resulting from our cancelled show.

We turned into hotel, Takioji Neris, at 7:30 pm. As we arrived, Romas gave his “see you later” speech. He said that he loved us because he loved who we are and what good values we had. He truly was thankful for the time he was able to spend with us.

After checking into the hotel we had a group meeting. We practiced our songs for the fireside and then Eddie Cha gave our evening devotional. He talked about how we need to be grateful for all the things

that we have, and also for this wonderful opportunity that we have to be here in Europe sharing our talent with others. This is an expensive tour. We need to remember that we are supported on this tour by obedient saints who pay their tithing so that we can build the kingdom of God on this Earth.

He reminded us to smile more, share more, and love more.

Thomas Rawcliffe
Kaunas to Nida

Saturday - June 24, 2006

The day began very early in Kaunas. We loaded the bus at 6:40 am and then everybody tried to check out. This is when several individuals ran into a few problems with hotel phone bills. Unbeknownst to several of them, in order to call America you must dial an access code. Some people did not do this and had a hefty phone bill waiting for them. After all of this was resolved and paid for we went to the restaurant in the hotel and had a nice buffet.

We then traveled to Klaipeda where we crossed the lake on a ferry in order to get to Nida. Upon arrival, we went on a boat ride around the coast of the Baltic Sea, and we were even able to see Russia from the boat. While on the boat we had quite an interesting lunch. We ate oily bread chips, vegetables, sandwiches with meat (which we all thought was bear meat), whole kipper fish, eel and pigs ears. Needless to say it was not our favorite meal, but it was certainly interesting. We were also met and socialized with a folk group from England while we were on the boat.

When we finished eating we ran to the city square where we split up into two groups. One group stayed and made a mural with sand, while the other group changed into costumes and prepared for an “animation” in the square. When all of the groups finished their murals we all took turns in the center of the square teaching and participating in each group’s dances.

After we finished the animation we went to Juodkrante where we had a small show with groups from, Lithuania, Latvia, Austria, Switzerland, and England. We were able to watch most of the show before we went behind to prepare for our part. We did about a thirty minute show with strictly American dances. The audience loved it! They continued to clap and cheer until the announcer began to talk.

After this show we rushed back to Nida to have dinner and prepare for the evening show. The stage was on the coast and only a hundred feet away from the water. It was a beautiful place to have a show at. Prior to our segments of the show beginning we walked along the pier and set up our changing area behind the stage. Our “changing rooms” consisted of a few sheets draped around the back of the stage where the girls could change, leaving the open air for the men. We did two twenty minute segments. The first segment was strictly American and the second consisted of many of our international pieces. The crowd loved it! It felt as if we were rock stars because of the staging and the crowd’s wild reaction. The standing crowd was packed in close to the stage.

When we finished our segments we exchanged gifts with the festival. Afterwards, we changed back into our *Journey* and pioneer costumes so that we could dance with the crowd. A traditional Lithuanian band played while we danced and watched fireworks.

When we were finished dancing we walked back to the hotel and went to bed. It was a long day—fun, and very rewarding.

This was a travel day for the group.

After a few wonderful days in Nida, a resort on the Curonian Spit, just a few miles north of Russia, we headed towards Riga, our destination for the day. The day was planned out as not only a day to travel, but also as a day to visit a few places on the way.

Early in the morning Alex, our bus driver, was ready with the bus as he always had been for the past week. The performance the night before had been late and we got in after midnight. (The sun in the Baltics sets very late in the summer and those of us who are used to shorter days in Utah had to adjust to that phenomenon.) Nevertheless, we left promptly in the morning after a few hours of sleep.

I must mention that the night before Megan Keffer asked me several times if it were possible to visit the sand dunes so that she could get some sand to take home as a memento. It was 11:00 pm at night, in the middle of the performance, and I had no clue how to accomplish this. I was certainly not thinking about taking a huge bus to the beach. As I was contemplating the “problem” a few locals, Arunas, Arturas and Edite, who were our guides for the stay, approached me after another well-received dance by the group. They were so pleased with what they saw their faces were lit as bright light bulbs. Then Arunas asked if there was anything they could do for us as a group. And that is when it hit me. I asked if they, having a smaller vehicle, would do small favor and get some sand for Megan, and then possibly leave it in our hotel at the front desk. They sure came through and Megan was happy as she could be the next morning.

Well ... now back to Sunday.

The plan was to stop by the branch in Klaipeda to take part in the sacrament meeting with the local members. After crossing the Curonian Lagoon at its narrowest point (about 5 minutes by ferry), we were once again on the “continent”. The other reason I was looking forward to being at the branch was to pick up some items that the Austins and Ohrans had left in the hotel in Vilnius. Ed had left a charger for his camera plugged into the wall and I asked a branch president from Vilnius to send this to Klaipeda with the missionaries.

The meeting went well. There were more of “us” than “them”. The meeting was held in Lithuanian and the spirit was there. Our group was very well received and members enjoyed talking to the students after the meeting. Klaipeda’s branch meets in an older building not too far from the downtown. It was remodeled for the Church’s use in only the last few years. But as in other places we have visited—there was no air conditioning. And speaking of air conditioning, the weather was getting hotter and hotter as our tour progressed. We felt blessed by having the A.C. on the bus, but many people living in the countries we visited suffered without. Weather of over 85F and 90-100% humidity is quite unusual for the region.

After the meeting it was time to find some food, as it was always a challenge for our group of 51. Luckily there was a mall with a food court nearby and all of us filed in to find something to eat. The food was great as always! Since we were now leaving Lithuania, I decided to leave my remaining change as a tip on the lunch table. I hope it was enough! ☺ And, as always, we didn’t leave on time as we waited for some stragglers to return to the bus.

On the way to Riga we took a detour drive through Šiauliai to visit the Hill of Crosses. This route was also shorter now as there was construction on the “shorter” highway from Klaipeda to Riga. As we drove off we sang favorite hymns to keep the spirit of the Sabbath with us. And since we had a long ride and we didn’t have a Sunday school lesson, we had one given by Bishop and Sister Nuttall. Ron gave a wonderful lesson on “deeds.” He talked about the importance of the things that we do in this life, quoting scriptures and talks by General Authorities. As hard as I tried to stay awake after a nice lunch, I finally gave up and dozed off for an hour (Sorry, Leslie ☺). When I woke up we were almost at the Hill of Crosses.

The Hill of Crosses is a site of pilgrimage. Over the years not only crosses, but giant crucifixes, carvings of Lithuanian patriots, statues of the Virgin Mary and thousands of tiny effigies and rosaries have been brought here and assembled into a growing religious tribute. There are possibly millions of crosses of all shapes and sizes. There even was a cross made out of old license plates. Although the Soviets worked hard to remove new crosses, and completely bulldozed the site at least three times, the new crosses continued to appear and by 1985 the authorities had given up. On September 7, 1993, Pope John Paul II visited the Hill of Crosses declaring it a place for hope, peace, love and sacrifice. Even though we, as Latter-Day Saints, don’t use the cross as a symbol of our religion, it was still an inspiring site to see that I am sure left a lasting impression on many from the group.

Today we had our first border crossing. As we pulled to the border control station it became clear that someone (I am not going to mention his name here) did indeed leave his passport in the trailer. Alex was kind enough to get it for us. Then about 15 minutes later, with the stamps in the passports, we continued the journey to Riga to meet with branch members for an evening activity. And as always we were 1.5 hours late.

The branch we visited, (there are two in Riga), also has a building in the newer part of the city like some other branches in Klaipeda and Vilnius. Members of the Central branch in Riga meet in a rented space, as it is too costly for a building downtown. The evening was wonderful. The fireside had quite a turnout and there were probably more members this time than us. We even invited Alex to attend the evening, but he shortly after stepped out. I think he was trying to get the bus in the shop that night to fix a few things. (One of them was a leaky air conditioner that was dropping water since the first day we arrived.) Overall we had a great time.

As it has been a routine for the entire tour – after the meeting with the members, we had to find a place for a dinner. It was almost 10:00 pm and the crowd was really hungry. One place that Jonathon scouted out when he was in Riga in February was a three-story restaurant in the city on the embankment called “Lido”. The Lido is similar to Chuck-A-Rama in that you pick the foods you want to eat, but the price you pay depends on what you pick. The place is huge, has a playground for the kids and the food was fabulous. Finally, this was a restaurant where all the menu choices were also in English so that I didn’t have to be a translator for 50 people!!!

As it was getting late the restaurant politely informed us they were closing and shortly after 11:00 pm, tired, fed, and happy—we drove off to our hotel called “Riga,” located at the edge of the old city.

I must say that the Riga hasn’t changed much since I visited it during the Christmas season of 2004. The Riga was still there—a hotel built some 15-20 years during the turbulent times of chaos and democracy. As we drove into the city a sense of nostalgia and pride took over my thoughts. I was anxious to show my city to the group and was hoping that everyone would have a great time. And they did ... but that is a story for another day as Sunday was over, and so is my tour history for the day.

After a night spent in the Hotel Riga with a man playing what I believed were Russian love songs on the accordion in the park and a dim light from the sky since the sun didn't go quite all the way down, we arose with a good day ahead of us.

After breakfast, we split into three groups according to who had what to do. The largest group walked to a workshop with Mr. Janis Purvins the choreographer for *Ligo*. *Ligo* is a leading Latvian folk dance group. Ed returned from the workshop with a new choreography and the notes to prove it, as well as I believe a DVD for future use. All had a good time and we would see Janis and his two dancers at the show this evening. The rest of the group had heard Janis say "*Pal Dias*" enough that they were sure to remember it for at least the rest of tour.

Group two consisted of the band and Jonathon who ventured into the park across the street from the hotel for a little rehearsal. The rehearsal was fine. However the most notable event was an older man who came up and was smitten by Deborah. To say love at first sight wouldn't be quite right because he didn't really speak English. But, it was in the right vein. He wouldn't leave even though I know everyone wanted him to. It was a bit uncomfortable. He simply couldn't get enough of Deborah.

After a per diem lunch, where some found that the cafes didn't open 12:30 pm, the group loaded into the performance venue. The Kongres Nams was a nice venue with a good stage, good lighting, and two glass pyramids out front than reminded at least me of the glass pyramids in front of the Louvre. Those who read *DaVinci Code* on this tour may be reminded of the intriguing mystery of the supposed location and description of the true holy grail. Those who didn't read it or haven't been to the Louvre were probably not reminded of anything and just thought they were two glass pyramids with no apparent purpose.

Most of the group were then whisked away to the U.S. Ambassador's residence for a reception in our honor. After a short walk, skip and a jump across the lock bridge we arrived at the home of the Ambassador. She made a speech, Ed made a speech, and then we ate cake and drank juice. Some of the group may not have realized that Elder Wayne Peterson a counselor in the Area Presidency in Moscow and his wife had joined us.

After dinner, hot sandwiches made by an American from Philly living in Riga, there was a church reception for some to attend. An interesting story to note here is that the press who attended acted unusual. According to Inara, they usually come for the food and not for the information. This time, however, they didn't seem to care about the food. They wanted to talk with the students more than anything.

The performance was a success with lots of VIPs in attendance including Janis and several of his dancers from *Ligo*. Several VIPs in attendance were associated with the ministry of culture.

There were about 900 people there, with about 98 percent non-members. As I watched from the door at intermission and the end of the show, there were smiles and kudos for what they had just seen.

We ended the day with a leisurely walk back to the hotel carrying a bunch of our things so that Alex could take the bus and spend the night a home.

It was our third and final day in Riga and we began by having personal time all morning long. This provided team members a good opportunity to look around the old city and search for those final Latvian souvenirs that they were after.

At one 1:00 pm we all met at the hotel stairs for a one hour tour with Inara of the old city. She guided us through the back streets showing us many of the beautiful old buildings. As she stopped at each one she would tell the story that went along with the building.

One cathedral we looked at had an especially interesting story. It was about two young lovers who will be remembered for a long time. Because he was a monk and she was a nun the two should never have been together, but true love once again came to the surface. Even though they knew they loved each other, they also loved the Lord and wanted to keep the commitments they'd made to him. For a long time they tried to ignore their feelings, but in the end it was just too much and they succumbed to the feelings. They started meeting in secret because they knew their love would not be tolerated. Unfortunately secrets are very difficult to keep and soon their leaders knew about the young couple. They decided a punishment must be pronounced that would not only punish the young couple, but allow their suffering to be an example to the people. The two were walled up together in the attic of the cathedral. The thought was that as people walked by they would hear the suffering of the young couple. The way it worked however, was that the young couple was so happy to be together, even in death, that the people heard only sounds of joy coming from the attic. Upon further reflection their leaders decided that a love that could cause that kind of joy should be celebrated. The couple was removed from their attic tomb and buried properly. They also made masks of their faces and put the masks into the side of the building itself. Now anyone who walks by the building can see the smiling faces of the couple. They are still providing joy for all to see.

After our tour we returned to the hotel and said goodbye to Inara. We gave her gifts and the men said goodbye in the folk dance tradition with kisses on the cheek. The ladies gave her hugs and she told us how much she would miss us. She was amazing at what she did. She truly is helping to build the kingdom of God. After our goodbyes we got back on the bus to get a special treat. We headed for the little town of Jurmala. Jurmala is a beach town, and that was where we were headed. As soon as we were there we found the little changing booths that were situated all along the beach and then it was out into the water. The water felt great, cool and refreshing.

As with any group like ours, some of the girls got dunked, Ed got chased until he threw himself into the water, and we all had a great time. We even threw the Frisbee around with a couple of guys that we didn't know. They sure seemed to like joining in our game. Gene was also out making friends. He tried to make friends with one of the local birds, but got bird bombed instead. Keep trying Gene. After enjoying the beach we scattered to find some food. Once again the bus ended up waiting for those who were not able to get their food before the time ran out.

Fortunately we all made the bus and no one got left. We then proceeded to go to a single adult activity with the Imanta Branch in Riga. We broke up into groups and played games. We played name games, screaming Viking, and lots of other fun games. Then we met back in the gym for a little dancing. We taught them how to do Oh Susanna and the Salty Dog Rag. They taught us a couple of Latvian dances. They were really fun!

We then had refreshments, as all good LDS meetings do regardless of where in the world they are, and talked. It turned out the missionaries had brought some investigators and it was fun to talk with them and see what they thought about the gospel. They really appreciated talking with a large group of young people who had the same beliefs as themselves. And even though Vickie tried to use the men's restroom, the group was able to make some good friendships. We now know some of our Latvian brothers and sisters.

After the activity Alex took us back in the bus to the hotel and we were given the rest of the evening for free time. The band decided to have a little fun in the square. They set up shop and began to play for anyone that wanted to listen. Pretty quickly there was a good little crowd gathered around listening. The people were really enjoying the music. The band even decided to let the dancers have a little bit of the glory. They played as some of us clogged. Then some of the guys did *hambone*, and *Mehkereki* was even performed. All who were involved were having a great time and the local people loved it. It made the perfect ending to our stay in Latvia. We even left the people with post cards of our group to help them remember us.

Ashley Oblad
Riga to Parnu, Estonia

Wednesday - June 28, 2006

What a hectic morning! Since it was our last day in not only Riga, but Latvia as well, everyone was running around the city for their last minute sightseeing and souvenir stops. Whether it was for chocolates, watches, amber, or postcards most of us were sprinting around until it was time to leave. We were all told the day before that we would have at least until 11:00 am to finish up our tour of Riga. Then the plans changed to meet the bus at 10:15 am. So instead of just casually enjoying the city, most of us had to rush our way around. Josh and Eddie rushed to St. Peter's Church which opened at 10:00 am. They arrived for the first elevator operating that morning, got to the top of the church, looked at beautiful Riga for two minutes and sprinted back to Hotel Riga for our departure. A big group of us made a last minute stop at Emīla Gustava Šokolāde for some delectable chocolates and for a cup of silky hot chocolate to go. As soon as the bus was ready to go we all got on. When we departed it was exactly 10:15 am. Was this possibly the *first* day we have left on time for our destination? It WAS in fact just that! Even though we were running around Riga the whole morning we still achieved this small yet vital goal. Are we amazing or what?!?

Once on the bus we all relaxed into our own activities. Word got around about the pictures of Jamon's early morning rooftop adventure. At about 4:00 am. Jamon snuck out through his hotel window and climbed onto a landing where he took some amazing photos of people sleeping—such as Scotty and Nate. Now, that just sounds like something Jamon would do doesn't it?

While some of us slept on the bus others, such as Adam Marriott, sat around with Brittany and had a discussion about marriage and "feeding" newborns. You all know who you are! It was very informational too, wasn't it? But it was the scenery that caught our eyes on the drive to Estonia. The roads were lined with thick forests and all we could see for miles were trees and more trees. "Beautiful! Gorgeous! Wish you were here!"

When we arrived at our destination, the bus made a stop at a "hotel" on the beach. Instead of just one large building, there were small little shack-like cottages spread throughout the wooded area. Most of us were worried because of the apparent size of the "rooms" and the possible lack of a WC. But there was nothing to worry about because we soon learned that this was not our place of lodging. Phew!

Once we arrived in the town of Parnu we hit up a fun, large grocery store for lunch before driving to the concert hall to set up for our show. Remember the huge lift that we used to load up our equipment onto? I'm sure Thomas remembers because he had quite the "dirty" ride up. As the lift was already heading up to the upper-deck Thomas grabbed hold of it and held on for his dear life. With all his strength and a bit of help from Nate he managed to pull himself up onto the lift. But as he looked down at his clothes he realized that his khakis weren't as "khaki" as they use to be. He was covered in black dirt and filth.

Does anyone remember how we DIDN'T have borscht for dinner this evening? If you remember back, this was the night we were fed kabobs; they were not your average street vendor kabobs either. They were honestly fantastic! It was such a nice break from the dill too.

After stuffing our faces, we made our way back to the dressing rooms, and to our amazement Matt Neal came in and told the women that there was a security camera in their dressing room. Yikes, what a scary thought! It was a good thing we were told quickly because most of us were in the position to start changing.

This was a surprisingly amazing theatre. The floors were made out of an African wood and they were shiny and beautiful. Plus, the 'house' floor was set on hydraulics so it could move up and down for transferring objects without having to use the stairs. It was like magic. The only bad thing about the floor was how it was so slippery and hard. During Irish and clog it would pound us back harder than we pounded on it, so our legs and feet were insanely achy afterwards. But the audience had no idea we were in pain. They were great to us.

Probably the highlight of the evening (besides finding out about the security camera) was when our presenter made her last comments about our show. All of us tried to hide the fact that our muscles were shaking and that there was sweat in our eyes by smiling as big as we could. *She* went on for days telling the audience something that we could not understand. With a little bit of help from the sister missionaries in attendance, they said that the presenter was trying to express how and what she felt that evening during our performance. She said she could not express the way she felt inside but that she enjoyed the warmth it offered to her. She could not find the words to even begin to explain the "way" she felt, but we all know that it was the Spirit.

And this is what we are all about. We reach out to those that have this missing link in their lives, inspiring others to feel the spirit and love of Christ through a different medium. What a memorable evening.

While loading up the bus many got to witness a beautiful rainbow in the sky. It was just a perfect ending to a wonderful night.

Little did we know that the night was still young. Once we got to the hotel Lemmenranna, (the real hotel), most everyone headed out to the beach for either a nice swim or a walk. Some of us just hopped over our balcony walls because we were right on the beach. What a memorable view! Only a few people actually went swimming, but they didn't make it out very far because it was a really chilly night.

But, of course, Jamon had to do something to injure himself. He cut his knee up pretty badly. Even though it looked like it hurt, everyone was more amazed by it—not so much surprised, but amazed. ☺

Everyone would agree that this was an amazing hotel. It's just too bad that we didn't get to stay another day and another night.

Melanie (Jardine) Grace
Parnu to Tallinn

Thursday - June 29, 2006

Today was another great day on tour! We had to wake up early enough to eat breakfast and be on the bus by 9:00 am. While getting onto the bus, Mark hit the corner of his head on a metal piece that stuck out by the stairs! It was a pretty deep cut that most likely could have used stitches, but luckily great trainer, Ron, was able to fix him up quick! We left our hotel and headed towards Tallinn. Everyone was able to go back to sleep on the bus considering the bus ride only totaled about two and a half hours.

Once we reached Tallinn we had the opportunity to join Elder and Sister Piper, along with President and Sister Waterson at the Peppersack restaurant for an amazing lunch. Elder Piper is a counselor in the area presidency, and Elder Waterson is the mission president. This was the lunch that we all had to pre-order back before tour even started, so we knew it would be good! The servers were dressed in authentic Estonian dress, which are always fun to see, and they did an amazing job serving our large group. We were served a great variety of soups and salads for the appetizers, and fish, chicken, meat loaf, and steak for the lunch. We also had a wonderful variety of desserts to follow.

This was the day we had a unique opportunity to perform at the U.S. Embassy 4th of July Party at the Estonian Ambassador's residence. We arrived at her residence around 1:30 pm and were received by Amy and Jay, who were to be our guides for the evening. They were very helpful in accommodating us with dressing rooms and making sure we knew the schedule.

We were asked to help serve as hosts for the party which included greeting the guests as they entered, and introducing ourselves as we showed them to the buffet tables. What a neat opportunity! This party was said to be the biggest event of the year, and up to 1,000 VIP guests sent in their RSVP to be there. We knew it was going to be huge!

Our sound check was at 2:00 pm and we were able to get a feel for the stage we were given. It was simply pieces of wood put together on top of grass—which meant it would not be the best for our clogging numbers. A couple of dancers had their taps ruined on their clogs while we were practicing and had to get them fixed. The taps got caught on the wood and pulled them right off! Lindsay Ozbirn's only came a little loose, but still needed to be repaired.

We thought we then had free time to get ready, but those who were in *Elkridge Clog* had to meet Ed outside on the grass for rehearsal. This would be the first time for our group to perform the new clog piece for an audience, and this was an important one at that!

When we were finally ready, we had the opportunity to take a group photo with the Ambassador. The guests started to arrive soon after. The big band made up of the Border Patrol played amazing music while they entered in, and our own band had the opportunity to play soon after.

The atmosphere was incredible. We were all surrounded by so many important dignitaries from Estonia. Even the Prime Minister from Estonia was there.

Every Society Page photographer was there! There were coolers with drinks for us to take whenever we were thirsty and little tables to leave your glass on after you were finished. There were eight large

buffet tables full of chicken, pork, fish, all different kinds of salads, grapes, cherries, and delicious breads with cheese cream—well, cream cheese as we call it. There was also a McDonald's booth that was serving chicken nuggets, hamburgers, and pie. Let's just say we all got plenty to eat that evening. All of us felt extremely privileged to perform at this party. This was the first time they had ever had dancers at this 4th of July Party! They all loved each dance we did, and afterwards many came out to join us on the little stage while Ed led us through some social dances.

Jamon's goal for the evening was to dance with the Ambassador herself, and by the end of the night he had reached his goal. Someone commented on Jamon's experience by saying, "The Ambassador is dancing with a Quaker." Who'd of thought that that's what his costume portrayed. It was a fun night for the band when Jon came up on stage and rocked out on the fiddle with the rest of the musicians! The rest of the band had fun while randomly switching instruments.

Alicia and Matt were able to talk to an F.B.I. agent about future jobs. Alan had the chance to meet the ambassador's parents from Poland. They told him about the father's experience to join the military just before the German invasion. He spent the entire war in a concentration camp to be rescued by the Americans. With tears in his eyes, he told Alan how much he loves America and what it has done for his family. He spoke of how proud he is of his daughter, and the joy he has in now being an American. He is currently writing a book about his experiences that should be done in October.

During the night, Marie asked a man to dance the waltz with her, but he did not know how. Marie replied, "Oh, well I can teach you!" As he pulled her in close the man replied by saying, "You can teach me forever!" After dancing for a while and kind of being a bit "creeped" out, Marie saw Adam Marriot and mouthed, "SAVE ME!" At the time, Adam was also with a "creepy" girl, so during the right arm swing he turned around and grabbed Marie's arm for the left arm swing instead of his partners! This left both of the other partners to dance together while Adam and Marie were now together dancing. It was hilarious and Adam definitely saved the day!!

Marie wasn't the only one that had a run in with a man that night. Apparently a Russian man talked with Deborah for a half hour about how beautiful she was and how she shouldn't smile at people who are on a lower level than she. He also told her how all the big, strong men in the audience were attracted to her. He thought she was absolutely perfect! He told her that she needed to write him so that he could make her a star. He also mentioned this to David Woolsey. And ... after talking about Deborah, he then asked Viddy to send him e-mails describing his success techniques with women.

All in all, this was definitely a night to remember. We received so many great comments from people who attended the party. A retired diplomat commented that it was the best Embassy held 4th of July Celebration they could remember. Another man made a similar comment that after many years it was the best 4th of July party he had ever attended. The guests were impressed with our smiles and how we showed so much joy in our dancing. Jon even mentioned to all of us how being at this party was a "God send." There had been a change in schedules and at one time it was a possibility that we would not be able to perform for the Embassy. Luckily, the party got moved to the June 29th and we were able to still perform in Parnu on the 28th. The Lord knew that we needed to be here.

I believe we all left that night with warm feelings in our hearts, and deep gratitude to our Heavenly Father. We arrived safely at Hotel Ulemiste in Tallinn and prepared for another amazing day on tour.

We began this day at 10:00 am visiting the Old town of Tallinn, Estonia. This old city was one of the few cities not destroyed during war time. Many of the buildings are 600-900 years old. We entered through what is left of the original city gate and wall. There were shops and cafes lining the cobble stone streets. We had time for sight seeing and shopping most of the day.

Many of us walked up the winding streets to the Russian Orthodox Church. On the way up we took what is known as the short leg street. It's uphill and has cobble on one side and lots of stairs on the other side. One of the local shop keepers said it was called the short leg street because it was easier for a short legged person to walk up all those stairs. The Russian Orthodox Church was beautiful with its many towers and onion shaped domes. From the church we walked up to a platform where we could view the whole city below. It was fun to see all the colorful roof tops and spires.

On our way back to the main square we took the long leg street. It's called the long leg street because there are no stairs just cobble gradually going down hill so someone with long legs can take big strides and get quickly down into town. On the long leg street many artists displayed and sold their paintings. We also visited the Fat Margarite. It's a big fat tower at the other entrance into old town. It was named after Queen Margarite who was very, very fat. We took photos at the skinniest street where in old days the ladies dresses were so wide only one lady could walk down the street at a time. The story goes that the polite thing was to let the eldest walk the street first with the youngest following. But no one wanted to admit they were older, so ladies didn't often go down that street because they couldn't go side by side. After shopping and sightseeing, and wandering on cobble stone streets, we rode on the bus to Tartu- sleeping most of the way.

In Tartu we are a part of the Gaedamus Baltic Song and Dance Festival. Tartu is a quaint little college town. After checking into our hotel we went to the town square to find dinner and look around. One of the most interesting buildings right on the square is one that is leaning to one side. We were told that the foundation sunk on one side and caused it to tilt. It is still being used today as a museum. We also went to the university, a large stately old building. It is said that the university in Tartu gave the 1st Doctoral degree ever recorded, and still accepts students today. In the evening we joined the festival's opening ceremonies. After being welcomed we gathered at the river for a torch lighting ceremony. The torch lighting was really interesting. There were barges lit on the river with fire-knife-like battles and twirling, haystacks on fire along the shore, torches lit all along the river and a procession of students with torches across the bridge. There were also fireworks and exciting music. At about midnight we returned to our hotel where several of our rooms were a little cozy, but comfortable (at least for the little people). It was fun and very relaxing to take a day to sightsee and shop.

After our late night Friday night at the Opening Ceremonies of the XV Gadamus Baltic Song and Dance Festival, it was a treat to sleep in this morning. We didn't have to meet to get on the bus until 11:00 am! We needed the extra sleep. The bus dropped us off near the main town square. We were told that we had free time until 1:00 pm. At that time we needed to meet behind the stage to start getting ready for our performance.

There aren't too many "sights" to see in Tartu, so free time for most of the team was spent souvenir shopping and wandering around. Since there were just two main souvenir shops to choose from, we ended up with some of the same purchases—lots of wool mittens and socks, leather slippers, and things made out of wood. And of course, there was the Amber jewelry, always a favorite. Since most of us ate breakfast around 10:00 am we also grabbed a quick snack before meeting with the group. Lindsay had the most marvelous crepe with marzipan and orange glaze!

At 1:00 pm we met the bus and unloaded all of our costume boxes. We thought that we were going to be able to change in a museum right next to the stage, but if there is one thing that we have learned about tour it is that plans seem to always change. Unfortunately the museum was not right next to stage, at least not the one in which they would allow us to change. So, we ended up changing right behind the stage. Our AMAZING bus driver Alex maneuvered the bus so that it and the trailer blocked some of the view, but we were still very much out in the open. After all of the fiasco, we were had only 20 minutes to get ready, and made our initial change on the bus. It was a little tricky, but we did it.

At 2:00 pm we performed a 30 minute show. Our lineup was as follows: *Texas Fandango*, *Appalachian*, *Journey*, *Elkridge Clog*, and *Last Night*. The performance went really well. The stage was much smaller than we were used to, so some of the dances were a little tricky. *Running Sets* was particularly tight. On stage left there was a steep, slick ramp that we used for entrances and exits.

Director's Note: It was a wonderful surprise when a Latvian family approached me after our performance and identified themselves as the Partna Family. Vickie and I danced with Gayleen Partna in the 1970's. A large portion of her family still live in Latvia, and they had come to Tartu just to see our performance and to meet the group. Their party consisted of Gayleen's Aunt and Uncle, their children and grandchildren. I gathered our group together for introductions and pictures. None of this branch of Gayleen's family are members of the church. What a small world we live in!

Michelle Hinton
Tartu to Tallinn

Sunday - July 2, 2006

This splendid Sunday morning began with the usual buffet breakfast selection of eggs, pancakes, sandwiches and fruit for those who chose not to fast. Alicia gave a thought-provoking devotional on our way to church in Tartu, sharing her reaffirmation that we are all children of God. We may speak different languages. We may have cultural differences. But despite our differences, our Heavenly Father loves us equally.

Fast and testimony in Tartu was an edifying meeting for all. We enjoyed the testimonies of several Estonian saints as well as those of Ben, Sarai, Ed and Ken Hinton (Michelle's dad). The translator bore his testimony, only occasionally slipping from English into Estonian. He didn't realize it until his translator repeated his Estonian words into Estonian. The congregation laughed about that, mostly because we understood how hard it must be to think in two languages.

Stacey, Adam and Ben were excited to see an Estonian investigator present who they had met the previous day. When they had met this young woman Saturday evening, she wasn't sure that she would be able to get work off, but she was there for most of the meeting! The entire group said goodbye to the Hinton family after sacrament meeting.

Lunch for those not fasting was spent at the mall in Tartu, either from the supermarket or buffet on the third floor. We left for Tallinn at 4:00 pm, and arrived at hotel Ulemiste at about 4:30 pm, in time for

an hour of personal time to prepare for the fireside. Ben led our music rehearsal before the fireside. Despite having a cold and a large hole in the elbow of his dress shirt, he once again did a remarkably entertaining job of preparing the group to sing.

Just before the fireside, Summer had the good fortune of stepping in a sticky mass of wet tar, which ended up conveniently all over her shoe, hands, the chain-link fence, and the grass. We learned from this experience that gas is one of the best remedies for removing tar. Scotty and Summer brought a different fragrance with them when they joined us after their battle, but both were victoriously tar-free. Due to technical difficulties in getting the video camera set up for broadcasting to the Tartu branch, the fireside didn't start until about 7:20 pm. Jonathan did a great job of introducing the group. The band played a stirring instrumental rendition of "Come Thou Fount" despite minimal rehearsal time. Thomas spoke in Russian on prayer, Ashley on faith, and Marin on obedience. Rustin bore his testimony on the Savior, and Megan Keffer finished off the fireside by reading the theme scripture: Moroni 10:32. Ed commented afterward that we did an "especially nice job," and that we "seemed brighter" than we had the past week after our day of traveling.

The band sang a slightly different version of "I Stand All Amazed" and the Hinton cousins, Stacey and Michelle, were honored to sing with them for this number. All were edified (not Cha-ified, mind you☺).

We mingled afterwards, then said goodbye to Elder and Sister Watterson. Elder Watterson wasn't able to completely hold back his emotions when he expressed his thanks for the light and spirit we brought with us to the Baltics. He spoke of how the work there was just beginning to flourish after being under Russian rule for over fifty years. He thanked us for strengthening them with our spirit.

We had about two hours for dinner in Old Town. The general consensus was that most of the selection was a bit on the expensive side. As Amber entered the women's water closet in McDonalds, a man was exiting one of the stalls—awkward...

A typical epidemic of anti-microphone-fever swept the bus on the trip back. Adam's query as to what the difference between unlawful and illegal was easily answered. When we returned to our hotel, Vickie "passed off" each of the girl's black pants to make sure they didn't need to be hemmed. Most of us were extremely grateful to return to our hotel with its particularly soft beds. "It was like sleeping on a cloud" was Deborah's poignant comment about the heavenly feather comforters.

**Adam Grimshaw
Tallinn**

Monday - July 3, 2006

Monday was spent in the old town. After breakfast at the hotel we boarded the bus where the devotional was given by Nate. We arrived in old town around 11:00 am and split into groups. Popular activities included taking a bus tour of the city and climbing to the top of the church tower for a good view of the city. Ben and Gene further fed their passion for tall things by climbing to the top of the Soviet television tower. Linen was the fashion of the day with the group purchasing a grand total of eleven pairs of linen pants, two sports jackets, and one very stylish suit. David Woolsey, on the other hand, rather than conform to the fashions of the world, determined to have the world conform to him and bought a mace to enforce his position.

At 4:00 pm we met back at the bus where we changed into *Journey* costumes. Due to female bus priority, the men were left to change in the trailer. Once in costume, we walked up to the main square

with sound equipment and costumes. Deprived of any means of getting electricity to our equipment, we sat and waited and set up what little we could.

In the mean time Banjo Adam made friends with a Russian gentleman named Nikolai who was playing the spoons. They jammed out until a man at the café told them they'd had enough. Still uncertain about whether electricity would be an option, Ed asked the band to play an acoustic set for the gathering crowd. The band played for about fifteen minutes. Many of the dancers mingled with the audience.

Finally, we found a shop that agreed to let us use their electricity for the show. Of course, we had to pay them for the privilege. We performed *Journey*, *Running Sets*, *Elkridge*, and *Last Night*. We drew in a crowd of about two hundred people, not to mention the many other people sitting at the surrounding cafes. Amongst the crowd there were about ten missionaries as well as some members from the Tallinn branch. Lyndsey Willis and Crystal Robinson weren't involved in the show until the fifth dance number, so they went out into the crowd. They asked the missionaries for ideas on street contacting, but didn't get any clear answers. Ed introduced a man named Alex to the band. He worked security at the old Town Hall adjacent to the square. He said he had enjoyed the performance and thought that the crowd had enjoyed it as well. He said the crowd was very quiet and that that was a good thing in Europe. Also, Banjo Adam's Russian friend Nikolai stayed for the performance and made sketches of the group, two of which he gave to the band.

After a quick clean-up, we walked down the main street past the Peppersack and a variety of small, picturesque street cafes to enjoy our last meal in Europe at ... McDonald's. Following dinner we jumped on the bus and headed back to the hotel. We packed and loaded costume bags and then went to bed ... except for the band which stayed up until one in the morning listening to their new CD and eating chocolate. Elise Andelin expressed her dedication and complete devotion to her fiancé by chatting with him online until 4:15 am.

Liz Davis

Tallinn to Drummondville, Quebec, Canada

Tuesday July 4, 2006

Happy 4th of July!

Today was a LONG day. We met on the bus at 5:40 am. At roll call, there were nine people who were missing—they had slept in, but by some miracle, they were all on the bus (some were even fed!) by 5:45. We then drove to the airport which was a convenient five minute drive. The first leg of the flight went by pretty quickly—in fact, it took negative-five minutes due to the time change going into Stockholm. Alan unfortunately sat in the way of a clumsy stewardess who dumped Coca Cola on his pristine blazer.

Our stay in Sweden was quite pleasant. Since no one knew what the exchange rate was there, the usual guilt for overspending in airports was dissolved and the majority of the group got yoghurt, muffins, or ice cream.

The next flight to Chicago took nine hours. Most people slept ... except Alan, who threw up three times instead ... he's seen better days. We each got our own personal TV screens. It made the time go by faster. And when we arrived in Chicago, we were greeted with all of our bags!!!! We then had a five hour wait before our next flight. The majority of the group spent much of that time on the phone. Many of us got burritos, or other yummy Lunchables (but alas, we understood the currency, and therefore knew how excessively expensive it all was). One of the security guards burst out in patriotism, singing the national anthem over the PA. It reminded us that it was the 4th of July, and helped us get in the

spirit of the holiday. Another highlight was the World Cup semi-finals game—Italy vs. Germany. Italy won 2 to 0 in a very dramatic overtime (two goals in two minutes!!!).

Elise Andelin was almost left behind in the airport because she was talking on the phone when our departure gate changed. Luckily, she made it, and she is, indeed, still with us today.

Our last flight of the day was quite enjoyable. At one point, the captain requested that all passengers fasten their seatbelts due to expected turbulence. After a moment, a flight attendant repeated the request. We thought this redundant—and we became suspicious with the third announcement. Soon after, she began yet once more, “Sir, please sit down. Sir?” We turned around to see Jonathan looking sheepishly, standing in the back of the plane, by the lavatories.

As we landed, there was a fantastic orange sunset (though it would’ve been 3:00 am in Estonia. ack!). We had made it to Montreal in one piece and, (cue fanfare), we didn’t lose any luggage!! We were greeted by Monica and Chantal, two volunteers of the festival. They were very kind. We all looked very haggard despite Ed’s incessant requests to make ourselves look decent. After a bus ride, we groggily unloaded the bus. We dragged it upstairs and many people fell asleep with their clothes on. We survived the 30 hour day!

Director’s Note: Actually, the festival had a crew of young people who loaded all of our baggage onto carts and took them to our rooms for us. I guess individuals did take their own shoulder bags. Both Monica and Chantal have been our guides in years past and Chantal has actually visited us here in Utah.

Happy Independence Day!

Justin Keyes
Drummondville

Wednesday - July 5, 2006

Jet lag seized the boys this morning when the majority of us woke up between 5:30 and 6 am, despite our long day of travel yesterday and our late arrival in Drummondville last night. Many of us made the hike down three flights of stairs and across the building for an early cold shower using t-shirts and blow dryers to dry ourselves because we had no towels. While the boys enjoyed breakfast, the girls seemed to have no problem sleeping in. After breakfast, Vickie led a good sized group of us on a 15 minute walk to Zellers in the mall to buy towels and other personal items. Thus began our long day of rehearsals and preparation for the festival.

The day started to pick up momentum when Ed found out that he needed to choreograph some clogging to French Canadian music for the opening ceremonies. So ... at 10:00 am we met in the amphitheatre at the Marie Rivier School to quickly throw together pieces of *Journey*, *Festival Clog*, and *Elkridge Mountain Stomp*. We were all slightly “loopy” and distracted during this rehearsal, and for the rest of the day for that matter. I think it had something to do with jet lag and lack of sleep. At the end of this rehearsal, Bobby, one of the festival volunteers who used to be on Mackinaw, taught us the parade routine: clap for 16, form a circle for 16, circle right for 32, clap-clap, circle left for 32, clap-clap, then party with everyone... easy-cheesy.

Next was a quick jump onto the bus and then a ride over to the Grand Place stage for a bit of a technical rehearsal where we continued to be slightly more loopy than normal. We finished throwing together steps for the opening ceremony while we were waiting for the tech (or so we thought). The

end of our opening ceremony steps were going to come from our Elkridge clog which is only 8 couples... so, those who aren't in that number were hysterically trying to learn the steps and getting a little frustrated because we were rushed. "Don't worry," says Ed, "you'll have time to learn it later."

The time spent at the Grand Place pushed us to the limit time and we barely made it back before the end of lunch at 2:00 pm.

At 3:00 pm we had a run-through on the stage so it was a quick jump on the bus back to the park. During lunch we discovered that the clogging we had put together was too long so Amber and Rustin helped Ed cut and paste some of the steps to make it fit and we all had to quickly relearn some segments before our run-through. This run-through felt like a repeat of our first run on the stage—except this time we had music. On the bus back from the rehearsal we had our first opportunity to meet René Fréchette, the General Director of the festival.

After dinner we had our dress rehearsal with everyone for the opening ceremonies which will be held tomorrow night. We waited for what seemed like forever in the Folkothèque for them to tell us to go on stage. It was there that we seemed to make our first international friends, the Nova Scotia group (a cute bunch of teenage girls who do mostly footwork dances).

After our late night at the park we came back to the school where we had a "loooooong" meeting in Ed's room. All in all, it was a hot, sticky day spent in warm-ups and costumes, but enjoyable nonetheless.

Jeff Tolsma
Drummondville

Thursday - July 6, 2006

Today was our first full day in Drummondville. The whole group is excited to be here after a long day of travel and short night. The temperature is definitely humid and warm, and we got our first taste sleeping in those conditions. The first thing on today's agenda was meeting the other teams outside the school for an official festival welcome and then to play some games with the other teams. The host group Mackinaw, a French Canadian dance group from Drummondville, conducted the games. Each of us got different colored arm bands and then intermingled with the other groups to form teams. It was a great way to break out of the comfort of our team and meet the other festival participants from all over the world. The other groups were from Turkey, India, China, Nova Scotia, France, Columbia, Africa, Japan, Finland, Slovakia, and Canada.

These games were outside games like you normally play at school recess or home with friends. They were relay races, balloon stomps, human knots, etc. It was a really fun way to break the ice for most of us. After the games we immediately had a rehearsal for the dancers and band. It was mostly to practice the opening ceremonies and the band went outside to learn a new song called Bill's Reel which they would play for most every show after that.

The opening ceremonies were fabulous. Every group did a short dance in their own ethnic style to French Canadian music—and the band just watched. One had to always find an open seat to watch the performance and tonight was packed so we were all spread out. They had a symphony orchestra from Montreal as the main highlight for the evening. They were fabulous. After the performances and official welcome by the festival they closed with a fireworks show that was timed with music. It was beautiful, and wonderful to get the initial feeling of beginning our ten day stay here. This festival is big, and it was completely packed tonight.

Tonight was the first night that all of the groups were here at the school as well. Members of Mackinaw gave us an official welcome back at the school. This event started at 11pm, or so, and carried on through the evening. There was a dance down on the main floor where most people came down to mingle. Outside the main entrance musicians from some of the other teams gathered. Our band instantly latched onto a band from Nova Scotia. We became instant friends and jam session buddies. It was so fun to just take your instrument out and join in a group that is just jamming and instantly make friends. It was the same with the dancers as they began to meet with the other teams. People were still most comfortable with their own teams, but slowly people started breaking out and mingling with one another.

That was the basic day with all of us realizing for the second night that it is hot and humid in Quebec ... and that the nights were going to be short—late nights and early mornings. Today really was a great welcome to the festival and we learned how things were going to flow for the rest of the week.

Dave McMullin
Drummondville

Friday - July 7, 2006

When: July 7, 2006 (Friday)

Where: Drummondville

What: History

Who: Dave-O

Why: If I don't Megan Keffer will hunt me down and beat me—hey that doesn't sound too bad!!!

So ... the day started off with a relaxing feeling, which was good after the amazing opening ceremonies and awe inspiring fireworks. If you ever want to be excited about fireworks just ask Megan Leavitt about fireworks or better yet sit with her while you watch them. It's hard to decide what's more entertaining—the fireworks or her☺

We didn't have to be anywhere until 11am but for some reason people felt like they still had to get up early to roam the halls and pretty much be bored for a few hours while others took the advantage to sleep in. Now we can't gripe too much about those who can't sleep in because some of us were still trying to adjust to whatever time zone we are in. With all the commotion and the ever-so-rhythmic music provided by the squeaky beds, those trying to sleep in found it difficult anyway. Needless to say, it was nice to have a relaxing morning.

Ready to start a new day, we gathered at 11am for Devo, done by yours truly, who shared a scripture found in Alma 38:10-12, 15 (good stuff, feel free to look it up). Then, after a lil' chat about the schedule and what not, we had lunch—YUM! Folkers sure do love to eat. After lunch it seemed that people went in all sorts of directions. Some ladies went to the festival to watch China dance, but I think the majority went and followed Nate and Deborah's dying desire to find and eat some Poutine.

For clarity, and cuz its funny, we shall refer to it as pooh-poo-teen. For those who don't know what pooh-poo-teen is, it's double fried fries smothered in gravy with squeaky cheese. According to Nate it originated here and they went to the original restaurant. Since I get to act as the voice for the day, I'll share with you my experience with pooh-poo-teen. First of all you need the background, just cuz you have nothing else better to do than read this amazingly informed day or your life ... well my life with you in it. I wasn't able to join this adventuresome group of curious "pooh-poo-teen tryers," so Megan Leavitt brought me back some. While they were gone, Amber and I were working with Ed on a mesh

of Irish for a later rehearsal. Not knowing that I'd be dancing, I was in warm tour clothes and worked up a sweat. So, being all hot and gross, I tried some of the pooh-poo-teen and it lived up to the name I gave it. OK ... not that bad ... it just wasn't the best thing while being hot and feeling gross. The squeaky cheese was like eating rubber. Well enough about that.

Around 2:30pm we had a rehearsal with Mackinaw where we did a combined dance with the Montreal Orchestra. Basically they played a score from Lord of the Dance and we did some jiggin'. Unfortunately, the Mackinaw group didn't know Irish step dance and we weren't sure how to include them very well, so they ended up doing their own thing while we did ours. Although there were some challenging transitions with the dance and the music was a bit slow, everything worked fairly well. We then had to rush to dinner and it seemed that everyone else was rushing too. But we have found that this is, for the most part, normal.

This evening we had our first performance in the Folkoteque, which is the small stage in the festival park. Here we perform dances and also involve the audience in animation. We did *Texas Fandango*, *Journey*, *Elkridge Clog* and LN. This, being our first "show" we had a great time and the crowd loved us—especially *Last Night*. The third year PACers also received a surprise this night. After our show guess who showed up? Well if you remember correctly it would be Dan and Steve from the band and Lindsay Turner. Good times and good friends, apparently they are volunteering at the festival the entire week—cool beans!

Throughout the day we were told of this "off-the-hook" worthy singer who has been on Broadway a few times and is loved by the people here. He was doing his big show the same time that we were in the Folkoteque so none of us got to see if he was really ALL that or not. Once we got there, he was on the end of his encore and just did a bunch of yelling. I think we heard more of the "gospel" choir singing than him—go fig'.

Tonight at the discoteque was also history worthy. They played a variety of music from booty shakin' stuff to salsa to swing—good times for all those who were there. However, I must say that Michelle wins for being most admired girl, and the one to dance with. This, at least is what the Columbians were thinking—you go girl. According to Summer and Megan L., the Columbians also did an amazing line dance. By the end of the night, it was mostly good ol' USA dancing. JT and Amanda win for being the "diehards" and the last of us to leave.

Well there you have it—a fun-filled day full of "pooh", rehearsal, sweating, eating, dancing, gospel choir—and yes, more dancing. "Sooooooo Gooooooood!!!"

Scott West
Drummondville

Saturday - July 8, 2006

The day started out with your typical morning of wake up just before breakfast ends, and hurry down to get some food before the door closes. We were all in a pretty relaxed state taking our time to get ready before our meeting at eleven thinking that it would be a pretty relaxed day. Little did we know that a day of hustle and bustle was just around the corner.

In their meeting the leaders learned that the schedule was not what they had expected. They gave us the information in our meeting that the day had suddenly become a lot more jammed packed. After an inspiring devotional we all made a made scramble to get ready and be at the doors for lunch in ten minutes. Since we needed to eat and be on a bus in half an hour we had to cut to the front of the line

for lunch, much to the dismay of those who had already been in line. The only problem was there were four other groups in the same predicament as us. Being the good Samaritans that we are we let them go in front of us and we barely were able to make it back in line as the masses began to stop letting people cut in front of them.

We quickly devoured our food and got on the bus. We drove to a park in an unknown part of town to do an animation. To our surprise the park was next to a ward building. The greatest blessings of the day came when we were able to practice and relax in the building which had air conditioning, what a glorious invention. The schedule originally indicated that we were only going to do an animation, but a parade was added to the program. In the air conditioned cultural hall/sacrament meeting we practiced our parade route since most had forgotten the sequence. After the rehearsal we had a few minutes to relax before the parade.

Either from the rehearsal or from the frantic movements of the morning many found themselves very tired. After a quick nap on the floor it was parade time. A crowd had gathered in the parking lot to wait for our performance and animation. Much to their dismay we left the parking lot to parade through suburbia. Some people from the parking lot followed the parade.

As we traveled along on the scorching hot street in the midday sun the hypnotizing melodies from the band summoned an occasional suburbanite to their door, not quite the mass crowds we were expecting. The first half of the parade was spent doing the parade route and occasionally pioneer when a larger crowd appeared, but for the most part the band played to save the weary feet of the dances. Dancers were able to talk to those who had come to the door and give them flyers.

To the relief of all we completed the parade route and returned to the parking lot to a crowd that had doubled. Jon reminded us that there were only three families there from the local ward so we still had a good opportunity to let our light shine for these people. After a quick water break we put on a show for the gathered mass, dazzling them with *Texas Fandango*, pioneer, *The Gathering*, *Polka Quadrille*, and *Appalachian Patchwork*.

In between the dances we were able to socialize with the on lookers and do some animation. By the end the boys had become soaked in their own sweat, much to the dismay of the girls. Quincy was especially sweaty, and to make his shirt look one color again he rinsed his shirt in the sink. Then, to see Britney Wood's reaction, he gave her a big hug in his drenched shirt.

Once Ed declared that we were done we all got some water and took refuge in the cultural hall. The floor of the cultural hall looked like a scene from WWII with bodies haphazardly strewn across the floor while we attempted to get some rest before we had to move on.

The bus picked us up and took us back to the school. In the few minutes before dinner many took a dip in the pool and the rest showered. Needing to be first in line again for dinner we got there early. Luckily the very efficient festival had taken care of the problem and posted a schedule indicating who needed to eat first. Quickly eating dinner again, we got our stuff together and headed for the main park.

Our evening adventures were a new experience. The game plan was to dance on the dirt roads that lead in between the shops around the park for any onlookers, and then to stop and let them take pictures in some of our costumes. Most of the performers weren't exactly sure how it was all supposed to work, but thanks to our excellent guides we were able to figure it out quickly (the leaders were back at the school taking a break). After gathering a crowd with our dancing we then invited the onlookers to try on a southern dress, some cowboy chaps and a hat, a pioneer dress, an Appalachian dress, or festival

clog dress. Many were skittish at first but gained courage after seeing others trying on the costumes. Once in the chaps men would jump around and hoot and holler and then grab a lovely looking lady to pose for a picture. The ladies, feeling like princesses in their new outfit, would pose for pictures. Even the little girls could join in the fun trying on a festival clog dress and then dance—spinning around. While the costumes were being put on, the band played requests and anything else that they wanted to.

After our third stop we traveled to a mini stage toward the entrance of the park. To our dismay we had to miss the Slovaks in the main stage as they dazzled the crowd. As we walked by everyone rubbernecked to see what the Slovaks were doing. At the stage many took positions on the hill and craned their necks to catch a glimpse of them. To the frustration of Dave who was trying to keep the group together and focused on fulfilling our obligation, Alan and Adam disappeared and never made it to the fourth station. It was later revealed that they had gone to sit with Alan's parents and watch the show.

Not having everyone to do *Appalachian Patchwork* we did hambone, the Southern waltz, and *Polka Quadrille*. The most difficulty came from fighting the main stage music that was blaring out all around us.

Once finished, many hopped on the bus to travel back to the school. While those who went back changed clothes so they could return to watch Columbia in the Folkotheque for the night, those that remained behind caught the end of Slovakia's show and then headed back to the school or stayed to enjoy the festival for the evening.

Some just stayed at the school to spend a quiet night relaxing, playing games, and sleeping.

Megan Keffer
Drummondville

Sunday - July 9, 2006

We started the Sabbath with a prayer and devotional by Quincy. He reminded us how to praise the Lord and show gratitude through song and dance. After breakfast, we were able to attend church with the Drummondville branch. Thank you to Monique and Chantal for arranging that for us. Not only was it wonderful to partake of the sacrament and be lifted by the Spirit, but we also had air conditioning and soft chairs. Brothers and sisters—the church is true! Of course the talks on having the Spirit, and Ammon and his missionary service also support this statement. We were also able to sing a lovely rendition of “Savior, May I Learn to Love Thee.”

After church we headed straight to the festival grounds to block the new Irish section with the orchestra. Following the rehearsal we came back to our shoes only to find them spread out and completely mixed up! Who was to blame for this—none other than our new friends of Mackinaw.

After rehearsal we had lunch catered by the cafeteria and then headed back to the Folkotheque to perform. Rustin, Michelle, and Summer had the chance to join in with the Indian group during their animation. We performed *Elk Ridge Clog*, *Last Night*, and *Appalachian Patchwork*. The show was great and once again the crowd went wild. They can't get enough of “that tie dance.”

There was one most exciting moment when Ed explained how clogging costumes used to be longer but as time passed they were shortened to show off the legs. After several whistles at Summer's slender beautiful legs, the statement was changed to “showing off their feet.” AWKWARD!!!

For supper we had another lovely meal provided by the cafeteria. Then we all headed down early to the festival to watch the Columbian show. Most of us took the bus, but Dave and Megan L. decided to hitch-hike. Well they actually were walking down and had to stop and ask for directions. The family they asked just volunteered to drive them down. The Columbian show was great. They are all incredible dancers. We all just need to think—National Geographic.

We had a great but interesting show. We did have to wait a while (2.5 hours) to perform, but who's counting? Waiting was actually good because we were able to go over the Irish sequence along with other steps that needed to be reviewed. Several of us were also able to catch a little nap. *Elk Ridge Clog* went well. The middle panel did decide to raise up a couple of inches and it was pretty slick.

Now *Last Night* was another story. It was well loved and full of energy, but Melanie broke her shoe and got up close and personal with the camera man. Megan L. also slipped and fell on her bum when she went out to jam with Dave and Bethany. The guys on the front row suggested sticking to the back handspring. Once again the stage was “bouncing” -quite literally.

The Irish segment was successful and wowed the audience. Before our bows with Mackinaw, Quincy and Marie had a profound realization. In Quincy's words it reads, “A few of us were waiting offstage left, right before the final bow of the symphony. Some of Mackinaw was there with us. As the symphony played, Mackinaw began to mess around. They pretended to be Jedi warriors dueling. After watching this for a little bit, Marie leaned over to me and said, ‘It's good to see they are just as weird as we are.’” Weirdness is universal.

After the show we all came home and pretty much went to bed or began the long process of it. It was a pretty tiring day. Oh, and one more thing for all those World Cup watchers before I end—Italy won the World Cup!

Alan Detton
Drummondville

Monday - July 10, 2006

A Poem For the Day

by Alan Detton

Oh what a fabulous day of freedom and joy that has come to us during this amazing tour,
It's now been about three weeks into our voyage and we're having feelings some may have never had before.

Today was a day that came when some of us really needed some time to recoup,
While others long for solitude and maybe a little space away from the rest in our group,

Our bodies grow weary and our muscles feel fatigued, tired, and sore,
Perhaps that's due in part to taking so many stairs to get back up to the third floor.

For today's adventures we visited the Ancient Village Quebecois d'Antan,
and all received a vision of the wonderful past of Canadian Woman and Man.

We saw donuts being made, harnesses of leather being cured, and old churches made of wood stone,
We walked along dusty paths that held wagons and horses for those who called this place home.

Whether the people in this village claimed to be doctors, printers, or husbands and wives,
None would admit to having anything else that they did with their lives.

To them this was home, so daily they baked bread, sewed cloth and played the penny whistle,
All the while denying inventions like a bus, an airplane, or even a nuclear missile.

The town made us all think of our own heritage held dear in the town of Nauvoo,
And the hardships that many in our world have had to go through.

Often we take for granted the opportunity to take a picture, drive a car, and have good food to eat,
And we don't recall often enough the path it took to make comfortable shoes for our feet.

The day continued at a leisurely pace for those of us not in the band,
but for our skillful musicians no rest was to be had because their talent was in high demand.

To the Folktheque we traveled for their two hour show of music and fun,
With guest performers of Lyndsey Willis and Benjamin Watson.

Lyndsey joined the band with some mad skills at sawing on the fiddle using Russell's bow,
While Ben played the guitar, waltzed with Matilda, and yodeled while a tappin' his toe.

The tent erupted in cheer as the band played its closing notes with their guest singers,
And none would have known they'd played long enough to give mere mortals bloody fingers.

A few other events of note did also take place on this glorious day of peace and rest,
I can't get it all down in this brief history but to sum it up in a few lines, I'll do my best.

Ben, Scotty, and Ashley were about to walk home, but instead traded a pin and a smile for a ride in a
car,
While Michelle danced with a drunken man and only understood "Texas Two-step, Dancing, and Bar."

Justin bought some raisin bread and Lyndsey & Russell a buckwheat cake in the shape of an oil
soaked pie,
And we all found out, thanks to that, why Susanna Dear came around the hill with a tear in her eye.

Many sat around and watched the Mexicans performing on the main stage later that night,
While Alan and Josh watched Superman beat up a French Lex Luther in a difficult fight.

Jamon caught a Butterfly, the band girls waded in the stream, and Marie and Summer learned a new
dance,
Alan, Jeff, and Josh shared a great laugh about useless pictures, throwing donuts, and poked fun at
romance.

But perhaps the greatest shock of all that day came to our beautiful friend Lindsay O, who got denied when she asked a nice old man to stand by her and take a phot-o.

It was a great day and I think we all appreciated the time we had to rest ourselves and to have quality time to spend,
Because sadly enough in just one more week our time together will inevitably come to an end.

Relations with the other teams continue to get better while we spend more time with them during a meal or at a show,
Which is great because these friendships and relations sometimes take a little time to grow.

What an amazing time we've been able to have during this European and Canadian tour,
And I only wish that it leaves the rest of you loving it and longing as I do for more.

Nate Hansen
Drummondville

Tuesday - July 11, 2006

This day surely was one of the most memorable and interactive days with the people of Drummondville. Beginning with a Folkoteque show, we were all encouraged through each dance as we looked forward to the standing ovations we were then becoming so accustomed to.

After Southern, the audience and Nate (dressed in the southern colonel garb) were surprised to find out from Ed that since the south lost the civil war, and Nate led the south, that meant that Nate “was a loser.” For the rest of the day and week, Nate was known as the “loser.” FUNNY ED!

Lucnica followed our show with their hat dance competition in which many of the guys on our team were more than happy to jump into. Alan, Rustin, Viddy, Adam, Quincy, Scotty’ and Adam were the last seven. Adam finally won with flawless hat taking and replacing movement and got tossed up in the air by the Slovakian men.

This night was the parade of all parades. Getting on site early to settle the band onto their float at 6:00pm, we entertained ourselves with card games and little children speaking non-sense French until 8:00pm when we finally got moving along the route.

During the THREE hour parade we learned many things:

- 1) Parades are still long even when there is no train stopping the parade
- 2) Chontal and Monique, little girls at heart, love looking beautiful in Southern dresses
- 3) Eddie needs new skids on his shoes
(revealed when he literally kicked his feet out from underneath him)
- 4) Dave needs to learn to how to hold overly excited, drunk ladies on their feet
- 5) Crystal was meant to be a float queen—to wave at all the cute kids

We were amazed of the record high estimated, attendance number of 89,000 people in attendance—especially with the knowledge that the city itself has only 60,000 people.

After the parade, we returned to the school to enjoy some yummy Quebecois pizza. The cheese was delicious and the pepperoni was so thick. Ed made everyone shower before they could have pizza.

Alicia Ingalls says, “The guys and ‘Slish’ had an amazing game of water basketball. Of course Slish’s team won because she’s amazing at basketball (at least in the water her short height doesn’t hinder her as much).

Lindsay Griffin
Drummondville

Wednesday - July 12, 2006

This morning ended up being a late morning for most of the group. Everyone took the opportunity to sleep in after last night’s festivities. That is everyone except the leaders and Nate and Stacey. This morning they went to the Cultural Center to attend a meeting with the Mayor and all of the other dance groups at the festival. Nate and Stacey were dressed in Southern costumes to represent the rest of the dancers. During this meeting, gifts were exchanged and the past 25 years were reviewed through pictures to celebrate the festival’s 25th anniversary.

At 1:00pm, we all got together to have our day’s meeting to go over announcements and show line-ups. At 1:45pm we caught the bus to get to our 2:30pm show at the Folkoteque. During this performance we alternated numbers with China.

In our first set we performed *Journey* and *Southern Reflections*. Our second set consisted of *Texas Fandango*, *Polka Quadrille*, and *Elkridge Clog*.. The audience was packed and their response was great, especially to the Elkridge acapella.

After the show, most of the group went back to the school, but the fandango boys and Adam, Jeff, Russ, and Lindsay from the band stayed behind because at 5:45 they did a live television performance for “Radio Canada” during the news. They performed Fandango and Hambone over and over again in the background while the newscasters were interviewing the director of Mondial and the Mayor. We initially thought that we were just going to perform one number, but once we got to the end of the song, they kept giving us the sign to keep going. So the band kept playing and the dancers kept dancing until they told us to stop. I think we ended up doing Fandango twice and Hambone three times all in a row. This television station covers all the Eastern township which includes Sheerbrooke. Our guide, Monique, informed us that this show would be broadcast all across Canada.

Later in the evening, back at the school, the Nova Scotia band set up their sound to perform for the dance party because it was going to be their last evening here at the festival. Our band decided to go up and jam with them also. Ed, Ben, and John also came up on stage to perform a bit. While this was going on at the school, some of the group stayed at the festival and watched Columbia and Japan. The Columbia performed their “poster dance,”—the picture of the dance on the festival advertisement.

Bethany Rawcliffe
Quebec City

Thursday - July 13, 2006

Today we woke up early to leave for our excursion to Quebec City. It was a nice change of pace to be able to site-see a little and not spend all day at the Festival.

The bus stopped off at some lovely waterfalls on the Chaudiere River near Quebec City. We walked down a large set of wooden stairs through some woods to a suspension bridge. The boys got a big kick out of making it swing and rock, and making the girls scream. (Thomas screamed a little too!). Most

of the group also walked down to the river bank, closer to the falls. The rocks were really jagged and it looked like there had been an earthquake there. Some couples (Brittany and Jon included) took cute pictures on the “kissing rock” and others (well, just Elise) fell into the river. The falls were gorgeous and the cold spray felt wonderful on our sweat-soaked bodies. We walked up over 300 stairs back to the top—feel the burn!

We then reloaded the bus and drove into Quebec City to stop for lunch. The festival provided us with box lunches of tuna and egg sandwiches, our favorite peach juice, and yummy cookies. We then rode the bus around the city and saw the old port and some of the more modern areas. The finally bus dropped us off by the beautiful Chateau Frontenac in the upper city and we were given a couple of hours to roam around on our own. Most of us walked around the shops and pretty streets overlooking the St. Lawrence River. We were able to go down a large set of stairs to the lower city. Some visited Quartier Petit Champlain (the oldest business district in North America) and hunted for souvenirs in the many unique boutiques that line the street. Churches such as Notre-Dame-des-Victoires, the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, and The Chappelle des Ursulines were visited and explored. Some were rather disappointed with the clean kept crypt at the Notre Dame de Quebec- they expected rotting bones to fly out at them or something.

We also saw some incredible street performers near the Monument de la Foi in Place D’Armes, and near the Champlain Monument. They juggled fire balls, breathed fire, and played some great music. We then met the bus to leave (some did not make it on time and were left while the bus circled the city to come back) and traveled back to Drummondville.

We had dinner at the cafeteria and then most of the group went to the park to see the evening shows. The band had a rehearsal for the closing ceremonies so they were not able to go.

We saw the big show on the Grand Place that had a “love and passion” theme. Included were singers Lynda Thalie (an Algerian singer from Quebec who liked to shake her hips and had belly dancers by her side) and Jean-Francois Breau (a singer/guitarist who made the girls, particularly Megan Leavitt, swoon). The modern dancers, Spain, India, Slovakia, and Columbia danced numbers in between the singers.

Many of our group had some fun backstage learning Mackinaw dance steps, Slovakian lifts, and Colombian lifts. There was also the usual discoteque dance back at the school for all to attend. Thus ended our lovely free-day.

Eddie Cha
Drummondville

Friday - July 14, 2006

Four days until we go back to Utah ... everyone is excited at the thought. Our bodies are getting a little tired. Some people are starting to give up their breakfast for more sleep.

Unfortunately we began our day with a Pioneer rehearsal at 9am. In thinking back, it was a good rehearsal, but it seemed like many people were tired. After finishing up on our “first” rehearsal for the day, four couples were selected and sent to another rehearsal for the finale.

We met as a group at 11am. Josh directed us in a French song that we were told that we are going to sing during the closing ceremony. We learned it, but it was funny when Josh told us how the song

doesn't really translate right. Then we were freed for 45 minutes to enjoy another greatly prepared Canadian lunch. We then had our "second" rehearsal for the day at 1 pm. Ed wanted to make a few more changes and "tweeks" in the new Pioneer choreography. Afterwards we learned a flag dance from Bethany for the finale of the evening show.

Our first show was at Restos Park at 4 pm. The line up included *Journey, Oh! Susanna* (for animation), and *Running Sets* with hambone. It was a quick show and a lot of people loved watching us and enjoyed our animation. One funny story about this show is that Justin almost planted his face during hambone.

Our second show was on the main stage with France and India. We did *Southern Reflections, Texas Fandango, Running Sets*, and *Last Night*. We had a great audience and they enjoyed it very much. It probably was one of the best shows that we performed at this festival. A funny story is that during the flag dance (finale), we ended up with so many people from our group that we couldn't fit everyone well on the stage. So when we were going around each other we had no space. Some of us had to jump over each other or not make the next position. Jamon was the first in line for this dance and he forgot some parts of the dance. I mean, when the girls go forward and guys go backward, only the people who go forward were supposed to raise the flag. But Jamon raised his flag every single time and everyone just started laughing. And then he forgot to kneel down when he was supposed to. So he was the only guy standing up for the kneeling part. Anyway—the finale turned out to be a bit miserable, but fun.

(Director's Note: You can say that again!!!)

Lastly, every team had been asked to create a painting that would be in auction. Nate was asked to take charge and be responsible for our painting. And now, because it is due tomorrow, many people stayed up late tonight trying to help him finish. It is turning out really nice and it has been fun to see it develop.

**Adam Marriott
Drummondville**

Saturday - July 15, 2006

We started off the day with an inspiring thought from Melanie who shared something to the extent of "You can't start over at the beginning, but you can start today to begin a new ending."

As we are rounding the end of the festival we were given the opportunity to do a full international show in the Folkotheque (which was voted by our team as the best place to perform) along with a short Irish and Elkridge show in a near-by cultural center. Although we all appreciated the soothing, humid air of the Marie Rivier High School, we quickly adjusted to the only building in Drummondville with air conditioning (at least as far as we could tell), and sprawled out in the coldest room in the cultural center. Many of us were a little rusty on our international numbers, but after a brief practice we were prepared to perform on a professional stage with good lighting. Of course our Irish number was accepted with a standing ovation.

We then speedily bused over to the main stage where we were given 10 minutes of glory in our *Texas Fandango* and *Southern Reflections* outfits. We were most excited about the evening show where we would dance 90 minutes of American and International mixed. Truly the crowd couldn't have clapped louder or screamed more unless they were on the front row of a World Cup soccer championship game with only a few minutes left and the score tied.

We started the show by demonstrating how the USA team does the local French Canadian dance, “Attache La Bottine”. During Josh Lamb’s solo he heard the familiar sound of the bones Ed frequently plays. To his astonishment, an old, rickety man had crept up on stage and seemed to be doing a gypsy dance while cracking his hand bones to the rhythm and continued on with the extra accompaniment.

The energy in the tent was ecstatic and the people were glued to the dances. Every seat was filled and the masses were lined up outside the tent stretching just to get a glimpse of the dances. The main male dancer from India stayed specifically to see our Bhangra dance and complimented our team saying that he enjoyed it and that we had performed it well. The women wowed the Romanians and Mek stirred the crowd to their feet almost instantly after finishing. “Encore, encore, encore!” was what we heard after our finale, Irish.

We stayed and talked to some of the audience and heard that many had come just to see one or two dances, but couldn’t pull themselves from our stage because we were so captivating. They loved our smiles and one audience member told Ben Watson and Adam Marriott, “Your team has definitely been one of the best here at the festival.”

Exhausted and soaking with sweat we packed our boxes just in time for an amazing fireworks show synchronized with exciting music. Colors and shapes some of us had never seen burst throughout the air and cracked booms that thrilled our “inners.”

Upon arrival at the school we enjoyed Canadian cooked (and quite puny) hot-dogs along with dancing with the other groups outside on the front patio. It was a day full of three superb shows, refreshing international dances, crazy crowds, and fantastic fireworks; a great day on tour.

Russell Wulfenstein
Drummondville

Sunday - July 16, 2006

In addition to being the last full day of tour, today was also the last day of the festival. Early in the day, some of the groups had already left and the rest of us were making final preparations.

Sunday mornings are always nice, but today was something special. We had free time for a while, which some of us spent reading and enjoying our surroundings. Later, at 10:30am, we gathered outside on the grass for a sacrament service. Britney and Jon Wood shared heartfelt messages about touching lives and taking our tour experiences with us.

In the evening, the band performed the “Closing Ceremony Marathon Medley of Death” (so named by Elise Andelin). The medley served as the music for the opening of the closing ceremony, in which four couples from each group performed a 64 count segment of one of their dances. While the composition was musically sound and surprisingly entertaining for a 12 minute number, I can’t deny that some of the music seriously clashed with choreography.

Here are a few of my favorite moments:

- China dancing to Salt Creek
- Burundi staying on stage for an extra 14 counts (the band politely played one measure over and over until they got off the stage)
- Slovakia really trying hard to find the beat (they entered after Burundi had finally left and were welcomed by a mild disaster on the part of the band)

- The lovely “Calliope House” leading into the hard and driving “David’s Jig” for the cute little Grandma solo.

Well, following that fiasco, our team performed a lively section of *Journey* and concluded with the A capella from *Elkridge Clog*. As always, our dancers were a hit!

During the evening performances on the main stage, PAC members frequented the crowd in search of the Rawcliffes. The matter was apparently urgent, and no one knew of their whereabouts. The word on the street was that their camera had been found – in the hands of a woman who was less than anxious to return the item to anyone but the Rawcliffes. After a good ten minutes or more, the Rawcliffes finally appeared and verified that it was their camera (this wasn’t hard considering the name “Rawcliffe” was printed on the case.) The woman reluctantly returned the camera, but asked that Thomas would email her the pictures she had taken with it.

Near the end of the evening performance, we all gathered back stage where we were given candles. Soon, we were moving toward the stage with our candles lit and found ourselves facing thousands of audience members, who seemed enchanted by the sight. We then sang a song in French (or rather, some people sang the song while the rest of us mouthed the words) about love and peace.

As we faced the crowd, I couldn’t help but wonder what it was that could make so many people attend a series of folk dance performances, and why such things aren’t more popular in the United States. I don’t claim to know the answer, but I left our final show knowing that our hard work had been sincerely appreciated.

As the crowd dispersed, many of our dancers could be seen on the projector screens where footage of many of the events of the festival was playing.

Josh Lamb

Drummondville to Provo, Utah

Monday - July 17, 2006

Traveling Home

We didn’t get much sleep last night. Whether packing or saying goodbye to the many friends made over the last ten days, it was a late night for most of the team.

Some members of the group were given bracelets from the Colombians and one of them explained to Matt Neal the symbolism of the colors. The yellow stripe is for pride, the blue is for the ocean, and the red is for the blood heritage of the people. While with the Columbians, Rustin, Justin, Quincy, and Alan had a good missionary experience with the director, Suleima. She didn’t know anything about the church and it was a great experience for all of them to be able to talk about it. The Mexican group left at about 3:00 am and some of the group stayed up to say goodbye to them. Despite the late night, we had to wake up early to get ready to depart home.

Most people got up around 6:00 am in order to have time to shower and throw last minute things together before setting their bags out into the hall and heading down to breakfast. Volunteers from the festival were kind enough to carry our bags down the three floors and out to the bus. This was no small task considering we had around 100 bags and most weighed 50 lbs or more.

We quickly ate breakfast at 7:15am and it was already hot enough in the cafeteria that we were sweating while we ate. We met at the bus at 7:45am and the moment we stepped on we were hit by a cool blast of air from the air conditioning. It felt so good!

Before we left we said goodbye to our guides Monique and Chantal. We gave them gifts including our picture, a BYU book, a T-shirt, and many hugs. They were so great to us the whole time and we're going to miss them.

The bus left at about 8:00am to take us back to the Montreal airport. It took a little over an hour to get there and then it was just the usual airport routine. We waited in a long line to check in. There was more concern about bag weights so we found some scales to make sure we were okay. There was also some worry about making sure no personal items were in the costume boxes.

In the end, checking in went very smoothly. One funny part of the airport though was one of the security officers. She came through the line telling us with some nice attitude and sass to make sure everything was in order and ready. Then she said she was just playing and that she went to BYU and we had a good laugh. She was really cool.

The plane left Montreal at 12:45 and we arrived without incident in Atlanta at about 3:30pm. We had a couple hours in Atlanta so we ate and hung out. While at the terminal we ran into a missionary going to the MTC. He was one of the translators that helped us out while we were in Latvia. It was fun to see him again—small world! We also talked with some members who had been on a vacation to Italy and were coming home. It's interesting that no matter where you are, if you are heading towards Salt Lake City, you will most likely run into a number of members and missionaries.

We left Atlanta at 5:45pm. When we got on the plane the pilot came onto the intercom and announced us. He described who we were and jokingly explained that even though we may look like flight attendants, we weren't. He told everyone where we had been and what we had been doing. It was really neat and those sitting by other people had a fun chance to talk to them more because they had a lot of questions.

We arrived in SLC at 8:00pm to dry, 100 degree air and the open arms of many spouses. The married ones were so anxious to get off the plane and run to their spouses. It was a very happy moment for all of them. Stacey's husband, Markus, had a funny sign which read "Stacey, Please come back to me, I'm sorry!" It was really funny.

There must have been some problems with the baggage carousels because half a dozen flights were all on the same carousel and the crowds were huge and the carousel was packed full of bags. We spoke to one of the baggage people and explained our situation and they decided to have our bags come to the "odd size" doors. We were able to get all our bags after that without incident. After we got our bags, we loaded onto the bus and drove back to Provo.

We were all exhausted after so much travel and it was sure nice to sleep in our own beds again.

Alicia Ingalls
Provo

Tuesday - June 18, 2006

Welcome back to America and hopefully a little sleep. Well, we weren't together very much as a team today, but if my day was anything representative of the rest of the team, then hopefully people got to

get some sleep by sleeping in for awhile that morning. David Woolsey (Viddy) and I also spent a ridiculous amount of hours laundering our costumes and all of our tour clothes. I know that several people went to help get the costume closet ready for costume turn in the next day.

Ed called a rehearsal for the boys at 6:00 pm where he worked them hard on Calusarii and Hopak trick steps—wake up call boys—it’s time to get ready for the Alumni show on Thursday. The rehearsal lasted about an hour and a half to two hours and the boys were exhausted by the end.

But, alas, they were not tired enough to forget about “Pirates of the Caribbean 2: Dead Man’s Chest.” An email was sent out to gather up as many land lubbers of the PAC team as possible to go sail the high seas and embark on the pirate movie watching the adventures at around 22:00 hours that evening. Viddy and I had already gone to see it that morning.

So, it was a day to get ready for the last couple of days of tour—to get some sleep, have reunions with loved ones, and to wake up our bodies to the repertoire (i.e. trick steps) to be put on display for the Alumni Reunion on Thursday night.

Megan Keffer
Provo

Wednesday - July 19, 2006

Today we had the morning free to finish up costumes. We all met around 3:00pm to turn in costumes. Everything ran smoothly for the most part. Thanks to Scotty for organizing things and Summer for keeping the girls in line. There was one surprise with Bethany’s costumes. Apparently she thinks the Appalachian costumes look better in pink. Personally I think it adds a little flare.

After we turned everything in we took a break for supper and then all met at the De Jong for a rehearsal for the Jubilee. We worked on Pioneer with Kathleen and continued to improve everything. We also had to make a few adjustments because Marie would not be performing with us. For those who don’t remember why, she had mono. Kudos to Summer for doing the women’s Indian and then jumping right back into Bhangra. We also ran through Russian for the first time, in what seemed like years. We finished up around 9:30 or 10:00 pm and all went home to get rest for the next day of rehearsals and festivities.

Vickie Austin
BYU: 50th Jubilee Reunion

Thursday - July 20, 2006

Today was the beginning of the Big Reunion. The first event of the three day affair was a family picnic in the park. The festivities began around 11 am at Veterans Park in Provo. The students came as representatives of the current generation of dancers. They also assisted the alumni with games and activities for the children so that former dancers and musicians could freely visit with one another.

Several former bands from the past performed—Silver City Pink, Lincoln Highway and other great musicians from our folk bands through the years. Rocky Mountain Express also performed throughout the afternoon. Greg and Maria Tucker were in charge of the entertainment for the afternoon. It was great fun seeing many “old” folk dancers from the past come together in the park. Those who wanted could also take advantage of the Provo city swimming facilities on this hot afternoon.

At 2:00 pm we all gathered in front of the old Women's Gym on University Avenue and 5th North for a group photo. This is the place where the first groups of folk dancers rehearsed—where it all began.

The evening was filled with an awesome performance by this year's group. The group definitely showed their expertise. The folk dancer-filled hall was mesmerized and thrilled by the students as they recognized styles of dance they had once performed and wished they could still do. One highlight was a video montage of Hopak through the years. You could hear parents proudly proclaim to their children—that's me in that photo! The show ended with a thunderous applause and all felt gratified to have been part of this illustrious group.

Summer and others did a magnificent job of filling in for an ailing Marie, who we missed not having in our final concert.

David Woolsey

BYU: 50th Jubilee Reunion

Friday - July 21, 2006

This morning started out early...and by early we mean 8:00 am. This felt extra early because of the show we did the previous night. Unfortunately, we found out that while we were told to be at the Harmon Building by 8:00 am, we didn't really have to be there until 9. Most of us took the time to sleep, return bags and blazers to PAM, or read scriptures.

When 9am finally rolled around, the families of the alumni showed up in preparation for a few hours of workshop dances. They and their families would learn "rec night" dances for the extra fun we would have that evening. Many of the PAC members would stay and dance with all the kids and parents and just have an all-around good time. Some of the smaller children grew tired of dancing and so many of the PAC girls set up a room in the Harmon building where they showed movies, played games, and did other thing to entertain the kids.

Those dancers, band members, and technicians who weren't there were doing laundry in preparation for the final costume turn-in, practicing for the band jam session, or cleaning up the deJong and burning DVD's for the alumni. The workshops ended around noon and we all went our separate ways until the ravioli dinner at Melissa's parent's house.

Director's Note: During the afternoon there were workshops held in the more advanced areas of Indian, Clogging, and advanced recreational dances. The alumni came to this without their small children and had a blast dancing. They were tired, but happy.

The ravioli dinner was excellent! Melissa's mother is a wonder in the kitchen and made the best ravioli that several of us had ever eaten. There was also tasty French bread, salad, several different kinds of soda, and wonderful brownies for dessert. Not only was the food delicious, but Melissa's mother made enough to feed a small army and she wasn't about to let us all go without two or three helpings each. Most of the folk dancers came so the company was as good as the food. Some of us jumped on the trampoline, swung in the deck swing, or sat around on the comfortable lawn furniture.

We left after the meal to head over to the Harmon building to prepare for the alumni parties and recreational dance night. There were, however, a few of us that stayed at Melissa's house watched some bloopers and deleted scenes. Those of us that stayed had a good laugh for about an hour before we went and joined in the dancing.

The evening was a whole lot of fun. Živio, a Balkan band from Salt Lake City, played most of our favorite dances. The alumni seemed a little hesitant at first to start dancing, but after a while, most of them went out on the dance floor with a little coaxing from PAC members. And many of their children got right into the thick of things.

It must have been fun because we all kept dancing until almost 11 pm. This was one of the last activities of the reunion, so many of the alumni exchanged stories, tears, and heartfelt goodbyes. All in all, it was one of the most fun days of the week.

Ed Austin, Director
Final Thoughts

Saturday - July 22, 2006

This week has brought a flood of emotions as those of us who have just experienced a wonderful summer tour are coming to the end of our time together ... and on the other hand, folk dance alumni have gathered to BYU for their 50th reunion.

Over 300 alumni were in attendance this morning at the final event of the reunion—a banquet honoring all those who have contributed so much to the program over the year, including Mary Bee Jensen.

Some of the highlights included remarks from past dean of the college, Clayne Jensen, a historical videos produced by Josh Probert, and surprise drop-in visit and song by Janie Thompson. Of course the most important part of the event was the visiting that continued from the previous two days. Brent and Marie Lewis, reunion committee chairs, and their committee did such an incredible job with this event. People will be talking about it for years. And some of the extra's that resulted from all the effort include:

- 1) A website that will continue to archive historical materials and update alumni with current information.
- 2) A book entitled, Reflections, Fifty Years of Folk Dance, Brigham Young University, 1956-2006.
- 3) The beginning of a system for emailing alumni.
- 4) The historical video which includes interviews with faculty and students.

This brings me to the second set of emotions that have built up over the past month. First of all, during the reunion, the performing Arts Company helped to host each event and you were all stellar in the way you carried though with your tasks. I appreciate so much the way in which each person followed through with each assignment. And you truly “wowed” the alumni with your music and dance during the reunion performance.

I have been proud of this team the entire year. But the best compliment I can give to each of you is to say that I noticed a sincere love develop in many of you for the people of the Baltic States. I believe most every person in this group understood their opportunities to serve as we performed throughout these countries: Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Canada. And I truly felt that spirit of service throughout the tour.

And we as a team were so very blessed with—increased love for one another, incredible new friends from a variety of countries, once in a lifetime opportunities to see new places and experience new

things, and an outpouring of love through gifts of the spirit and the grace of our Savior, even Jesus Christ.

I am so glad that I had this time to spend with each of you. Thank you for who you are and what you are willing to do in the service of others.

Why the Long Face? (Horse jokes that are actually funny)

Original: So a horse walks into a bar and orders a drink and the bartender says, "Sure, but first, why the long face?"

But if the bartender was He would say...

Scientist: Certainly, but first, why the elongated nasal and oral cavity?

Thomas Rawcliffe: What has four shoes, eats hay, and has a sorry long face?

Spanish: Por Supuesto, pero porque tienes una cara tan larga?

Australian: Struth me gumboots, cobba! Yous gots heaps of nose on that face, mate!

Thomas Rawcliffe telling a joke: Chuck Norris doesn't serve horses at his bar, he round-house kicks them to their long face.

Mr. Ed: Sure nice to see a familiar face in here.

Kronk: Did you see that horses face today? Talk about long!

Yoda: But first, a question I have! Why the long face have you?

Ghetto bartender from the Bronx: Yo, why you be trippin on yo' upper lip? Don't get all up in my grill. Back that thang up!

Adam Marriott: You know John Adams had a horse just like you?

Little Red Riding Hood: My! What a long face you have!

Anthony Dunster: I can photo shop out that long face for you!

Accountant: First, like blind people and persons over 65, you can get an extra tax deduction for that long face. Not to mention wear and tear on your shoes plus the deduction for feed and stable fees.

Mormom Missionary: Will you tell me why the long face?

Gene Ushinsky: You know in the history of Latvia, horses were well known and proud of their long faces.

Ed Austin: Despite your long face, the show must go on!

Ron: Ice, ice, and more ice that face to make the swelling go down.

Adam Smith: It is the will of the invisible hand that your face is long. You have a monopoly on long faces.

Bethany Rawcliffe: Wah Wah Wah! Your face looks funny!

Summer Tour Participants 2005-06

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