CHRONICLE

INTERIM
IN
SERVICE-LEARNING
TO
ZIMBABWE 1990

Interim In Service Learning: Zimbabwe 1990

Group Chronicle

by

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This journal was written so that whoever chooses to read it, whether a team-member, friend or parent, will be informed and highly entertained at the same time. Ask the author and he will tell you that being informative and entertaining at one time is as easy as patting your head and rubbing your stomach at the same time, but all the same, hopefully you will find he made a passable attempt.

This journal will be slightly different from the past two service-interim journals. Those who read this probably know already that a massive amount of planning goes into these trips, beginning as long before the departure date as nine months. Team members met together for the first time back in the spring of 1989, the officers earlier, in March of 1989. Then followed the Long Hot Summer of fundraising. You can also read about the weekly fall meetings, fundraisers, and the infamous S.I.F.A.T. You've probably heard about the "Farm" in Langly, Virginia, where the C.I.A. trains its operative agents in covert skills. S.I.F.A.T is a similar type of operations center for those in the missionary world. And of course, the TRIP itself will be descibed in fantastic, breathtaking detail. The story is about to unfold, so find a comfortable spot, and team-members will want to scan with a High-Lighter so that they can make their name stand out every time they are mentioned in the journal.

Way back at the end of January, 1989 the Service-learning team to Bolivia had just returned home from three weeks in South America. Dr. Stewart Jackson, Director of the Service-Learning

program at BSC, had barely hopped off the plane and reclaimed his baggage before the wheels were set in motion for the January 1990 Interim. Plans had already been made to return to Old Mutare Mission in Zimbabwe, Africa, where a trip had been made in January 1988. In early February of 1989, applications were made available on campus for those possibly interested in leadership positions on the Zimbabwe trip.

Lo and Behold, the Officer team was a subtle blend of old and new faces, thanks to the skill and intrepidity of Dr. Jackson. Chris Morgan, Bolivia Veteran, was chosen as Senior Project Officer which is a position that oversees every aspect of the trip, and is mostly responsible for being able to trouble shoot over any type of problem related to the trip or the team members. Ed Larson, Bolivia Veteran, was chosen as Senior Construction Officer. Ed was responsible for writing to Old Mutare to see what projects they might have for the team in January, and then to co-ordinate our goals in the States with the Mission's need (procuring tools, etc.). He was also to be foreman on the actual worksite. Molly Robertson, Bolivia Veteran, became the Senior Worship Officer. Molly's job was to direct team members in the religious aspects of the trip, as well as promote friendship between team members before the trip. This part of the trip was important to the success of the team, because when a group of thirty Americans goes to a small African village 7,000 miles from home, and each person has to depend and trust the rest of the team, if there is tension between certain people, or even dislike, the situation could be disastorous

to the team's mission. Thanks to Molly and the blend of personalities on the team, the team came together when it needed to. Suzanne Cloyd, TenderFoot, was the Team Secretary. Suzanne kept the team informed over the summer of upcoming projects, and also kept the records of our meetings. Amy Hunter, TenderFoot, became Senior Medical Officer. Like Ed, Amy was the boss of one team on the trip, the medical team. She had to get the scoop on the medical needs of Old Mutare, and likewise co-ordinate the supplies and medical tream here at home before we left. Her duties continued, to a greater extent, when the team got to Old Mutare. Last but not least (certainly not shortest), Wesley Edwards, TenderFoot, was the Transportation Officer. Wesley's job, in a nutshell: "Get us there and back." He co-ordinated the travel arrangements with our travel agent, even when they got crazy just before the departure date. Throught the hassle of flight changes, Wesley remained, as always, Mr. Cool, Calm, and Collected. These officers, along with Stewart and the two faculty advisors, Dr. Diane Brown, Zimbabwe Veteran, and Dr. Doug Waits, TenderFoot, now had before them the fabulous job of team selection.

The Zimbabwe Interim attracted a record number of students to apply for the trip. Each applicant was given an application requiring basic information such as the applicant's year in school, course of study., and G.P.A., and then several essay questions were asked; about the applicant's definition of service, previous service experience, why they felt the need to go on this trip, and other questions which aimed at getting to know the applicant's

feelings about helping others. After weeks of waiting, the news was out, the team had been selected. Eighteen students were picked out of the multitude who applied, and the top ten below the eighteen were placed on a waiting list, in case a team member should drop off the team. The team included: Mellisa Clawson, TenderFoot; David Dill, TenderFoot; Frank Dominick, TenderFoot; John Dunn, Bolivia Veteran; Christian Genetski, TenderFoot; Kristin Harper, TenderFoot; Alice Hsu, TenderFoot; Bailey Leopard, TenderFoot; Kathryn Likis, TenderFoot; Beth Martin, TenderFoot; Katy McLeod, TenderFoot; Melanie Miller, TenderFoor; Jason Moellinger, TenderFoot; Matthew Penfield, TenderFoot; Brant "Scrantley" Phillips, TenderFoot Rhodie; Steffen Pope, TenderFoot; Grover Robinson, TenderFoot; and Leigh Wilson, Bolivia Veteran.

The team met together once before the end of Spring Term, just so that they could look themselves over and so that they would know what to expect over the summer and on intothe fall. At this meeting the team members each meekly introduced themselves to the group, not knowing that by the middle of the coming January, they would be sharing the MOST PERSONAL secrets (more on the MOST PERSONAL secrets later).

Maybe you wonder the reasons why each member chose to apply for the trip, and after being selected, strove to perform their best bothg personally and as a group for the success of our work in Zimbabwe. Each team member had their deepest personal reasons, of course, that only are revealed in their inner souls and can never be revealed to us. But the team did have many discussions, and

there was general aggreement on some points. The most eloquent thought comes from an old friend of this author's family. In speaking of those who do charitable work, he used the Latin phrase "Caritas Christi Urget Nos". In English, it means "The Love of Christ Compells Us." Because we were a Christian group of students, the Love of Christ had compelled us to perform works of charity and mercy both in the U.S. and in the nation of Zimbabwe. Not only does the Love of Christ compell us to help our neighbor, His Love also compells us to become friends with those we don't know or understand. We came to know and become friends with the people of Zimbabwe, more than we had dreamed in the summer months of 1989. We thought beforehand that we knew our goals, or what we hoped to accomplish in Zimbabwe. Later on in this journal it will become clear that what we expected and what we met in Zimbabwe didn't always match up. Our goals weren't Grand or Glorious, we were all fairly humble about our personal abilities. But we did accomplish great works through small tasks. Even when we couldn't work because of lost luggage or weather, we acheived much. Perhaps our most notable accomplishment, however materially small, was our Witness of Presence. Even when we did nothing, yet continued to be with the Zimbabweans, we were witnessing the Love of Christ to our friends by just being there to share our lives, as well as to share their lives. Hopefully what you read above doesn't "give away the story", but it does describe why we went, in so many words.

During the summer, for the most part the team put Zimbabwe on the back-burner, because of summer jobs, vacations, or anxiety

attacks about the coming school year. Occasionally we were reminded, especially when we got the team packets from Suzanne. In each packet was our reading list about southern Africa (which we all read from diligently, as far as we can remember), the purpose of this list was to familiarize ourselves with the politics and literature of the region. Also included was a fact sheet about the trip, and major stats on each player (just kidding). Lastly, there was a letter from Stewart on fundraising, and his cookbook of fundraising ideas. Also over the summer, Beth Martin was made team Treasurer, and John Dunn was made team historian. Otherwise our summer was filled with wonder about the dark contintent.

Indian Summer--what does this bring to the minds of each team member in a service-learning project? Registration, classes, and FRIDAY AFTERNOON MEETINGS!!! Each Friday afternoon, we met together for approximately two hours. The general purpose of the meetings was to keep us in touch and coordinated with the officers. Most meetings also included a presentation about Africa by recognized "experts" on the subject. The most remembered meeting was "Dr. Dan Holliman talks about parasites." For people like Grover and Christian, who got the prize for "Most Paranoid About Africa", this was a particularly nerve-wracking meeting. The team was told, in a nutshell, that everything they did in Zimbabwe, would introduce deadly parasites into their systems (but, here it is April 1990, and, we ain't dead yet!).

Early on into the fall, the team was saddened by a tragic event that happened to one member. Dr. Diane Brown was forced to

leave the team until she recovered. To say that the team was just shocked and upset by the news is an understatement. Dr. Brown as well as Stewart, were looked on for enormous support and encouragement, as well as reassurance simply because they had both been to Zimbabwe, which meant that they had insight as to what we should expect. Therefore the team was confronted with a brief feeling of loss of direction. As well as concern for itself, the team had sympathy for Dr. Brown, and felt disconcerted, because of not understanding why bad things happen to good people. At one meeting each member had something to say about what Diane meant to the team in general, and those team members who knew her through classes or other ways, related their personal fondness for her. As bad as this turn of events seemed at the time, there was a light at the end of the tunnle. The light was Dr. Janies Spencer. She wasn't just picked as a replacement faculty advisor by Diane, she had been asked personally by Diane to take her place, and the team was very happy that Dr. Spencer accepted. Talk about a trio- Stewart, Janie and Uncle Doug! Janie was very well known and liked by those who went to Bolivia, since she was the faculty advisor to that trip. An especially fond memory of her was her waltzing ability, and the team eagerly anticipated mare in Africa.

Two other components of the team meetings were the team-building exercises and individual reports. The team exercises were either games or discussions held to promote a sense of community, which as mentioned above, is extremely crucial to the trip's success. Some of the games we played were, like it or not,

goofy. Some edged on the border of questionable practices, case in -THE MUTUAL BACKRUB. In this exercise, the team got into a circle, and gave each other backrubs. All things beingthe same, the exercises were rewarding, especially when we would just gather for group input, when the progress of each team member as far as getting ready for the trip emotionally or physically was voluntarily discussed. The group reports were especially informative and amusing. The team covered every possible item about Zimbabwe or Africa, in with every conceivable slant. They ranged in their delivery from Beth's literature recital from James Michener's Covenant, to Jason's film presentaion of African wildlife, to Alice's art work depicting Impala horns, to Frank and Brant's lengthy diatribe on Cecil Rhodes (no offense, seriously). Everyone did great jobs at presenting their reports, yet there is really no point to talk about each report when there is so much else to talk about (hopefully everyone else understands), so just accept that brief example.

The last event which took place at the meetings was those awful SHOT DAYS. Of course the team needed the shots to survive, but they were just so terrifying and horrendous, or so some thought. The Bolivia team lent to the team, especially those who had never been abroad, the fear, mainly because befor that trip, the Gamma-Globulin shot was given in the posterior. Happily, this time it wasn't, and the shots went smoothly. If only the malaria pills had gone down as smoothly as the shots.

Okay, you've probably wondered about S.I.F.A.T. since you

started reading, so here's the story. This was the first time a service-team from Birmingham-Southern had ventured to SIFAT, located in Wedowee, Alabama. SIFAT is an ancronym for two things, meaning Servants In Faith And Technology, as well as Southern Institute For Appropriate Technology. It is the job of the good folks at SIFAT to prepare church-groups headed to the Third-World about what to expect. It was founded about twenty-five years ago by the Corsons, a couple who had done Methodist Church work in Bolivia, and Mr. Corson is a minister. They felt that training missionaries before traveling to a thrid-world nation rather than learning-by doing once there, is more productive and sensible. SIFAT is located on a huge piece of land, and there are several working projects on the site, such as living quarters and the types of tools realistically useable in poor countries. The two most permanent projects are a Permaculture garden, and a sourghum mill.

The Zimbabwe group went during the weekend of Fall Break, Wednesday October 11-Friday October 13 1989. We gathered Wednesday afternoon in order to get to Wedowee by 7:00 that evening.

Wedowee is located in the middle of nowhere, Alabama. We got to SIFAT late, after dark, around 7pm, due to nutty driving. First we were greeted by Christie, our hostess; an attractive woman a few years older than us, yet several years younger than Stewart. We ate a wholesome dinner of Beef Stew (they eat hardy in Wedowee). After dinner, we sat and talked with Christie some more, then we met Sarah Corson, who co-founded SIFAT with her husband. Sarah related their missionary experiences in Bolivia. Mr. Corson is a Methodist minister, and they spent their years in Bolivia among the poor in the mountains around La Paz. We found her story to be touching, those who had been to Bolivia the year before could relate to her experiences, while those new to mission work were amazed by the "typical" encounters the Corsons experienced. Sarah also explained the reasons for SIFAT, how the Corsons realized that there should be better training stateside for missionaries headed to the third world, mainly because of the totally foreign lifestyles that Americans find themselves faced with in these countries.

After this introduction, Christie gave some comments about the day ahead, then we were escorted to the double-wide trailer which would be our shelter for the night. Community time amongst ourselves followed. In a circle, the group individually related thoughts about SIFAT, the group members, and how our expectations about the trip were shaping into reality, or how they may have gotten onto strange tangents. The general feeling about this weekend

was that it was extremely successful as it shaped community spirit, and also gave us material proof that yes, indeed, we were capable of building something, and no, we would'nt be stumbling around Africa like doe-eyed Dan Quayle Americans who had never seen shovels or hammers in our lives.

The next morning, Stewart woke us in subtle, charming, obnoxious ways, around 6:30 am. At this point, several in the group drew a line--alright, granted, we were headed to the third world--but was this worth getting up before noon?

We ate breakfast in the cafeteria at 7, then met Jim at 8am to begin our work projects. Jim, our "foreman" of sorts, told us his plan for two work groups. One group, which was composed of most of the team, got to cut Cane in the Sorghum field on site, which we would later process into Sorghum syrup. The smaller group (six of us--Bailey, Christian, Grover, John, Katy and Molly.) was put to work in the "Permaculture Garden". The gardeners were told to pull up the sweet potatoes in the garden, after an aborted attempt to terrace another section of garden. The work was light, yet these stout souls were also distracted by mice and huge spiders. The gardening work quickly dispatched, the gardeners were able to help the sorghum workers. Most everyone got to try their hand at the macheti as the stalks were smitten down. The cane was then tranported by truck to the sorghum mill, also on site. The mill was totally manual, the cane was fed slowly into a grinder, driven by two mules named Charlie and Molly no less! This crushed

the stalks into a sweet, green juice which ran down a trough into the boiler. Stewart had had previous experience from his north Georgia days making sorghum, so he led Ed and others as they used a "skimmer" to skim the froth off of the boiling sorghum as it thickened. After this stage, the sorghum was ready to be bottled and sold. After this chore, we broke for lunch, where we were joined by the whole staff and community of SIFAT. During the lunch we were introduced to each other, and the team got to meet Mr. Corson. When lunch ended, there was a community devotional followed by the kitchen clean-up. It was very warm by afternoon, and we had used quite a lot of our stamina, so we were allowed to rest before the next project.

The afternoon project will go down in infamy, because although we accomplished much of the task, we also became quite wet. There is a creek running through the property, and Jim and the other SIFAT men had a plan to build a dam, and use it to create electric power. There had been an earlier attempt washed out by rain, and the debris had to be cleared from the creek bed before we could begin. The dam was constructed by lowering huge nets of chicken wire into the creek, then filling these four foot cages with boulders. Therein was the problem. There were many old boulders scattered down the creek bed left-over from the previous attempt, which could be reused, the only problem being the muddy water and slimy boulders, not to mention the "mudpuppies" or crawfish-like creatures that liked to

live on these boulders. Needless to say, everyone involved became soaked in no time. After this reservoir of slimy boulders was used up, new boulders were brought from a local quarry. Because the creek was in a small valley, and the boulder pile was mostly on the crest of one side, we formed a train to pass the boulders down to the creek. As people made bad aims or threw too hard or too soft, tempers rose. Some team members, remaining nameless, thought it cool to throw the boulders with reckless abandon, playing make-believe football. This was also a stamina-draining project, and when we quit around 4pm, it was about seventy-five percent completed. We trudged back to our trailer for showers, dry clothes and naps. Dinner followed, then we had another meeting with a member of the SIFAT community, an older English woman who had been on missionary work to West Africa, particularly Nigeria, and she also gave us a talk on what to expect, as well as telling us to be sure to respect and follow the native customs.

We could finally retire to ourselves in the trailer. We had some more highly enjoyable group building time, enhanced with music from Stewart, Matthew, Frank and Ed, who passed the guitar around. After this meeting, several of us took a late-night trip into Wedowee in search of cokes, since no carbonated beverages were served at SIFAT. Grover became the butt of a very funny misunderstanding in directions between the two cars that we took (Does "HOTEL LOBBY!!" sound familiar??). Still later, Beth, Stewart, Molly, Kristin and John stayed up to have conversations

about the paranormal and other weird subjects.

The next morning, which was Friday the Thirteenth, we ate our last breakfast, packed and were given a hurried tour of the rest of the SIFAT grounds by Christie. Then we headed back to Birmingham, or home. All in all, the trip was thought to be highly rewarding, the main plus being that we each became closer with our fellow team members.

The other two events of the semester, both for fund-raising, were our band party and LOAFING FOR ZIMBABWE. Since band parties in Simpson Hall are a popular form of recreation on weekends at campus the team was able to get two bands to volunteer their talent for a party that we hosted. At first, we feared a small response, but we drew a fair crowd, and wound up with a pretty good profit. LOAFING FOR ZIMBABWE was the most interesting of our fund-raisers because it entailed actually pressing the flesh with the general public. A few of the cafe ladies were generous to bake several hundred loaves of bread for us, which we then took to churches in groups of ones and twos. At each church, we would introduce ourselves, our mission, and the idea of selling the loaves of bread. Then afterwards we would hit the congregation as they left the church, selling the loaves for ten dollars each. This project, needless to say, raised a good amount of cake for the trip.

After each of the above mentioned events came and went, before we knew it, Christmas break had arrived, and as we went home, we each had thought something like "I

can't believe that in less than a month, I'll be in Africa!"

PART TWO: "IT"

The Zimbabwe team met again during the afternoon of Wednesday, January 3. It was right around lunchtime, and we had pizza waiting for us, but most of us seemed too excited or nervous to eat. Though we didn't know it at the time, in a week, we would be severely regreting having left that pizza behind. During this meeting we discussed once again our last minute plans, our itinerary and heard a few words from Jerry Vandiver, our travel agent. Jerry gave us an overview of the trip-travel arrangements, as well as what to expect at Victoria Falls and Hwange Game Reserve. That Wednesday, we were still intending to travel Delta Airlines to London, but in retrospect we now know that was not to be. We then talked about that evening's commissioning service. It is an annual event in service-learning to have a send-off chapel service with parents and friends within a day or two of departure. The rest of the afternoon was spent packing or shopping at the last minute for supplies.

That evening we gathered in the chapel surrounded by friends, family and the curious. The program consisted of brief readings and songs, as well as a center-piece on the altar, made up of various "essentials" for the trip that each member provided. Rev. Karl Stegall from Montgomery gave us

each a blessing for the trip and our health and success. Afterwards, Dean and Mrs. Penfield invited everyone down to their house for dinner. That night everyone went to sleep realizing that in forty-eight hours we would be on a plane flying over someplace other than Alabama.

The next day, Thursday, was our "official" packing day. This packing would involve putting all the team equipment into our duffle bags along with our personal belongings, or at least try to. Although the team had been instructed to leave two-thirds of our baggage empty for team equipment, for some this feat was no more than wishful thinking. Ed and Amy gave all sorts of neat, incredible, bulky stuff to put in the bags--medical and construction supplies. All of these things, needless to say, added up in weight even though we were only allowed so much weight. Lastly, we were invited to take along hymnals--yes, HARD-COVER BOOKS--if we had extra room. Nothing like taking a lot of HARD-COVER BOOKS to Africa, and if you don't believe us, try doing it yourself. The packing job was finished around noon, and after this we were left on our own again, to finish buying supplies (yes, even on the last day, some of us didn't have everything we needed) or enjoy the last liberties of the first world that we would have to do without for the coming month.

Friday began with extreme excitement for some, but others had heard disturbing news the night before, and Friday was about to become a very long, black day for all of us. During that first week of January, some little

freak decided to play a prank with the airlines. Supposedly, and eighteen year-old Irish person had called Delta Airlines to give a bomb threat for all trans-Atlantic Delta flights. CNN reported the news, where we first saw it, early Friday morning, so by 11:00, our scheduled meeting time that morning, we all knew the news, although those who heard the news late understandably thought that their friends and roommates were joking, until the rest of the team confirmed. At first we were irritated by the delay caused by searching for another airline, and had not yet begun to fear that we could not leave on the planned date. Then we were confronted by the first in a seemingly never-ending series of hurdles over the next two days. Our travel agent, Jerry had gone on ahead to London before the threat, to confirm our reservations from London on Air Zimbabwe, and with the change in time zones, obviously she had not heard the news. So, we had to wait until what we thought a suitable hour for her to be back in her hotel room, in order to let her know that our itinerary suddenly had some serious flaws. We waited. And waited. No Jerry. "Where is she?" And waited. "What could she be doing in London at 3:00am? (half a million things.) Stewart and Dr. Berte consulted, and it was decided that in the interest of safety, there could be no way to fly Delta. That being the case, Stewart, Doug, Janie and Dr. Penfield all manned phones trying to get other atlantic flights that would get us to London in order to meet our Air Zimbabwe flight. Meeting that flight seemed crucial because of the

infrequency of Air Zimbabwe flights to or from London, and we could have easily wound up waiting until mid-week for the next flight to Zimbabwe. Dejected, the group broke up to eat and give a chance for the phone fiends to get other flights lined up. We were caught off-guard, with news to get to the airport "ASAP!!!", because Stewart and the others thought there was an alternate route suddenly open.

The weather was awful. Enroute to the airport, many of us traveled in the midst of heavy rains, and had to go around several collisions on I-59. Well, we got there, but still had no affirmative travel plans. By this time, parents who had originally intended to see us off were now at the airport to offer support and advice. Thoughts about Jerry were becoming ugly, as we still had no word. At the height of this alternate-plan frenzy, one grand plan had been concocted. According to this plan, we would be divided into several small groups, later narrowed down to four, finally to two. These groups would travel by different airlines, to different international gates around the continental U.S.A. From there each group would fly through different routes around the world, to London, each supposedly with time left to meet that insane Air Zimbabwe flight. In later revelations, Chris told us that the adult advisors had tracked paths to London over every continent but Antarctica. Looking back, everyone involved can probably be thankful we didn't resort to that plan, simply because of all the things that could go wrong, with the new multitude of connections each group would be reponsible for

making on time. It would also have left an incredible burden on Stewart's shoulders until he could see us all safely in London. Late Friday afternoon, it was obvious that we would not get any flights out of country that day, so it was decided to return to campus, where the Penfields would once again provide dinner, and where we could once again try to get in touch with Jerry, our only hope, since we began to doubt whether or not we would catch the Air Zimbabwe flight.

How low was our morale? No one who was not involved can possibly imagine. We tried our best to keep the doomsday thinking of the trip cancellation out of our minds, but it WAS a possibility, wasn't it? Compared to the night before, the dinner at the Penfield's was somber, it was as if we were gathered to pay tribute to a slain comrade rather than just waiting for Jerry to get back to the hotel (WHERE IS SHE?). Dr. and Mrs. Penfield did their best to lighten the mood, but we were stubborn--nothing could make us happy--or so it seemed. After dinner, we gathered in the Penfield's living room for a strategy/therapy meeting. Someone raised the fateful question to Dean Penfield: "Is it possible that the Interim will be cancelled, and that we may go somwhere else." To the Dean's credit, since he knew no more than the rest of us, he emphatically stated that we were STILL going to Zimbabwe, even if we got there a few days late. Then Stewart and Matthew played a few tunes on the guitar. We left with some last ditch plans. The adult advisors and

Chris would keep vigil most of the night waiting for Jerry's call. Stewart had finally left a page at the Delta desk in London, in the hope that when she went to the airport to meet us at our supposed arrival of 6:00am London time, she would call Stewart, which would be midnight Birmingham time. If she did call, and would be able to make sudden plans, we would be called at in our rooms and given immediate instructions to evacuate. If we did not get a call, we would congregate at 9:00am in the Student Center. Although most of the team stayed up late, no call came before 9:00am.

The team warily went to the Student Center, much as a condemned prisoner approaches the gas chamber, afraid of the inevitable bad news. BUT IT WAS GOOD NEWS! Good ol' Jerry HAD gotten the page at Gatewick airport, and immediately she went to work. Her first plan was to fly us to Athens, Greece from the U.S., to meet another Air Zimbabwe flight. Her second plan was even better, no, miraculous. The London Air Zimbabwe flight had been delayed because of the Delta delay and other airline delays, so we got booked from Birmingham to London on USAir, going through Charlotte, N.C., in time to meet the plane to Zimbabwe. Our morale sky-rocketed to the place it should have been all along at this new development.

As happy as larks, we once again went to the Birmingham airport. We were actually happy to be just flying, even if we never got past Charlotte. We were gleeful as we filled out our USAir Frequent-Flyer

Applications, and checked our duffle bags in, knowing that those HARD-COVER BOOKS would stay out of our way until Zimbabwe. But we were also suddenly nervous, faced with the sad job of hugging and kissing our parents good-bye for a month. Briefly we were hit once again by the magnitude that traveling to a third world country brings, when your small group of Americans will probably be the only Americans you will see for that month. Finally we got the boarding call for the flight to Charlotte, and our feet left the solid soil of Alabama. We were happy just to be sitting in the airplane, even if we were still on the tarmac in Birmingham. When our jet left the ground we shared the feeling that we really didn't need a plane to fly. Yes, there we were on the USAir flight, enjoying our peanuts and cokes, halfway to Charlotte, when the plane suddenly did things that were so nutty, we wondered if we'd touch ground before Charlotte, albeit while enduring a considerably bumpier landing. We hit some pretty heavy turbulence, enough of a force to make the pilots play with the engine throttles. Christian had a portable tape-recorder with him, and was casually making an entry when we hit the trubulence, so he caught our suprise and alarm forever on tape. Obviously, we landed safely in Charlotte, only to meet our second stumbling block--being "Smurfed".

Being "Smurfed" meant that we had to play the game that all air-travelers love, being put on stand-by. When Jerry had made the reservations, our seats to London were supposedly "reserved" because of our transfer from Delta.

Once in Charlotte, we were to learn that the good folks at USAir used the term "reserved" loosely in our case. It seems that we weren't the only group that had last minute bookings on this flight to London. A group of girls from the Salem Academy were also "Smurfs", but their group had checked in before ours. Half the solution was eventually solved, because sixteen of our group were allowed seats. That left fourteen of us, including Drs. Spencer and Waits to sit nervously at the gate. Thanks to the fiery negotiation of Dr. Spencer and the iron will of Dr. Waits with the gentlefolk of USAir, after another delay, all fourteen of us got on board. We were able to get on the plane because passengers already in their seats gave them up for a cash incentive, a booking on a flight to London the next morning, and a free night in a hotel. To get the final person off the plane for a seat, the cash offer had gone up to eight hundred dollars.

We were pleasantly suprised at the planes USAir uses for overseas travel. Before we saw the Boeing 767, we wondered if we would be flying in an old transport. We settled back to an exciting airline dinner, then watched the in-flight movie "Parenthood", or else the male members of the team spent the flight watching the girls from Salem Academy move around the cabin. One interesting conversation took place between John and two other passengers. These passengers were a black couple returning home to London from Jamaica, where they had been missionaries for six weeks, so naturally there was

something in common to talk about. But these two were a bit more evangelical than us. The women, after looking around the cabin at our group, looked twice at Katy, then turned to John with an extraordinary gleam in her eye. She told John that a couple years ago, she had a vision, in which Katy appeared, although she swore to have never seen Katy before. When told this story, Katy and Stewart could not believe that John had not made up this story, but he swore that not even he could dream such a fantastic tale.

After sleeping or dozing, the cabin lights came on and we were served breakfast, before arriving in London. A few of us were concerned because it was nearing 5:30am on this Sunday morning, London time, and we had to meet the Zimbabwe flight at 6:00am-it would be a tight squeeze. Once again, Dr. Spencer and Jerry Vandiver came to the rescue, arranging with our flight attendants to call ahead to arrange special transportation to the Air Zimbabwe gate at Gatewick airport. When our plane landed, our group was among the first people off the plane, and we got onto a British Airways Bus which would race us through customs, then to our waiting plane. The only snag was when we ran through security, the metal detector, and the officers decided that they had to hand-check our picture film. They surely regreted that rule when they saw that we must have been carrying at least 150 roles of film. We were put on the same bus afterwards, then raced to the waiting Boeing 707 on the tarmac. Total on-ground time in London: about 30 minutes--we felt like real jet-setters, hopping from

continent to contintent! So far so good, right? Au contrare mon frere. What about our checked bags during all this? Well, as you have guessed, it was physically immpossible to get our bags off the USAir plane first, then run those through secutiry, then loaded onto the Air Zimbabwe Boeing within 30 minutes. At that time, we were slightly worried, but not too concerned, because we were told that the bags would certainly be on the next Air Zimbabwe flight out of the country, that night at 6:00pm London time.

We received our first taste of the third world when we climbed up the boarding stairs and entered the cabin of the vintage jetliner. The crew and passengers didn't appear very delighted that we had kept them waiting. Because this was a morning flight, the attendants had begun to warm "something" up for breakfast. To Americans who think that airline food in the states is bad, the smell from this breakfast was quite an eye-opening experience. The plane itself was an experience. The FAA would pull its hair out if Eastern was still flying a plane this old, certainly one of the first series of 707s produced, in the early 1960s. The interior was a gut-wrenching orange and brown, and most of the cabin floor was drenched in something liquid, hopefully water and not fuel or hydraulic fluid. The cabin crew obviously chose not to follow the passenger-relations philosophy of "we love to fly and it shows". They were a bit grumpier than we were. The cabin was fairly empty before our group filled it up. There were no more than a

few black passengers, the rest being wealthy white "Rhodies". We were amused at the usual pre-flight instructions, which were delivered in Shona first, since Shona is the largest native language still used in Zimbabwe. That first morning, Shona sounded like: "mbwe sgehr chuh bogogogi tutifruiti." Translation: "The air-sickness bags are located in the seat ahead of you." As dawn broke over the night sky, we rose into the air over Europe.

This flight lasted 10 hours, and was a great test of patience and holding your nerves in check, simply because there is nothing to do for that period of time--no movies or in-flight stereo. We found out what breakfast was. A yellow mass drenched in some sort of cooking juice, called an omelete. Not bad-tasting, just bizarre-looking and funny-smelling. By the looks of this plane some of us guessed that Air Zimbabwe was not one of the more financially huge world airlines, especially after a comment that one older passenger made to David and Brant in passing. As they were talking, the woman said that it was a shame that we weren't on the other plane, because it was much nicer. All of Europe was overcast, so there wasn't anything to see until we crossed the Mediterranean Sea, which took about an hour. It was an exciting moment for most of the passengers when our pilot pointed out that we were approaching the northern coast of Africa, somewhere near Algeria. As we looked down on the desert, we looked to the left, trying to distinguish Libya from the desert,

as if that were possible, from 36,000 feet up. The next interesting sight was the mighty Sahara Desert, which took us four hours to cross over. There is a faintly surrealistic feeling, certainly a feeling of otherworldliness, as you cross this mysterious, age-old piece of geography at 560 mph. Looking down you felt that you might catch a glimpse of a camel-driven caravan, maybe even Lawrence of Arabia, but there was nothing below to hint that we were still in the twentieth century. Man has probably not yet set foot on some of the sections of desert that we were peering at.

This being Sunday January 7, it was also Dr. Waits' fiftieth birthday. We surprised him with birthday cards, but on the plane the attendants overheard that it was his birthday, so they gave him a bottle of champagne. He shared it with the group, and eventually the attendants gave him another bottle, as we had taken care of the first. Why were they so generous with champagne? Dr. Waits got to pay for it later, of course. Sometime in the afternoon, we were served lunch, which was a tray of sandwiches, made of stale bread. As the day wore on, and the air onboard grew dry and old, naturally some of us began to feel de-hydrated and uncomfortable. But our lovely attendants were quite stingy with beverages for the most part, or else they just forgot to bring the beverage. Finally, the day ended, and as dusk fell over the sky, we came closer to Zimbabwe. Dinner was served, and wine with it. Unfortunately to dry palates, the meal-beef of some sort and wine tasted

strangely metallic. As we began our descent into Zimbabwe, Brant, David and Jason, drawn by their curiosity and the open cockpit door, went up front, where the flight crew were happy to talk a while with them. The captain invited one person to stay in the cockpit to observe the landing, so the trio flipped a coin, and Brant won the toss to stay in the cockpit. Our three heros were amazed at the laid-back attitude of the flight crew, the captain had his shoes off, and the co-pilot, navigator, and flight-engineer were also relaxed. During final approach, a curious phenomina occured in the cabin. Condensation, perhaps from the air-conditioning, began to drip from the ceiling of the cabin onto our heads. The landing was a bit bumpy, but the only one to grab the airsickness bag was Bailey. Then, before it fully dawned on us, we realized that we were--there--!

Atlanta's Hartsfield International Airport will never prepare the American traveler for what to expect in third-world airport, even Harare International, in the capital of Zimbabwe. Although the Harare airport is more developed than some other third-world airports, it still takes one by surprise in that it lacks what we consider essential components of the modern airport. It was dark when we de-planed at Harare, the first thing noticeable was the huge throng of people on the airport's observation balcony.The second things noticed were the soldiers near the terminal building, armed of course. You also find out that the terminal is not sound-proofed or air-conditioned, so the noise and smell can be disarming, and will contribute to making you a bit more nervous. The Zimbabwean customs agents are intimidating, but at least they speak English, so you are somewhat aware of what they want from you. Luckily we went through painlessly, without any arrests or shootings, and we gathered just past customs to find out about our luggage and transportation to Old Mutare.

We were quickly met by Dr. Rhodes Chimonyo who would prove of invaluable assisance with transportation and retreiving our lost luggage. Dr. Chimonyo had rented a bus to take us to Old Mutare. The driver told us that since he wasn't sure when our flight was supposed to arrive in Harare exactly, he had been in the airport waiting since 6:00am Zimtime. While Stewart, Doug and Janie checked about our bags and making sure they got to us safely, the rest of us waited around. Those on the team who hadn't experienced a third-world airport were a bit timid and stood closely together, but

the Bolivian veterans felt right at home, and quickly sat or laid down on the dirty floor, and the others quickly followed, letting other passengers move around us. We spent three hours at the airport, playing cards or talking, or just trying to absorb all that we'd done so far over the past forty-eight hours. We did have two legal forms to complete upon entering the country. Since Zimbabwe is trying to keep inflation down, the government keeps tight control on the currency supply entering or leaving the country, and visitors must fill out a green card, and keep it with them for the duration of the stay. This green card keeps exact track of different currencies you bring into the country, and how much you exchange into Zimbabwe dollars (hereafter referred to as Zim or Zimbeans), if you take more than 150 zim out of Zimbabwe, you can get into a whole heap of troubles. We also filled out a declaration form, telling in detail what we each brought into the country, and its approximate value. Around 10:00pm z-time, which is eight hours ahead of CST, we boarded the bus for Old Mutare.

The night air was fairly chilly, and during the four hour bus ride, we were a bit uncomfortable. Also, for the whole trip the driver kept the interior bus lights on, making dozing a bit uncomfortable, but we were exhausted from travel, so some time was spent napping. Unfortunately, most of our first night in Africa was viewed from a speeding bus, but we did get one break. About halfway through the drive, the driver pulled over to the

side of the highway so that we could stretch our legs. We were next to an open field, the moon was full, and we could see a good distance. As we stood there, a train, the cars brightly lit, made its way across this field. It was pulled by a steam engine, and if you had seen the movie Out Of Africa, or African Queen, then this would be the typical night scene that you would expect to see. Once the train made its slow way past, we were again surrounded by absolute silence, until we loaded back on the bus to finish our journey. We continued to sleep, listen to our Walkmans, read, play cards, or have Leigh read our romance horoscopes until we arrived on the mission two hours later. We pulled onto the mission grounds at 2:15am z-time, Monday morning (6:15pm CST, Sunday night).

Our bus pulled up to what we came to know and love as Dodge Hall, the dormitory that the males would be living in. Dr. Nhiwatiwa got on the bus to greet us warmly. Dr. Nhiawatiwa is the Station Director at Old Mutare Mission, as well as the chaplain for Hartzelle High School. He told us how happy they were that we had finally arrived, and that he would do anything possible to make our stay more comfortable. After that, the male team got their stuff off the bus, and Dr. Nhiawatiwa rode with the girls to their home, a girl's dormitory, about half a mile away. At first glance, these dorms were a sorry sight to behold. Although much, much better than the lodgings in Bolivia, the dirt and grime was still highly noticeable. Ironically the BSC group that was at Old Mutare in 1988 painted the very dorm

that we would be spending the next two weeks in. The walls had wall-spiders, the floors had roaches, the mattresses were wafer-thin and dirty. Since we had no bed linens with us, we did our best to cover the mattresses with towels, jackets, or carry-on bags, for the important buffer between the grimy mattress and (after two days travel) our grimy bodies. It would be very soon when, after an afternoon of work, we would think nothing of collapsing on the bare mattress, and be extremely glad to have the mattress barely between us and the steel springs. Needless to say, after our travels, we quickly slipped into unconsciousness as soon as we got our bodies on the beds. That night we got a preview of the kind of man Rev. Nhiawatiwa would be for the duration of our stay. Since it was chilly, and we had no bedclothes or blankets, he and another man stayed up and roamed the mission at 5:00am in order to round up blankets for all of us.

Later on the morning of the 8th of January, at 8:00am, we re-grouped next door at the mess hall for breakfast, and our plans for the day. We met Dr. Rosalie Johnson, originally from Georgia, who is the mission doctor, and who has kept the hospital and surrounding back-country clinics running for many years. We also were introduced to our cooks, who became our friends, and Karin, a German woman who had been appointed to be our "food-director", although she admitted to us that she would just be going with the flow, since that was not her regular job. Her husband is a teacher at Hartzelle High. Our first Zimbabwe meal

consisted of tea, bread with marmalade, jams and peanut butter. Grover was highly disturbed that there were no napkins to wipe the "PB&J " off our hands. This consisted, generally, of every breakfast, although later on we would have cereal. Zimbabwean peanut butter, cereal and mayonaise is not as refined as the American products, so we often brought the peanut butter that we had brought in our bags to the table to share amongst ourselves.

After breakfast, Stewart informed us that this was to be an orientation/rest day. Dr. Johnson took the medical team-Alice, Amy, David, Jason, Melanie, Melissa, Stephan and Suzanne, to the hospital to show them around, and tell them basically what her plans were for their help. Stewart took the construction team on a tour of the mission. He showed us the school buildings, which house about 1,000 students who would arrive for another school session in several days, while we were still there. We then saw the mission church, where services are held, and where we would probably have the opportunity to attend church.

The rest of the day, everyone spent their time roaming the mission, writing in journals, or resting. As a group, the construction team decided to walk to the hospital, to see what the medteam would be into. The hospital was down a dirt road, about a half-mile from Dodge Hall. Along the way, mission workers would stop their work, and greet us very warmly. We had been taught that to say good-morning in Shona, what we would have to say was "Mangwanani." What we had failed to be told was that this greeting is just the

begining of a drawn out conversation in Shona which we had not yet learned. So, we would stand with a dumb smile on our faces, as the person we were saying good morning to responded and as a feeble response, we would say nice to meet you, causing them to laugh at us for being caught by their Shona. After a while though, we were taught what to say in response at any time of the day, which they appreciated for our attempt to learn their traditions.

As we came around a bend in the road to finally reach the hospital compound, we heard the nerve-shattering screaming of dozens of small voices. The building it came from was the "Baby-Fold", or orphanage, a place we would soon become either very fond of or very wary of, depending on how much we could tolerate these kids. But on this first day, we went to the hospital building. On the outside, this main building, with many wings looks nothing like our hospitals, the only sign announcing this as a hospital is a small, weather-beaten one in the middle of the front yard, although you might get an idea of the purpose of the building by noticing the never-diminishing group of around twenty family members or waiting patients, who are under trees in the shade around the building until they can be attended to. The first thing your senses notice upon entering the building is the smell--slight traces of medicine, but mostly an overwhelming odor of disease and sickness which lingers in the building since there seems to be poor ventilation. At one time it was explained to some of us that this hospital vaguely

resembles a rural American hospital of the 1920s or 1930s, with technology from the same period. Though backwards to us, the nurses, patients, and Dr. Johnson are quite proud of the operation they have.

Dr. Johnson gave the construction team a quick tour of the hospital, as well as introducing us to several nurses, especially Matron Mackenzie Mapenzi, a local legend. The examination rooms were small, and the corridors filled with waiting patients. Certainly, private rooms are unheard of, because they would be unpractical naturally because of the lack of space. Instead, there is a male ward and a female ward, with many beds. An interesting custom in this hospital is the amount of a role the family plays in the welfare of the patients. Rather than paying for hospital food, which in most cases is unaffordable, the families always bring three meals a day to the patients, and hover around the bed, all day and some even at night. The next area we toured was the wing for expectant mothers and mothers who had just delivered. A house behind the hospital was pointed out to us, where, Dr. Johnson explained, because of the hardship involved for women to travel the difficult distance from their rural dwellings to the hospital during labor, they would come weeks in advance, and live in the house until they came into labor.

Next we saw the pediatric ward, which was the saddest part of the hospital. Although the young children, for the most part were comfortable, we also looked into the room where the premature babies are kept, on very primitive

incubators, though the machines are still fairly reliable. But, there still remains a high infant-mortality rate. This completed our tour of the hospital proper, so we decided to visit the baby fold, across the yard. The decision to go was steeped in good intentions until we saw the scene of near-anarchy that our visit caused. When we entered the main courtyard, where the children are kept most of the day, the children ran to us, with upraised arms, screaming, in Shona, "Doctor! Doctor!" They called us doctor, the nurses told us, because the only white person that they had seen in their lives was Dr. Johnson, so they assumed that because we were also white, that we must also be doctors. The children were funny and cute that first day, but the team soon realized that these kids could probably wear out a young, healthy person quickly over a period of a few weeks. After this first visit at the baby fold, some of us had had enough of the kids, but a few, like Suzanne and Melissa, often helped at the baby fold, and got to know the nurses there pretty well too. We all came back, though, especially when painting the baby fold became one of the construction team's jobs. After this visit, we walked back to Dodge Hall for lunch. Although we had not started work, we were near-famished because of the hiking we had done around the mission, so needless to say our appetites were well-fueled. Later on, our stomachs were surprised by what lunch had to offer. The cooks had prepared a "cool" lunch for us, since the day had grown quite warm. The lunch was of very odd

sandwiches, at least to Americans. There was bread, mayo, bell-peppers, tomatoes, onions, and carrots, but no lunch meat of any kind, so we were resigned to enjoy our vegetable sandwiches with water or tea and coffee.

We also found that the Zimbabweans still followed the British tradition of mid-morning tea, so we would try to meet at 11:00am for tea and biscuits in the dining-hall, though the medical team would usually stay at the hospital, where they would take tea with the nurses. This was a fun custom to observe every day, though the construction team had to discontinue it soon after work began, because of the time we would burn getting to and from the dining hall.

After lunch on the first day, everyone took naps for a while, then some who felt brave or curious walked around the mission again, and out onto the mission farm, where the 1988 team spent their time. Some, like Frank, found greater challenges to conquer. Directly behind the male dormitory, there is a mountain, which Stewart tried to have us believe was inhabited by mean oranguatans (of course, his hallucination was quickly proven false). So several team members, following Frank's call to glory, spent a couple of days trying to scale this great peak, and most were successful.

As the afternoon came to a close, those who had towels braved the showers, or else those who wanted to shower borrowed towels. A lucky few had a fresh change of clothes or underwear in their carry-on bags, but most of us wore the same grimy clothes that we'd been wearing since Friday.

Dinner was once again sandwiches, but we also enjoyed dessert. Some days, Karin would make fresh ice-cream, which was a difficult process, since the ingredients for making ice-cream are not widely available in Zimbabwe. She would usually make an enormous amount, about five gallons, and then demand that we eat the five gallons of ice-cream in one sitting, since it was so impractical to store.

Every night we were at Old Mutare, we would alternate the evening activities between community meetings, amongst ourselves or we would have African nights, when a member of the mission would come and speak to us on various aspects of Zimbabwe life in general, mission life particularly. The first night was a community night, so we gathered in the dining hall at 7:30pm. Our lack of clothes, as well as feeling useless since we were also without tools to work on the mission, had managed to put our morales in a new deep valley, as we had been traveling from peaks to valleys since the Wednesday before. We were all understandably testy. Each of these meetings usually began with Stewart playing the guitar to lead our singing, although a couple of nights David and Kathryn would lead us in a song or dance that they new from their careers as camp counselors. Our singing the first night (and most nights) was out of tune, so we did a pretty fair job of frightening the cooks. Our discussion began with the baggage problem. Stewart and one randomly picked lucky person (Chris) would drive the four hours back to Harare to transport our bags back to Old Mutare. Stewart then related a bit of interesting trivia

about our boarding-master (the man who met us the morning before with Dr. Nhiwatiwa), who claimed to have a sixth-sense about our arrival. He didn't go to sleep because he had a feeling that we were on our way from Harare, even though it was early in the morning, and although he was tired, he decided to stay up a bit longer, and sure enough, a few minutes later we drove up at 2:15. Our boarding-master was asked if he had any premonitions about our bags, and he promised us good luck. Beth, as a member of the food committee, briefed us on the food arrangements for our stay. We would eat foods normal to our American palates, as well as eating a native dish once a week. Ed then said that it would probably be Wednesday before the construction team began work. Molly then led us in directed meditation to try to sort out our feelings about the quick events of the past five days, and we made some comments about our feelings, then we broke up around 9:00pm and continued to sit and talk, listen to someone play the guitar, or else go to sleep since Chris had warned us about the importance of rising on time (thanks dad).

We woke up Tuesday, looking forward to crawling into our by now, themselves, crawling clothes, since our pants could now stand up on their own. Stewart and Chris left for Harare at 6:00am, since our luggage would supposedly have arrived from London by now. The plan was that if our bags were waiting, we wouldn't hear from our couriers, and could assume that they were on the way back, and would get back Tuesday evening. If we received a dreaded phone-call

from them (there was one phone at the mission store), we would know that they were forced to stay overnight until the next flight came in. The rest of us spent the day like we did Monday, exploring the mission, and the medical team went back to the hospital. Although without medicine or instruments, the med team got to participate in some interesting activities. Melissa and Kathryn participated in a baby delivery, which didn't appeal very well to Melissa who passed out briefly. Amy got direct hands-on experience, when she pulled a man's tooth out, with an instrument resembling an enormous pair of pliers. Melanie spent some time with the nurses explaining the nursing profession in the US, and how it compares to Zimbabwe, as Melanie is a Nursing Major in real life. The construction team was once again at loose-ends generally. For the most part, people again walked around the area, or went to the store to buy cokes or Sparlettas, a really hideous soft-drink native to Zimbabwe. The friendliness of the people was once again welcomed and appreciated by us, even though at times we didn't understand what they were saying. Some of the construction team went back to the baby fold to help bathe the kids and wash clothes, as well as play with them. Washing the kids wasn't a very well-liked job, and those who held the kids when playing with them weren't overjoyed when the tykes would answer nature's call on our already dirty clothing. Some, like Uncle Doug, were on the verge of a nervous break-down by the end of the day. Although we did suffer dearly at the hands of these kids,

we felt badly for the young nurses, who put up with this day in and day out all year.

As the day drew to a close, and there was as yet no call from Harare, we became delirious by the idea that we may have clean clothes by day's end. But, as we should have expected, we heard that we had yet another day to wait. We learned that the flights from London did not have our luggage, only because our bags were mishandled in London, and were now in West Germany, awaiting a flight to Zimbabwe. In a way we felt jealous that our bags were now more widely traveled than us. This meant that our happy travelers would be forced to spend the night in Harare (later we would learn that their humble lodgings were just in a five-star hotel), and wait again at the airport on Wednesday.

For the rest of us, Tueday night was African night, so we had the honor of Dr. Nhiwatiwa speaking to us. He told us the history of Old Mutare Mission, and the continuing goals of the Methodist Church and this mission in Zimbabwe. The mission was founded in 1897 by a missionary from Illinois State, Bishop Hasawa. He had a desire to explore the possibilities of setting up the church in this part of the African continent. The Bishop got to meet the famous Cecil Rhodes, and to ask permission to establish a mission in the area. Before this visit, Rhodes had already been considering Old Umtali (later Old Mutare), as a likely church site. October 8, 1899 was the official opening. The vision of the mission was that all people from Africa

would come, and the gospel would spread through Africa from Old Umtali. Dr. Nhiawatiwa then explained the mission structure. There is a High School enrolling 1,000 students with a staff of thirty, which is an operating unit of its own. A Primary School is also on site, with a staff of 24-26. The hospital and mission farm, which is the provider of food to the school and mission, complete the structure. The heads of each unit, Dr. Nhiwatiwa and two elected members of the mission committee consult to make decisions.

United Methodist involvement in Zimbabwe--there is another mission and a girl's school fifty kilometers south of Mutare. Raowa High School is sixty kilometers north, with 2,000 students. Another smaller mission, a Teacher's College and a smaller high school are a part of the United Methodist network in Zimbabwe.

The education system in Zimbabwe is based on the British model. Exams are given to weed out students who aren't performing at the expected level. Nhiwatiwa was a victim of this cut system himself in Form One (equivalent to elementary grades), so he came to the mission and was employed on the farm to feed pigs, sheep, etc. He did his reading and studying at night, and successfully passed through the school. This took place between 1967-1970. In 1970 he went to college, but still had not achieved the college admittance level. He reached this level in 1971 and studied to become a minister. In 1974 he received an offer to go to the United States through the Mennonites, but did not yet go. In 1975 he was appointed Associate

Minister at Old Mutare until August of that year. In 1976 he studied at an Illinois college in the US and finished graduate studies at Illinois State. He returned to Old Mutare in 1984, and now is the Headmaster, head minister, head of the History Department and full-time minister.

Dr. Nhiwatiwa then told us more about the mission. He pointed out its closeness to Mozambique, less than ten kilometers, and hinted at the delicacy of the political situation in the area, as the border often moves back and forth, and in the past Mozambiqan refugees, as well as the terrorist Renamo group in Mozambique would come onto the mission and surrounding areas for food. This area of Zimbabwe, the Eastern Highlands, is the food-basket for the country, as the soil is rich and beneficial.

After this introduction to the area, Dr. Nhiwatiwa was glad to field some of our questions. Someone asked where the idea for the African University sight at Old Mutare came from. He told us that there was a desire to create a United-Methodist run element of higher education, which Africa lacks. In 1987 a delegation visited Zimbabwe as well as other african nations in order to decide its location. Ground-breaking was scheduled to begin on April 1, 1990. Next he was asked how students get to Hartzelle High School. Applications arrive in large numbers, so admission is highly selective. The goal is to educate students morally, intellectually, physically and spiritually. On the question of where the orphans come from, he replied that some are neglected, some have mothers

who died, or sometimes families are financially unable to raise an infant, so they stay at the orphanage until they reach an older age. Then there are those whose mothers are mentally unstable. After the children reach a certain age, if not adopted they are turned over to the welfare department, where an attempt is made to teach them work skills so that they can support themselves.

Some final comments were made by Dr. Nhiwatiwa. He said that once a student at the high school completes Form Six (eqivalent to second-year college), they may be able to attend a University in the US, but only on an individualized basis. He spoke briefly on religions in the area, saying that there is not much traditional religion, because there is a conflict of faith among some people. There are many sects rising, and many different patterns of worship. In the areas surrounding the mission, the families have been educated in the Gospel. The Roman Catholic Church is very strong, and some other faiths are the Lutheran and Presbyterian churches. Before he left us, Dr. Nhiwatiwa told us that our visit is a unique experience at the mission, that not many groups do come to the mission. He said that the people of the mission cannot tell in so many ways how we are helping. Just to come, to visit the people, to join together for a time means a lot.

Wednesday, we woke up not with Charles in Charge, rather Sonya, Uncle Doug and Janie. The day was filled with more of the same, at least for half a day. Whilst dreams of sugarplums and clean clothes danced in our heads,

we followed the routine that seemed our second nature by now. The medical team went back to the hospital, while the construction team once again took part in the baby fold although some of the team went with Ed to look at the field we would be working in once we got our tools, and discussed the project with Mr. DeWolfe, a native of Massachusetts who teaches English and Shop at the High School, as well as coaching basketball. He was our ex officio worksite foreman, and he explained the plan to dig ditches in this field as well as installing the water pipes and faucets. Except for breaking for tea, the morning was uneventful. But then, what did our weary eyes behold? Not eight tiny Reindeer, but Stewart and Chris, and most importantly, THE LUGGAGE!!! We could not have been much happier if someone had given us each a million dollars than we were when we recognized our bags as they came off the truck. It was so amazing to see clean clothes, that we were'nt quite sure what to do with them exactly, but we soon learned. After we sorted the medicines and tools as well as the HARDCOVER BOOKS, we eagerly dove into all that freshness in our clothing. Some people couldn't wait to get into Dodge Hall to put on the clothes, so they stood outside and changed shirts, yet luckily every one remained in control enough so that there was no danger of any team member streaking.

Well, once everyone showered, changed into clean clothes and ate lunch, we realized that it was now time to do real work, what we came to do. The medical team took their medicine to the hospital, and thus began the tedious

job of sorting it out and counting pills--a task which took several days to complete. The construction team, meanwhile, moved enforce to the battlefield. Actually, it wasn't until we were in the fields performing hard labor that we really felt how hot the weather in Africa is. Christian put it eloquently when he observed,"It's not hot--it's AFRICA HOT!" This became a common phrase used for the duration of the trip.

The first afternoon on the field was, to put it gently, a comedy of errors, though it was not our fault, it just took awhile for us to "get into the groove". Mr. DeWolfe stayed with us a little while to get us going, and while he was there watching and helping to carve out the long ditches for the pipe, we did just fine, once he left, we just kind of fell apart. Luckily, there was a team of men working an a field not far from ours who came to our rescue. Our tools were kind of awkward, comprised of hoes, picks and shovels to carve the ditch two feet deep and about six inches wide. For a while these men watched us with amusement, making comments between themselves in Shona, then laughing, but finally they came over partly out of curiousity, but also to try to help. In broken English, they told us and showed us how inefficiently we were doing the job. We surely must have looked like the stereo-typical Americans who do no manual labor outside of picking the afternoon newspaper up off of the driveway. What we had been doing slowly and sloppily, taking several breaks, they came over and did in no time at all. They alone

managed to dig about fifteen yards of ditch, in a straight line. Their only problem lay in not understanding the necessary depth of the ditches. It was actually a mistake on our parts, if that can be believed. We didn't realize that Zimbabwe, as is most of the civilized world, is on the metric scale. So, they asked how deep the ditch should be, and we would tell them, two feet. They would look at each other with amusement, then say "Two feet? Ok, two feet.", and then just keep on digging. It took us a while, but eventually we realized that these men had absolutely no idea what two feet is. Since we did not remember what the metric equivalent is, we just watched helplessly, although through body language we explained the depth, because some of us would stand with one leg in the ditch, then point to their knees, which were approximately two feet above their feet.

Finally, the afternoon grew late, and we were able to leave the field, exhausted after only a half-day of work, to go and take showers and rest before dinner. The physical strain of work the first day for the construction team, and the tediousness of sorting pills that the medical team felt managed to put us all into fairly grumpy moods. We learned that the man whose truck we hired to transport all the bags to Old Mutare had charged an arm and a leg, much more than Stewart intended to spend, so he and Chris were put off about that. Wedneday evening's community meeting, in the girl's dorm, was not full of community, unfortunately. Some off-the-cuff remarks were made that

were not really directed at anyone in particular, but somehow, team members took comments personally and there was a bad mood in the room. Instead of feeling uplifted and relaxed after this one meeting, which was the intent of the meeting, we left the meeting, and stood in small groups, brooding. Luckily, this was just a one-night occurance, and apologies were made to smooth ruffled feathers, so everyone remained friends, and did not become warriors out for vengeance, except for a particularly brutal and ugly game of Spades played between Janie, Chris, John and Grover. The point of meeting at the girl's dorm was that they (the females) had been whining about HOW FAR they had to walk to come to and from the dining hall, whereas the males lived next door. But the night brought out the men in some guys, and the chicken in others. After the game, on the way home down a terribly dark dirt road, a bat dive-bombed the guys who stayed behind in the girl's dorm playing Spades, and scared each fairly badly, enough so that they ran a good distance crouched over.

The next morning we woke to begin our first full day of work if we were on the consrtuction team, or else those lucky med-team people went back to the ole grindstone, sorting pills and assisting the nurses or Dr. Johnson. Some people on the medical team each day would go with Dr. Johnson or the ambulance driver, whose name is Mandall Chimanyzo and nurse, into the country around Old Mutare, to visit several clinics. These clinics are small stations located close to people who find it difficult to travel to

the regular hospital. The nurses and Dr. Johnson make frequent visits, trying to visit at least once a week to these places to check on patients, or else to give various series of immunization shots. There is a government-sponsored program to get every citizen immunized against diseases such as Tuberculosis, which is still a serious threat in this and other third world countries. Med team members would go in teams of two or threes in the ambulance, and each medical team member got the chance to go on a clinic run.

David and Jason desribed the events of their clinic run. On their day, they went with a dental assistant and Dr. Johnson. They drove into the bush for about 1 1/2 hours, and along the way were shown the site for the African University, then stopped at an open-air market. David said they knew they were in the boondocks when they started passing thatched-roof huts. Dr. Johnson said that she only made the trip to this clinic once a month. Once there, Dr. Johnson saw patients, while David and Jason filled prescriptions and observed bizarre dental practices. They stayed at the clinic until 1:30pm, then went to see the Methodist church in a nearby township. The church was built by another American group, and the US embassy had provided the money for a water tower. Interestingly, the clinic building, they noticed, was powered by solar energy panels.

Thursday night's dinner was a very infamous event in the life of our group at Old Mutare. Remember that the

cooks had promised a traditional shona meal once a week? Well, this was the night. As we watched the preparations for the meal, and even took part, as when Aunt Janie stirred the sadza, we we highly optimistic that we would be able to enjoy this meal, as we were hungry. In reality, the meal turned out differently. It is a tradition, when eating native meals in Zimbabwe, to eat without any utensils or even napkins--that's right, we ate with our hands. Not so terrible if we were eating hot dogs or burgers, but when the meal is pumpkin leaves, some "variety" of beef, gravy, and a dish with the cornmeal substance of porridge which they charmingly call sadza, dumb Americans can't help but to encounter problems. The beef wasn't difficult to pick up and eat, but the gravy and sadza were not as much fun. Most people just grinned and bared it, but other team folks were unhappy until they saw the good old flash of stainless steel at plate-side or the reassuring white cleanliness of napkins within easy reach. The cooks seemed a bit disappointed that we weren't hysterical with joy about the dinner, but they probably expected such uncouthness from Americans, so they didn't hold grudges. After the dinner, we met for a community meeting, so that we could discuss our plans for the coming weekend, which would be a work break for us. The plan was to get up early Saturday morning, get on a chartered bus, and drive about twenty miles into the Eastern Highlands to see Nyanga National Park, which is known for "World-View", a tremendously high mountain peak with spectacular views. Our

other choice was to travel south, to Vyoompa Park, a preserved pre-historic park, abounding with examples of early botanical wonders which had survived the ages. Uncle Doug was especially excited about Vyooma, but because of logistical problems, the group settled for Nyanga. After this important matter, the meeting broke up, leaving everyone to their own entertainments.

Friday morning began with the threat of rain. If it did indeed rain, there would be bad news for the construction team, as lightning in Zimbabwe is especially dangerous. In our area we were relatively speaking on low ground, but we were still 3,000ft above sea level, and that altitiude is more prone to lightning strikes than the Birmingham region is. So, if it did rain, we'd have to seek immediate shelter. By the time we had arrived in Zimbabwe, there were already thirty-seven fatalities from lightning strikes. Of course, the medical team would remain unaffected, although they probably would have enjoyed a break from work because of rain. On the field, the construction team had settled into an efficient system of work parties, and we were progressingly at a good rate, considering out lack of knowledge and only one and a half days previous work time. Frank and Bailey were the engineers responsible for the placement of the water pipes and spickets. As they set up spots along the line for future spickets, the rest of the construction team took turns shoveling, picking or hoeing the ditches to their uniform length. This was a tedious job, but tiring, as it

involved standing bent over, putting a lot of strain on our pampered, petty, bourgeois backs. And of course, we had our friends in the next field, who would take breaks to observe our progress, as well as teach us Shona, as we tried to teach them good English. Sure enough, about lunch time, the skies grew threatening, and although the rain still seemed a good distance away our friends quickly left their field to go home before the lightning struck, we would have been smart to follow their lead, but we weren't observant enough. We also failed to take into consideration that if we waited until the rain began, we'd have one looong walk home in the rain. When the rain came, it didn't just creep gently upon us, rather, when the rain clouds came over, they immediately dropped buckets of water on us, soaking us in a matter of seconds. In Zimbabwe, the rain never slows down, instead it rains harder and harder until finally, a good while later, it quits as quickly as it began. Sometimes it just comes in waves of soaking rain clouds. By the time we had gathered the tools for the walk home, we were growing gills, then stayed soaked for the 2 1/2 mile walk to Dodge Hall. The rain storm soaked the fields so there was no point in working out there anymore. The rest of the day was spent reading, playing card games, or some went back to the baby fold.

The Africa meeting you might say, was sponsored by the medical team, since Dr. R. Johnson spoke to us. She told us about her experiences at Old Mutare and in Africa. Before she began her talk, she introduced a new missionary in

Zimbabwe from North Carolina. Dr. Johnson told us that Old Mutare was the first medical mission in Zimbabwe, and is called "Jerusalem".

Dr. Gurnee, a Methodist minister, wanted to start a mission in Rhodesia. The local Bishop told him that a doctor was most needed, so Gurnee went bake to England to get his MD, and returned.

When Dr. Johnson came to Rhodesia in 1962, Old Mutare was referred to as a maternity home. The largest medical mission in Zimbabwe is at Nigeri. In the 1960s, district hospitals were classified A, B, C, D, and according to their classification, got the corresponding budget from the government. Since independence, the government has put heavy importance on developing rural areas. Whereas once, the government was the enemy of various church organizations, now the government works closely with each mission.

The Ministry of Finance provides 80% of hospital funding, patients privide 15% and the church gives 5% to the operating budget. The church provides ambulances, operating room equipment, etc. Because of heavy government funding, the mission hospitals do have to follow certain regulations.

Dr. Johnson began to speak on certain medical topics concerning Zimbabwe currently. She said that AIDS came to Zimbabwe in 1986, and all blood in the country has been screened since then. AIDS started in Zaire and Uganda, and moved down the continent. The government and non-government organizations have worked to fight the crisis. In Mutare

itself there is a current counseling group, called FACT which is civilian. In Zimbabwe, it has been the practice for a time, unlike in the US, to consider any sexually active person to be suspect for possible HIV.

Dr. Johnson then told the history of the baby-fold. It started early on, first run by school students, later it was decided to build a building near the hospital. The hospital has fifty beds for inpatients, but often has as many as seventy inpatients. Dr. Johnson received her call to be a missionary doctor when she was a child and attended the Baptist Vacation Bible School in Georgia, and met a Chinese missionary. She became committed to being a missionary at age twelve. She was in Rhodesia from 1962 to 1975, when she and her husband were deported to Zambia, but they returned to Zimbabwe in 1981, after the successful independence revolution.

After the meeting, the girls returned to their dormitory for what they thought would be a peaceful rest before our excursion to Nyanga the next morning, but they were soon caught up in some terrifying events. Around 2:00am, Sonya woke up for some odd reason, to see a man standing over her bed. She screamed, and he fled, whether out the front door or to an upper story window in their dorm, no one is sure exactly. Her scream got everyone excited, and Aunt Janie rounded everyone out of bed for terrible run to the male dorm, not knowing if they were being followed by the intruder(s). When they explained what had happened, after waking the guys up, a few guys grabbed

sticks, stones, and flashlights, and went back to the girl's dorm to search for the intruder(s) or any evidence. None was found, so they returned. Needless to say, the rest of the night was disturbed. The next morning, Dr. Nhiwatiwa, who was perhaps more upset about the previous night than we were, gathered the mission's executive council to meet us at breakfast, to assure us of an investigation into the events, and apprehending of any suspects. The committee did its best under the circumstances, to let us know that precautions would be taken to improve security of the dorms and our belongings while we were not around. They told us that these actions had not been taken when we arrived because the scenario of trouble directed to us was at the time unfathomable, as it was to us.

As a group, we considered cancelling our trip to Nyanga, until our emotions came back under some kind of reason. But, as we discussed within in our group, then with Dr. Nhiwatiwa, we came to the consensus that the best thing to do would be to get away for the day, to put our minds at ease, and Dr. Nhiwatiwa highly encouraged us to continue with our plans. We had earlier invited our cooks to take the day off with us, so they were happy to go traveling with us on the bus, since they had never traveled beyond Mutare. As the bus pulled out of the mission, we knew that we could leave our troubles behind and let the executive committee work on them. The drive was in overcast, and occasionally drizzling rain, but the scenery was still remarkable, the higher into the Highlands we traveled. The layout of Nyanga

was similar to a national park back in the US. There were paved roads through the park leading to various attractions and resorts, and handy directional signs. We first drove to the Rhodes Inn, which we heard was a good place to come back to for afternoon tea. It was here that we saw for the first time, how the other half lives in Zimbabwe, the other half being wealthy white farmers, or people on holiday from England. Because these citizens are uncomfortable with the new form of government in Zimbabwe, they are referred to as "Rhodies", since they long for the glory days of Rhodesia. We couldn't help but notice the cool reception our cooks got, especially from the hotel propieter, so we quickly made our reservations for tea, and left for another park resort to eat lunch. The other resort was more hospitable to us, and we noticed a few black families on vacation, so we felt more at ease. We were overjoyed, because for the first time six days, we could drink water without boiling it first, and the food was totally Americanized, and cooked pretty well. Some of us had a problem restraining our appetites, and became a little bit bloated. After lunch, we had a few minutes to stretch our legs around the resort. When we got back on the bus, we had a decision to make. There were two things to look at, but there wasn't enough time to do both, so we had to make a decision as to whether we wanted to drive up to World View, or to a special crafts market. The groups' decision was split 50/50, and no one could be a swing vote for one or the other, so we decided to do both, and just spend less time at each site. To get to World View, our bus

climbed up a very steep grade, along the edge of the mountain, with a sheer drop off. Yes, this was a one-lane road, and yes, we did meet opposing traffic. But it remains uncertain as to how both the bus and car got by without tumbling over the edge. When we reached the top, we were rewarded with a spectacular view that was certainly worth the hazard of the climb. From our vantage, we felt as though we were viewing the whole world at once. There were other mountains nearby, but ours was the tallest, we were even above some clouds. But remember, dear reader, that we still had to visit the craft fair before tea at 3:30. So Aunt Janie cut short our reveries, and we headed back down the mountainside.

Our only problem was the fact that someone had given us bad directions, so we soon found ourselves headed to no particular place. After driving in circles several kilometers, we finally flagged down another car, which led us to the craft sight--unfortunately, the fair was already closed for the day. So we quickly hurried back to the Rhodes Inn for tea, because it looked like the rains were going to strike once more. For the tea, the management placed us outside, supposedly because the lawn we were on offered a pleasant view, but more probably to keep us motley Americans with our African friends help away from the Europeans and Rhodies, or any other civilized vacationers. As we ate we couldn't help but notice the constant stares we got from the other patrons, so we were quite uncomfortable, though still managed to enjoy our group's comradeship. After the tea we

headed back to Old Mutare, wondering what Dr. Nhiwatiwa would have to say to us about last night's events.

On a better note, today, Saturday January 13 was Brant's 21st birthday. We had a surprise birthday planned for later that night back at the mission, and until then no one went out of their way to recognize Brant in any special fashion, though outwardly he seemed not to notice. During the day, we were all sneakily gathering gag gifts from our bags to give him, we signed his birthday card, and had a special cake baked for him. It was decided that the girl's would also live in Dodge Hall for the duration of our stay for safety, and also since we had enough spare rooms to accomodate them. While we were touring, their belongings had been transferred to Dodge Hall. Dr. Nhiwatiwa told us that in the girl's dorm, broken glass was found, and blood was on one window, leading him to believe that the intruder scaled a wall to the second story, then broke a window to enter. Once again we were assured that a suspect would be found, the police would handle the matter, and we would have our safety guaranteed. We trusted him, so we let that problem escape to the backs of our minds for the time being. Chido Johnson, the son of Drs. Johnson wanted us to get a feel for the local entertainment and culture firsthand, so he told us of a dance hall in Mutare that was featuring a nationally renowned band, The Runn Family Band Saturday night, and he offered to escort us there. Most of us gladly thanked him for the offer, Stewart ok'd the trip, and became our chaperone, so we set 9:00pm as the departure time for

the Fiesta Palace in Mutare. Meanwhile, we celebrated Brant's birthday. We secretly gathered in the dining hall around 7:00, and had the lights turned out. When he was escorted to the hall, we turned the lights on, sang "Happy Birthday To You", gave him his gag gifts and helped him eat his cake. Before those of us who wanted to departed for Fiesta Palace, Stewart told the whole group that we had been invited to Dr. Nhiwatiwa's house the following afternoon for another tea party.

Unfortunately, the transportation a friend of Chido's had to take us into Mutare wasn't large enough to fit all of us, so a few had to stay behind, but Chido promised to take another group the following Wednesday night. Fiesta Palace was all Chido promised it to be. It was a badly lit, small, hot open room with a stage at the front and a few chairs and tables along the walls. It was packed, the the temperature shot through the roof quickly. The band, Runn Family Band, is extremely popular, and when we were there, they were planning a "World Tour" in Europe. They played a lot of Reggae which is well-liked in Africa, as well as a few Paul Simon tunes. Everyone danced, even Stewart was coaxed out onto the floor. We could have danced all night, but we did have to go to church the next morning, so we only stayed a few hours. All in all this day was a good tension breaker, and it seemed to have been greatly enjoyed by everyone, especially our cooks, who weren't used to just taking a day off to go site-seeing.

Sunday was also a day for us to relax, though we did

attend church at the mission. It was a nice service, led in Shona for the most part, although English was used for our benefit in some places. Stewart took part in the service, so it was a treat for us to see him in a clerical collar, looking official. During the homily, Dr. Nhiwatiwa introduced us formally to the rest of the congregation, though we had met most of them informally, just by walking around or working with them. After church, we rested until the tea party. Unfortunately, starting late Saturday night, some of the team began to feel ill with flu-like symptoms. We would later find the cause to be in the water on the mission site, which for some reason the cooks had quit boiling before using it. By the end of the next week, everyone on the team had a bout with sickness, some felt very bad, others were lucky to just get a minor touch of sickness. Some medicine we brought, as well as some from the hospital helped to get us all well as quickly as possible.

Concerning the intruder, we learned that the executive committee had found a suspect, a young guy who we had seen around the construction site who seemed friendly enough, and would talk to us, although he had started to ask us for money. So before we met for tea, This guy was being questioned in Dr. Nhiwatiwa's house by the committee. Other than that problem, we were able to have a very pleasant tea at Dr. Nhiwatiwa's house. He had invited a number of mission officials and officials from the United Methodist office in Mutare, so there were many people who wanted to

meet and talk with us. The tea was excellent, and there were various types of finger food to munch on, but the highlight was definitely a special cake that Mrs. Nhiwatiwa bought for us in Mutare. It was a store-made cake, with the inscription "Welcome Guys" written on top. Seeing the inscription and knowing the trouble they obviously went through in researching a proper American expression, was a very meaningful gesture from them to us.

Monday came around, and signaled the beginning of another work week, but also our last week at Old Mutare-how the time had flown. Both teams went about their projects, with renewed vim, except for those who had gotten too sick to get out of bed. This sickness we shared was no laughing matter, it wasn't just an upset stomach. Whether you were affected in a minor way or got a serious dose, you still made many trips to the bathroom, when you weren't asleep. Most of the team was over the sickness in about 48 hours, but some either had relapses or just remained sick for more than two days. Those who were able to work reported good progress, both at the hospital and at the construction field. An odd part of the sickness was that towards the end of a bout, the stomach problems would end, but the person would still be kept in bed with a weak, puny feeling.

Tuesday brought new excitement for the construction team and some on the medical team. The work in the field was slowed because all the rain over the weekend had made the dirt into mud, and impossible to work with. Ed found us a new job in the baby-fold, however. Two rooms in the 'fold

needed a paint job very badly, so Ed and Mr. DeWolfe went to Mutare to buy paint. Paint in Zimbabwe is at a ridiculously high inflated price, as are basic handyman tools, so without our help, it would have been a long time before the 'fold could afford to do the painting. The rooms focused on were the crib room, a large front room where the infants sleep, and the other was a small storage room, which could be transformed into another playroom with just a little effort. Those readers with a knowledge of painting, and the problem of painting around small children, can easily recognize that painting around the fold was fifteen times more difficult. When the kids decided to cause problems, did they decide to attack the crib room, where water based paint flowed freely? Of course not! The obvious target was the storage room as it was being painted a pretty blue enamel. Needless to say, operations went better in the crib room than in the storage room.

This was also the day that 1,000 students came back on campus to begin a new quarter. Once back on campus, they added a hum of activity around us that made us realize how huge and empty the mission grounds are with just the faculty and workers on the property. Our meal schedule had to be modified since many Form-I students must share the dining hall with us, and there were now two sets of cooks in the kitchen-theirs and ours. Naturally, they had more right to interfere with our schedule than us theirs, since they were the ones paying tuition. Speaking of food, the arrival of students made us appreciate our food situation more.

Karin, our food hostess and Zimbabwe's own Emily Post, told us that if the students saw what we eat, then we probably would have caused them to demand better food. Yea Us!

The evening community meeting was once again enriching for everyone. Kathryn and David led us in two chaotic songs in their usual forceful yet lovable way. Uncle Doug was the featured attraction of the Bug-A-Loo song, as his mannerisms were turned into chic new dance steps. Frank then taught the group a song which his sister had written, meant to be sung in rounds. It became the "official team song" because of its immediate popularity, and surely everyone reading this has heard it several times already. The team, in Molly's capable hands, was divided into groups of four. Each group held private talks about the ways those here at Old Mutare who dedicate their livelihoods to the success of the mission show their love for God and humankind in the many jobs they do. It was pointed out that we should apply our goals for this trip in ways similar to the everyday jobs performed here at Old Mutare. That is, we should not attempt to complete one grand, huge mission, but that if we put great effort into little jobs that seem insignificant, such as feeding one of the Fab Four at the baby-fold, or painting a wall, then these small acts will add together to bring about the greatness of our experience overall. After the meeting, the team wrote, read, or resumed the ritual maniacal games of Spades or Uno before bed.

For those team members who got up at 6:45am Wednesday morning, an interesting ritual was observed. We were

invited to the morning assembly of the high school. At morning assembly the students are called to assembly by a piercing siren much like a civil defense siren in the states. Each form of the school wears a different uniform. All the students paraded (actually the sound of shuffling feet was deafening) into a large auditorium, uniform with high school auditoriums in the states. The place was filled to the rafters, and the program began. Our beloved adults were invited to sit with the faculty up on the front stage. An invocation began the day, with an inspirational message by Dr. Nhiwatiwa. Then the regular business of the first day of school began, as in thousands of other high schools around the world. The class officers were elected, as well as class marshals, whose job it was to provide a good example to their forms, and to act as liasons between faculty and students. Also, captains were elected from the student body. These were exemplary students chosen to act as dorm-directors, or RA's, in each dormitory. Even though no students lived in Dodge Hall with us, we too were assigned a captain. After the announcements, the whole school sang the African National Anthem. Hearing this was a very moving event, because in most African nations, there is not an individualized anthem. Each country shares the anthem, the only adoptions made were the changing of the lyrics into each country's native language.

When assembly ended, the students began their class day, and we began our work day. We were told that the next day we would be allowed to sit in on a few classes. The

work progressed at its usual pace. Most construction work was now concentrated on the baby-fold, because it appeared that we would have the most accomplished there whereas in the field we would not be finished by Friday, our last workday. The construction team borrowed Alice from the medical team for her artistic talents. She was asked to paint some pictures of animals on the walls in the storeroom, just to make the walls more entertaining to look at, and she did gladly, accomplishing a very nice set of paintings. Meanwhile, in the crib room, the walls had been given a double coat, so we began stripping the cribs and painting them with a new paint that was not toxic.

Wednesday night, Dr. Mafundkoto, the man in charge of cirriculum at Hartzelle High, spoke to us. He spoke on education in Zimbabwe. First he gave us background on himself. He worked at the mission before pursuing education. Then he taught at various high schools, was station master at one mission and was headmaster of another school before returning to Old Mutare in 1988.

Outline of Education History in Zimbabwe--
The pioneers of Education in Zimbabwe dated back to the church missionaries of various faiths. Their aim was to propogate the gospel, secondly, to insure that the people could read the gospel, therefore, educating them. In the beginning each domination was given a part of Zimbabwe. The United Methodists were given the eastern portions of Zimbabwe.

In 1970, the bulk of the primary schools were taken over by governing councils, or local authority rather than churches. Before this the government only provided education in urban areas.

Education Set-up--
At age 3-5 a child is in the creche, or kindergarten, which comes under the administration of Women's Affairs. After five years of kindergarten, they move into seven years of primary grades 1-7. The schools on average are spread about four kilometers from each other at primary level. Mathematics, English language, the local language-shona in

this area of Zimbabwe, also environmental studies-nature, conservation, climate, plants, animals are studied. They also have moral education, biased towards Christianity, with some comparison of Christianity to local religions. Seventh grade ends the first stage. After this follows the six years of secondary education.

FORM I--

Includes English, indigenous language, geography, history, religious ed., biology, chemistry, physics, also a combination of sciences studied is offered. Students are determined as science-biased or otherwise-biased, to decide their continuing education. From Form I, the student, if successful passes on to Form IV. Exams are conducted through Cambridge examinations in London, although there is a move to localize the exams in Zimbabwe.

University is competitive since Zimbabwe has only one University to enter.

Tuition In Schools--

Lower levels are most expensive. The cost can run from $500-$1000 a year. Grades 1-7 are basically free. Developments of the physical plant at schools fall on the parents. Secondary students must pay tuition, books, supplies etc. Day schools run $400 on average, Boarding schools such as Hartzelle High-$1000, thought there are more costly schools that run $3000 a year.

School Administrative Breakdown--

The central head in any school is the headmaster, who is the central administrative officer. The deputy headmaster oversees the change in subject syllabi. Students choose student leaders who should be more responsible, who work hand-in-hand with administrators about subjects, realtions, ideas and suggestions.

The headmaster is directly responsible to the regional office. Each office has a group of experts in each subject area, who go from school to school to assure that schools follow national policies and syllabi, as well as conducting teacher workshops. National headquarters is in Harare, led by the Secretary for Education. Deputy Secretaries are responsible for individual aspects of education. Under the Deputy Secretaries are Chiefs of Education who supervise examinations.

Teacher Qualifications--

Set standards are required, at least four years of primary, passing in five areas. Then successfully obtain a certificate from an education-training institution. Secondary teachers must attend accredited Universities.

After Dr. Mafundkoto spoke to us, those who didn't go to the Fiesta Palace Saturday Night went tonight with Chido, Uncle Doug and Sonya. Those who went feared that Uncle Doug would tear out his beard before the night was over, or until we were safely back at Old Mutare.

The next morning, Suzanne was asked to give the message at the high school assembly. Some of us again struggled to rise at 6:45 in order to hear her. She gave a very well-thought out message, that seemed to be recived well, yet some of the up and coming male students seemed stunned to find themselves addressed by a female during the sacred morning assembly. People in Zimbabwe aren't very familiar with Gloria Steinhem. After assembly, some of us attended classes. The classes were interesting, yet almost disappointingly seemed too familiar with us. The resemblance to an American class, and the attitudes of teacher and student was uncanny. Meanwhile, work in the baby-fold was finishing up nicely, and there was some time to play with the kids, which over time turned into something not so horrible after all. Work in the field reached a point where other workers could pick up at a later date, and finish the job fairly quickly after the headstart we gave that project. There was a mini-project taking place on the high school basketball court, just outside of Dodge Hall. The backboards were rotted through, so we offered to buy wood for backboards, paint them, then install them. Mr. DeWolfe was very happy that we could do this job for the courts, as the school would never have bought the wood if he had requested it on his own. Meanwhile, the medical team continued to perform its magic in the hospital, unhindered by weather.

Thursday night, we enjoyed a very musical change of pace. We were invited to the community men's bible study.

Although called a men's bible study, we soon saw that a number of women also attend. The highlight of this evening was the music provided by the men's choir, who used native instruments to accompany them. This event took place in the hospital cafeteria. It was probably the most exciting and moving choral performance many of us have been to in our lives. All hymns were sung in Shona, and we had Shona hymnals, so we tried to follow along, with little success, but our effort was regarded fondly by the community. We also noticed how stale most anglo-church hymns are in relation to these Shona hymns.

Friday was, sadly, our last day of work, and our full day on the mission, since Saturday was a day planned to go into Mutare to shop. Work at the baby-fold was pretty much finished, so the team either worked on the basketball nets or out on the field, finishing up. Leigh was unfortunately/luckily the only person over two weeks who was hurt, but she did sustain enough of an injury to damage her finger permanently. She was lifting a wheelbarrow, overweight with tools, as they planned to come in off the field for the last time. Somehow, her grip loosened, and the 'barrow fell, slicing her middle finger open. The cut was enough to produce cartilage damage that she had have looked at again in the states, then have surgery on, but though a painful injury, it did not seem to be overly excruciating. Meanwhile, we took a break for lunch, which was hosted by Matron Mapenzi at her home, as her way of saying thanks to us, mainly thanking the medical team, since

she really never got to interact with the construction team. lunch was a surprise--fried chicken, rice salad and fresh fruit, all of it very good. We ate and socialized, and she told us stories about her nursing job at the hospital during the independence war of 1980. She and the nurses entertained us very nicely for about 1 1/2 hours, then we thanked her, and went back to work for the last few hours. It was sad, knowing we were spending our last hours, probably forever, in the baby-fold, hospital, or on the field surrounded by low mountains, a view never to be forgotten in the mind's eye. The day came to close, sadly, in that we had to start saying good-bye to many new friends, yet joyfully at the same time, because the things we had accomplished, though many small projects, added together to equal the great success of our mission. There was nothing to be disappointed for, since we had no material goals set before we actually got to Old Mutare. Certainly we had no reason to think the people of Old Mutare felt we had just loitered for two weeks, just picking at a few minor projects, rather, you could see in their eyes how extremely grateful they were to have us in Old Mutare, after all, to just be there.

Friday night, we were extremely lucky to arrange, as our final speaker, Dr. John Kurewa, the President-Elect of the African University. His background is that of a Methodist minister, though he is also involved in politics, having served as the Secretary of Parliament for ten years.

African University--
Stressed the importance of locating the University at Old Umtali mission. The dream of African University goes back

through many leaders, starting with Bishop Hassaw and other missionaries. He was the first of many bishops who felt that Old Umtali should become a University. In 1984 a series of meetings was started about the possibility of a University sponsored by the Methodists, because the Methodists had established colleges in India and China, but not yet Africa. In 1986, after meetings with other denominations as co-sponsors, it was decided that the United Methodist Church would go it alone. Two years later, the parliament and cabinet of Zimbabwe approved the University to go ahead. Right now the Minister of Higher Education of Zimbabwe is placing a Bill before parliament to allow the establishment of private colleges and Universities in Zimbabwe. The feeling is that this bill will pass as long as the private institutions live up to government standards. Another question is security. There is a concern that no University may be established by a foreign nation in order to influence adversely the citizens of Zimbabwe. The fact that the US, a super-power, is providing much of the funding for the African University was raised, but should not be a serious hindrance. The goal is to make this institution available to all Africans. By June or July of 1990, hopefully all government issues will be ironed out, and then construction will begin.

Church Influence--

Various boards in the Methodist Church have different opinions on the goals of the University to the populace, and this church bureaucracy is taking longer to go through than expected.

Kinds of Colleges--

Four colleges in 1992, Starting preferably in 1991. College of Theology, Education, Management would come in 1991, in 1992 the College of Agriculture would start. Other colleges in consideration are the College of Humanities,Social Sciences, Natural Science, and possibly a College of Medicine. One question recently raised is that of a Dental College. Currently there is no Dental College between Tanzania and the Republic of South Africa. There is a serious need for dentists not only in Zimbabwe, but in all of Africa. There would be a final total of seven colleges, or faculties. The faculty would be welcome from around the world.

Projections--

After five years, they expect between 500-800 students, after ten, 2,000 students.

Language--

It was decided that the language of the host country would be the language of the University. In the College of Theology, Portugese and French would also be required because of the communication difficulties in Zaire, Angola and Mozambique. It would be a preference of the Board of Directors that 20% to 40% of the student body come from Zimbabwe itself, but no more than 40%, because it would take away from the idea of an All-African University.

There is an interest that the College of Theology acquire faculty from Latin America, who know Liberation Theology, as this is the Theology of the poor. There is

also a heavy interest in pursuing the study of Theology influenced by native African influence.

Help For African University From Home--

Right now there is now official information line coming from Old Mutare, since no Public Information officer is yet hired. One is expected in August, but until then the best source of information is the office in Nashville. Then Old Mutare will become the center of information.

After Dr. Kurewa left, we settled down for our last night in Old Mutare, after a quick briefing on the next day's plans. We would be free to go into Mutare the next day, to shop or sitesee, or just to eat, but we'd have to go in small groups, and take the public transportation into town. The whole day would be free, until dinner time. The rest of the day should be spent packing, and there would be a communion service that evening with the community, in the church. After that, we would do last minute packing until our departure time of 11:00pm. It was decided to leave that late, then arrive at the Harare airport between 3:00-4:00am. since our flight was scheduled to leave at 6:00am, rather than spending the whole night in Harare.

The next day in Mutare was very enjoyable for us, because we got to see a fairly big African city firsthand. The population is about 69,000, and the downtown area is fairly crowded. We went into a supermarket which was very similar to a Food Mart here in the US, except that in grocery store in Mutare, they sell clothing as well as food. There were numerous bookstores which sold a variety of foreign publications, some from the Soviet Union. It's quite odd for an American to pick up a magazine printed in Zimbabwe, with an advertisement for an Iranian shipping line on the inside front cover. There were numerous small

restaurants where you could buy fries (chips) and ICE-COLD Coca-Colas. Some of us grouped together to tour the Mutare museum, which had several displays about Zimbabwe history, and displays of ancient artifacts found nearby Mutare. There were also plenty of street-artisans selling their jewelry and stone-carvings to lucky tourists. But this town is definitely a haven for Rhodies. They came out of the wood-work, to descend on Spieckle's Department store, similar to a Gayfer's. Some of us ate lunch at Spieckle's, following the advice of Stewart, but we were severely disappointed in the hamburgers ordered, and in the ketchup, which tasted more like sweet and sour sauce-eecchh! Getting home to Old Mutare was a real puzzle to some of us, since taxis were expensive, and the buses were running infrequently. Luckily, a man from the mission happened to drive by, and yes, he was going our way, so happily gave us a ride. Others got rides back on the backs of trucks, etc.

After packing, some of our boys thought it would be fun to challenge the number-one high school team in Zimbabwe to a friendly basketball games on the court with new backboards. Nice gesture--we got creamed, but it was a good good-will gesture, anyhoo. The rest of the afternoon passed quickly, and soon, we were sitting to our last dinner. The cooks and Karin were emotional to see us go, especially after we gave them small tokens of our appreciation for their hard work. The cooks then sang a few farewell songs after dinner, and it was our first sad good-bye. Actually, with our last minute packing, it was hard to feel too sad,

since we had so much to pack. Our bus and driver to Harare had arrived early in the afternoon, so he was a constant reminder of our impending departure.

Going to the evening Communion service, we knew to expect a sad service, but we still weren't prepared for the flood of emotions that the service brought out in us and in the people of Old Mutare. Everyone we had gotten to know, even the men from the other field were there that night to say good-bye. The choir was wearing their traditional choir outfits, and the church elders were all there with their families. Also, several high-school students that we had gotten a chance to meet were there to say good-bye. Drs. Johnson, and Chido were there, Rosalie Johnson was wearing the traditional outfit that the other women wore. Even some faculty were there, most interesting, I thought, the three or four members of faculty who are from the US were there to say good-bye, although none except Mr. DeWolfe and both Drs. Johnson said more than two words to us the whole two weeks. One had to wonder if seeing other Americans upset them in someway. The choir sang several shona songs, and perhaps tried to do us a favor by singing an anglo-hymn, something like "How Great Thou Art", anyway, the effect of hearing that tune after hearing the moving, rhythmic African tunes was very anti-climatic. Dr. Nhiwatiwa and the assistant pastor, who had also come to know some of us well, spoke their thanks, and then spoke thanks for the whole community. Stewart then shared our thanks for their kind hospitality. We then gave gifts to the community of clothing

or tools that we wanted to leave behind. The most moving part of the service was when we all greeted one another. The elders were playing their instruments and sang a song they sang at the Bible study, and everyone gave very warm handshakes, but most gave hugs, the warmest coming from Dr. Nhiwatiwa.

After this moving service, everyone left the church with the oddest expressions on their faces, a mixture of extreme love and joy, mixed with a little confusion as to how a group of students from Birmingham-Southern College could have such a profound effect on the people of this community. It was very hard to leave that church, to leave the warmth of these people behind, whom we loved like no other people we had ever known as strangers just two weeks before. But, we realized that life goes on, and we still had the sorry job of packing to complete. Little did we know that Dodge Hall would resemble the American embassy in Vietnam on that day in 1975. Kids were all over the place, trying to wheedle walkmans and tapes and playing cards, and anything else from us. They finally got so bad that it was impossible to move, as there were probably five kids in each room. Finally Dr. Nhiwatiwa came over to clear the kids out so we could pack in peace. Around 11:30pm, we finally began loading stuff on the bus, then, away we went, in the quiet peace that you only find in an African night--everything still, rudely disturbed as your bus roars by, then settling back down to the business of the night dweller-predator or prey. As Dr. Nhiwatiwa was the first to greet us, so he was last

to say good-bye, he is truly one of the greatest men we will probably meet in our lifetime.

We pulled into the Harare airport parking lot four hours later, having slept badly, being crushed in with bags on narrow seats. Finally as the airport came to life, so did we, and we moved into the terminal to stretch our legs, or eat until our flight to Victoria Falls was boarded. It was a very luxurious feeling, to step onto a modern jet-aircraft, with comfortable seats and air-conditioning, after two weeks braving the African summer. We had a short flight to Kariba, a man-made lake resort, then a ten-minute hop to Victoria Falls. At the Victoria Falls airport, our old friend Jerry was there to escort us to the Vic Falls Lodge. The Victoria Falls Lodge is a ****Hotel, surrounded by many lawns and paths to walk on. Not to mention a great buffet for every meal, room service, air-conditioning, cold AND hot water. More or less, we were in Hog Heaven. The rest of Sunday was spent sleeping or taking baths, although excursions were made to see the Victoria Falls the natural wonder of Africa, which dwarfs Niagara Falls. The night life at Vic Falls was also an enjoyable change from Old Mutare, as there was a piano room in our hotel, and a casino in a neighboring hotel. It was nice to find things to spend our zim on.

The next morning was the day of our perilous white-water rafting expedition. Dr. Brown had suggested that we do this, down the Zambezi River, so we had Jerry arrange it, but some of our excitement dwindled after we signed the release form,

letting all responsiblity for our lives and health remain on our heads alone. We woke up, and some had the breakfast buffet, while others cowered in rooms with room service or were pre-occupied with sending our laundry to the hotel cleaners. But, around 8:00, we hiked to the border of Zambia, about three kilometers away. We would be launching off on the Zambia side of the river, so we crossed the border, the got on a Sobek Expedition truck to take us to the launch center. There we met our guides, had the trip explained to us, and were told that if we had any physical injuries, that we'd be insane to go on the trip. After we had our special orange juice booster, we got our insrtuctions on safety, being thrown out of the raft and such, put on our life vests, then we trekked down to the river. The walk down resembled a Hollywood movie set of what a jungle in Africa should look like, with vines and dense trees, and a family of baboons walking by. Seeing the river was a heart stopper. The Zambezi is the Cahaba River to the 27th power. It is a class five river, of which there are only three others in the world. Most white-water rivers in the US are class three. The rapids in this river were exhilarating, and terrifying at the same time. Just before we'd go into each of the eleven rapids (we skipped rapid number nine, because of its uncontrollable currents), we'd get instructions from our guides like: "If you go over (get thrown out of the raft), try to hang on to the raft, if you can't, swim to the right/left shore." We had to go to the specific shore they called out to avoid the alligators. There was one terrifying

moment when one of our four rafts had flipped over, spilling everyone out, and we thought we'd lost six team members, but, our guides are paid to do their best to keep us alive, and that's what they did. The only other mishap was a loss of glasses by Brant and John, who are both blind as bats. They had to lead each other around or be led by the hand by other sympathetic team members for the rest of the trip. Well, we finally made it through all rapids, only to climb a cliff equivalent to a forty-story building. Back at the lodge, we collapsed from mental and physical exhaustion, but we would all have gone down the Zambezi again, or so we said when our feet were on solid ground.

Tht night at the hotel, we enjoyed a staged native show, called the African Adventure, which featured native dancing by a lot of inebriated natives. Later in the evening, most people went to the casino to win or lose more Zim. We only planned to spend a half a day Tuesday at Vic Falls, so the morning was spent shopping in nearby stores, and hassling with street vendors, who offered items "masterpieces" in exchange for shoes, t-shirts, walkmans, etc. After shopping, we loaded our bags for the trip to Hwange Game Park. In the afternoon, we once again boarded a plane for the 15 minute flight to Hwange. Our lodge was located in a very prime viewing location. The property of the lodge ended about 200 hundred yards from a natural watering hole, so all day long, you could sit by the pool and watch the animals come to the watering hole during their feeding cycles. At night, the highlight would be the elephants who came to the hole usually

after dark, but the hole did have lights aimed at it. The food at this lodge was also quite good,and we again enjoyed room service. Each room had a patio facing the watering hole. The next two days were full of highlights. Wednesday and Thursday mornings, we'd get up at 5:00am, to go on game runs in the park. Our guides were very knowlegeable on where to find animals in the park. They were also very congenial, and often joked with us. They even told us that we were more fun to take around than the stuffy British or Europeans. There would also be afternoon game runs, and Thursday afternoon, on a game run, the first and last annual dung war took place at Hwange, each jeep racing around the park evading other jeeps, then attacking unsuspecting jeeps in ambush, with elephant dung. Don't ask questions. The rest of the time was generally spent lounging at poolside.

As Thursday night was our last night in Africa, we had our last community meeting during which, we each related how we felt about the trip to each other. Each person had a chance to speak as long as they needed, and each person said something which meant a lot to each of us. Robin, Stewart's wife joined us our last day in Mutare, and we had bonded so well, and were always joking around with inside jokes, that she was a perfect observer to let us know how well we seemed to get along. Each person had felt some change in their outlook on the way the world turns, and each person also felt some large or small inner-growth. After this meeting, we stayed up a long while talking, not wanting our last night in Africa to end.

The next two days were a whirl-wind of travel, but everything went much better this time around. In Harare we said good-bye to Katy, who had arranged to spend extra days in Harare by herself, living with friends of her family. We wondered if she would find her way home by herself--she did. We had the pleasure of flying Air Zimbabwe's brand new Boeing 767 to London. This was just the plane's third flight. Luckily this was a night flight, so the ten hours went by more quickly as we slept through most of it. In London, we had about four hours to kill before our Delta flight home. Some people took a quick jaunt into London with Jerry, to the HardRock Cafe, passing the parliament buildings and Piccadily Square. Others stayed in Gatewick and looked in the shops or just sat and thought about the trip quietly. John and Brant ran into their old friend John Malchevich, star of Dangerous Liasons and Places In The Heart. Mr. Malchevich bought them coffee, and told them to call him up when they got home so they could do lunch. Actually, Mr. Malchevich, Brant and John bumped into each other, and John Malchevich did his Greta Garbo "I want to be alone"/Recluse routine, then slipped quickly into the crowd. Our plane to Atlanta was a huge Lockheed L-1011, with Ava Gardner's body in the cargo hold below us (no lie). The 9 hour 45 minute flight to Atlanta got old very quickly. People paced, talked, went to the lavatories a lot in hopes of passing the time quickly. FINALLY, we arrived in Atlanta, GA. We transferred to a small DC-9 headed to Birmingham, and drove the other passengers nuts because we were now quite keyed up, and told

all the dumb jokes we learned in Africa quite loudly. 30 minutes later, we were back home in Birmingham, looking at parents and friends we hadn't seen in three weeks, and we realized we were finally home again, home again.

Though we enjoyed being home, we learned first-hand that you can never come all the way home from Africa, as some author stated coming home from his trip to Africa. It's true--we can't wait to go back.