

Visit to Burning Ghats ... Once is Too Much!

Continuing a series of letters home from Janice Carter to her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ormie Cater, describing a tour which she is taking with Karen Kozack of Glen Williams and some English girl friends.

The trip to Nepal was quite an experience — we drove nearly 2500 miles round trip and saw a lot on the way. Agra and the Taj were magnificent. Just outside Agra at Sikandra, there is another mausoleum built by Akbar (he built the fort at Agra at the headwaters of the Indus). This one of red sandstone, has the typical Islamic layout — an entrance archway and formal gardens leading up to the central structure. The grounds were beautiful — lush green lawns and crimson bougainvillea and lots of monkeys. The monkeys really feel that they owned the place and would attack you if you aggravated them enough (of course, Abjan started teasing them and had them leaping about frightening the rest of us).

We first saw the Taj at sunset. We really felt quite excited as we approached it because we could see the minarets from some distance but the main part was hidden by the high walls. When we finally walked through the arch and saw it in full view — we were a little disappointed because it was so much like all the other monuments. However, when we came back at night and saw it in the full moonlight, it was really awe-inspiring.

The dome was reflected perfectly in the pool in front of it and all the marble seemed to glow in the moonlight. Next morning we came again and carried around the gardens, taking pictures to prove that we had been there. In the sunlight the white marble is so dazzling that you can't bear to look at it; so, I think that it is only in the moonlight you realize the perfect symmetry of the building and its surroundings. Inside you walk through lacy marble arches to the tombs — the two on the main floor are only replicas of the actual tombs which are situated in an underground room. Shah Jahan planned them that way as the people could come to the upper tombs to pay their respects while the bodies remained in peace below them.

Everywhere there is inlaid work — flower and bird shapes cut out of the marble and filled in with marble chips and semi-precious stones. Of course, all the souvenir shops have capitalized in this characteristic art and charge outrageous prices for little boxes and plates inlaid with similar work but of a much inferior quality. I suppose, the fact that it was commercialized spoiled our impressions a little. After travelling a while you just want to go some place where you're not going to meet other tourists and where there are no shops selling miniatures and other trash. Oh well, there's always Tibet, some day.

We slept the night on the Tourist office floor — it was free and convenient and we wanted no more bother. In the morning, we had to be on our way early as the Shah of Iran was coming to Agra and they were sprucing things up a little — an impossibility with great lumps of sleeping bag bodies all over the floor. We drove to Falgaur Sikri in the afternoon — that's another famous fortification about 20 or 30 miles from Agra — we were suffering from traveller's ennui and were not as impressed as we should have been.

It is a huge place with stables (for elephants as well as horses), vast living quarters and a central patio where the Shah and his family used to sit on a dais and play chess on the pavement with various members of their retinue. In the mosque there, there was a tomb of some holy man all encrusted with mother-of-pearl. That was beautiful.

Our next destination was Khajurho — another day's drive away. We passed through very interesting countryside, saw lots of wildlife and many changes in costume! When you think of India, you visualize saris and turbans but there are a great many variations even within one state and the colours are so bright. I will never be able to think of India in terms of pastels. It does seem to be a country of extremes anyway — extreme wealth and beauty, extreme poverty and ugliness.

At Khajurho, there are several medieval Hindu temples famed for their sculptures. Most of the temples are dedicated to love; thus the temples are renowned as much for the frankness and explicitness of their glorification of love as for their technical beauty. We enjoyed just wandering around from temple to temple as the weather was superb and it was quiet

there because Khajurho is a little off the beaten track.

Next — on to Benares. The Tourist Bungalow was full; so we found a delightful spot called the Holiday Home. It belongs to the Postal Cooperative Society but we were allowed to stay there. No beds — only a gigantic (hard) table affair and lots of mosquitoes. We went shopping for a sari (for me) and ran into an enormous traffic jam in the Old Bazaar as some festival was going on. Also, we discovered later that a great number of funeral processions pass through there.

When I had finally picked a sari out of what seemed like hundreds, the shop keeper's younger brother undertook to lead us down to the Ganges so that we could see all the ghats. "You must see the Burning Ghats," he kept saying. We expected some kind of temple where incense or something similar would be burned. But as we approached the ghats, coming out of crowded, winding streets onto the upper level of the river bank, the air was full of sickly smoke and on the fires we could see the remains of bodies wrapped in brilliant red materials and beside the fire, other bodies awaiting their turns.

Even more sickening than the limbs sticking out of the fires, were the dogs on the river bank tearing the charred flesh off the discarded bones. Even the fellows couldn't stand much of that? Afterwards, we rode in a boat along the river bank to see all the temples, the people bathing and the holy men meditating. Our hearts weren't really in it tho' and it was a gray day anyway — so we decided not to do any more sightseeing and to leave early the next day.

The roads in that part of India were really dreadful — they are very narrow and bumpy and crammed with heavily laden carts which will move for nothing. Also, there are railroad crossings every few miles and if a train is passing you are usually delayed half an hour. We used to laugh at the little signs posted beside the tracks: "Complaints may be entered into the book kept by the gatekeeper." But after so many delays, we failed to see any humour in it as they obviously never read the book anyway. Besides —

crowds always used to gather and we had to contend with the inevitable question — "Where are you going" — "where do you come from" — "what's your programme" — baksheesh, sahib, etc. etc. The final straw was all the misinformation we got in Patna where we had been told that we could cross the Ganges by ferry. Not so — another 60 mile drive out of our way to Baruni where we could cross on a bridge — that was after driving all along the river in Patna from ferry company to ferry company. In addition to that, we had been put off several rest houses because they would not allow us to stay overnight as the man who could give us permission to stay was not available.

(continued next week)

Occupancy Rate Rise Is Noted at Hospital

The occupancy rate at Georgetown & District Memorial Hospital continues to rise. Figures just released on the hospital's operation in April shows the rate of occupancy for that month as 85.9 per cent compared to 80.7 per cent for the same period last year.

Medical and surgical floors have been busiest with the occupancy rate there 85 per cent. Maternity ward had an occupancy rate of 48 per cent which pulled the over all rate down considerably.

Hospital boards like to keep their occupancy rate below 80 per cent over all allowing a 20 per cent cushion in case of a local disaster.

Adults and children admitted to hospital during April totalled 199 compared to 175 in April '68 while births increased by one to 30.

The daily average number of patients in hospital rose to 57.8 from 54.2 adults and children, and to 6.6 from 5.8 newborn.

| | April '68 | April '69 |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Emerg. visits | 261 | 347 |
| Deaths | 2 | 8 |
| Operations | 66 | 71 |
| Performed | 639 | 640 |
| X-ray exam. | 10 | 8 |
| Average Length of Stay (days) | 10 | 8 |
| Adults - children | 10 | 8 |
| Newborn | 6 | 10 |

Red Cross Officials Meet Governor General

An honour guard formed by members of the Red Cross Corps and Junior Red Cross and Red Cross Youth representatives of different Metro-Toronto schools welcomed the Governor General and Mrs. Michener in the Royal York Hotel in Toronto on May 5th.

The Governor General and Mrs. Michener were there for a luncheon held by the Central Council of the Canadian Red Cross Society. The Governor General was bestowed with the award of Honorary Counsellorship and Mrs. Michener was presented with a stole made by

war-veterans as well as a gift for the two youngest grandchildren.

The Governor General bestowed several special awards. In his speech the Governor General spoke on his recent trip up North and stated that our "pioneering" time was not over yet, it had just started in the North.

President of the local Red Cross Branch, Mrs. Gerry Walsh and Public Relations Chairman Mrs. Connie Nieuwhof were able to attend this special event.

Forecast Double Population In County Town, 20 Years

Milton's population will more than double in 20 years.

Planning board figures released, recently show an expected increase of 7,300 with the projected population in 1988 around 13,800.

At present Milton population is 6,500. The plan will serve as a guide for town council decisions on future development programs in Milton.

Land Milton annexed in January is being used as industrial and residential.

Some development land that is set aside will not be put to use in near future because of the extra cost to the town in servicing it.

This land includes a large area southeast of Milton where it would be necessary to install a pumping station or sewage plant near No. 10 Sideroad to service the area.

But if developers want to set up subdivisions the town would work out a method to service the area with the development firm.

The amount of land annexed earlier from Oakville and Essex Township is 1,900 acres and increased the size of Milton to 2,900 acres.

The official plan will go before the public at a meeting to be held in the Martin St. school on May 22.

If there is no objection it will go to council for approval. Next step would be zoning by-laws passed by council declaring certain tracts of land for residential, commercial, industrial, public, institutional or park land use.

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Conservation Work is Explained to Institute

Mrs. F. Campbell was hostess and convener for the May meeting of Silverwood W.I. on Thursday evening May 8. The meeting opened with singing the Ode and a verse of 'Old McDonald' had a farm roll call, minutes and collection of pennies for friendship.

Delegates for the district annual were chosen. The evening of May 19 was selected for planning the program for the year. It will be at Mrs. G. Smith's.

Fall Fair committee was chosen. Limehouse W.I. and Ballinacraf W.I. were welcomed guests.

Mrs. Joan Rollings from the Information office of the Credit Valley Conservation Authority was guest speaker and showed slides taken in the area of the Credit River watershed.

Mrs. Rollings gave a comprehensive commentary on the work progressing at several points, and also on future plans for the watershed.

A plant sale brought in needed cash, and a social cup of tea and sandwiches brought the May meeting to a close.

— Alicia F. C. Scott

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by Arnold Blachford
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Negotiations for our most recent contract — with the Spanish Telephone Company — began in 1967 when Spanish telephone authorities were in Canada and gained first-hand information about this country's telecommunications. Last month, 10 Bell Canada men flew to Madrid where they will be stationed for about six months. They are responsible for recommending long range plans for the Spanish long distance network, the Madrid metropolitan network, and for future methods of charging for customer-dialed long distance and international calls.

While it's a fact that Bell Canada people are turning up all over the world, it's also true that people from all over the world are turning up at Bell Canada — visiting our Panorama of Progress in Telecommunications.

After just one year of operation, the Panorama has received more than 34,000 visitors hailing from Canada and the United States, and from such distant points as Australia, Kuwait, Russia, Great Britain, France, India and South America.

Particularly popular with students — they constituted some forty per cent of last year's visitors — the Panorama puts sound, light, demonstration and narration to dramatic use in telling the story of man and his communications through past ages, in modern times and into the future. A Bell Canada guide escorts each group of visitors along a fascinating journey through time. Each tour takes about an hour and a half and the narrations are given in either English or French.

Even though the Panorama has only been open for a year, it is becoming well known as one of the principal tourist attractions in the city of Montreal. If your holiday plans include a trip to Montreal, we hope you'll drop in to see our Panorama. It's open Monday through Friday and, since the Panorama is so popular, we would suggest you phone or write to us first to make a reservation. That way you'll avoid any delay between your arrival and the time the tour gets under way. The phone number is (514) 870-8893 in Montreal or write, Bell Canada, Panorama of Progress in Telecommunications, 601 LaSalle Street, W., Montreal 128, Quebec.

Arnold Blachford



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