

Bonnettes travel near head shrinkers

Lou Bonnetto and his wife Madeleine of Acton, have been to practically every country in the world, but no place left them as breathless and in a magical spell as

Columbia, South America. Lou is executive director for EEP, Extended Education Programs. This organization is mainly concerned with worldwide

youth travel at cheap prices. EEP offers trips to every major country of the world during the school March break. Air fare, transportation within the country, food, and accommodation are all provided. Teachers are allowed on the trips free of charge if they have at least 20 students in a group. Last year, over 3,000 pupils took advantage of these great opportunities.

Trips to all countries in Europe, Russia, Australia, Mexico and East and West Indies are some of the places featured in this great experience.

Bogota, Colombia
On August 11, Lou and his wife left for Bogota, Colombia. The purpose of this trip was to find suitable accommodation for students, and to charter the courses of travel within the country.

Four days were spent in Bogota, sightseeing and meeting people. This city, the capital of the country, has an average temperature of 55 to 65 degrees all year round. It is situated in the Andes at an altitude of 10,000 feet above sea level. It was this factor that made it hard for the Bonnettes to do anything too strenuous as they were not used to the lack of oxygen.

In most ways, Bogota was like many Canadian cities.

Tall skyscrapers lined the streets, cars rushing from place to place, people walking and talking, seemingly in a hurry.

The only real difference is the majestic mountains surrounding the city and the old cars. The average car in this country is around 22 years old selling for \$2,000. A brand new Dodge Dart, an average size car in North America, costs \$10,000.

From Bogota, the Bonnettes travelled to a town of 10,000 in the jungle, Letitela, as it was called, soon became their headquarters. They travelled to many different surrounding areas from here.

Letitela
Letitela, even though it has a larger population than Acton, was actually smaller in size. This is because of the great many families living together, and the people who did not have homes at all.

While here, they ventured forth into the wilds of the jungle. A long boat ride up the Amazon and small tributaries brought them out at a small lodge, where they hope the students will be able to stay.

This lodge was built at the edge of a large, deep pond. There were several piranhas, man-eating fish, in the water. However, they are not a danger if they are not

bothered. It is hoped that the students will be able to take tape recorders so they can tape the animal noises during the night at this stop. The lodge is built on stakes above the ground so there is no fear of the students being attacked by wild animals at night. It is all perfectly safe as long as the instructions are followed.

From the lodge, Lou, Madeleine and their guide went further into the jungle. The temperatures reached 100 to 120 degrees during the day, but it did not bother them any more than 90 degrees heat in Canada.

Head-shrinkers
During their travels up the Amazon and into the jungle, they came within two days of the head-shrinkers of Peru. This is an area even the native Indian tribes will not go near.

The excursion up the Amazon and its small tributaries was worth the trip in itself. The scene seemed as if it was taken straight from the late show on television. The boat was rowed by a skilled oarsman, and a man sat at the front of the craft with a machete, cutting and hacking his way through the

thick foliage overhanging the river. An alligator could be seen nearby, seemingly smacking his lips in anticipation of a meal to come.

Malaria, a fatal disease carried by mosquitoes, is no longer a threat to healthy humans. The countryside is sprayed with D.D.T. According to Lou, South America doesn't have as many of the blood thirsty pests as Canada.

On the way up the river to the city of Benjamin Constant, macaw birds could be seen perched on the overhanging branches.

Benjamin Constant is known among the guides as having the best food within hundreds of miles. While there, the Bonnettes enjoyed a six course meal, highlighted with rosent, spaghetti and monkey stew. They both thought the food was delicious. However they were not told until afterwards what it was they ate.

At this small village, everything was elevated from the ground. The sidewalks, as well as the houses, were raised, perhaps due to the rainy season, perhaps because of the snakes and boa constrictors.

Naked children
Early the next day they left Letitela for Yagua. Here they found a tribe of Nomads

who had settled on the river banks in open, one-room huts. The women walked around bare-breasted followed by naked children. Pierced noses were a common sight, as well as bleated stomachs of undernourished youngsters.

The Ticuna, the tribe of this area, found these Nomads on their land with out authority, and certainly without welcome.

The next night, the Bonnettes went Calmen hunting. These are small alligator-like creatures. A main hunter with a mine's light on his hat moved his head back and forth until the light catches sight of a red eye in the water. A shotgun is shot into the water close to the Calmen in order to stun it and then they are caught off guard and swept into the boat.

Before returning to Bogota, Lou and Madeleine walked through the jungle by Letitela to Monkey Island to a lagoon where they saw the giant Victoria Regina Lily pad. These pads are very large and strong enough to hold a 50 pound child. As beautiful as this lagoon was, it too was infested with piranhas.

Once back in the capital the guide took them to Zipanguilla where they visited the salt mine. There is a Cathedral the same size as Notre Dame in Paris and holds 10,000 people which is built right into the mine.

Their last stop in this part of the country was Medellin. Here they visited the botanical gardens and did general sightseeing for two days. This city was much cleaner than Bogota and had a very different appeal from the capital.

Fly to coast
The Emerald Coast, Santa Marta, was the next stop. To get there, they had to take a one hour flight to Cartagena, an eight minute flight to Barranguilla, and then an eight minute flight to Santa Marta. Because of the mountains and poor roads it would have taken five hours

by car to get from Barranguilla to the final destination.

After four days swimming in the ocean and relaxing in the sun they flew back to Cartagena. This is a very old city within a new city. A huge stone wall surrounds the town much like the wall around Jericho in Biblical days.

The couple were very impressed at the scenery. They stood in the new part and looked across a small inlet and saw the old section. It looked like a different part of time. Within minutes they were looking at the old part, from the new.

La Popa monastery and St. Philippe fortress were the highlights of their visit to Cartagena.

After three days of night-seeing here, the Bonnettes flew back to Bogota for their final two days. While here the gold museum was on their agenda as well as the monastery of Mon Serate.

Beggars in the street looked at them with pathetic eyes seeming to cry out to them for

some help, any kind of help. Women slept in the streets because they did not have any other place to stay. They had small dogs and cuddled them in the night for warmth.

Their trip ended with a visit to Plaza Bolivar, named after the early South American explorer.

Leave for home
As they stepped onto their plane to leave they looked upon the country in a very different manner from when they arrived. They respected the people for what they were, rather than what they had.

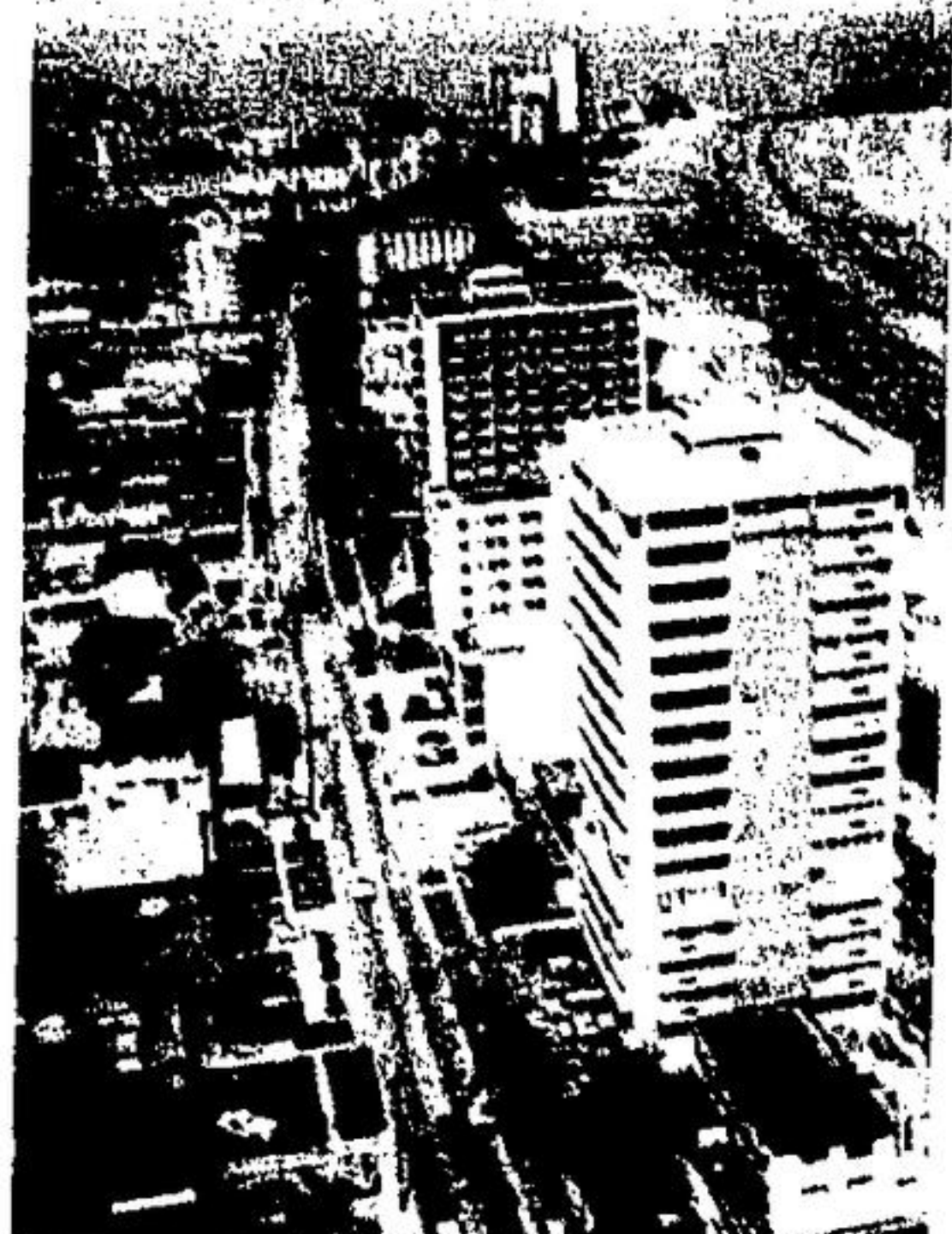
"It was a fantastic country," exclaimed Madeleine. "It was just terrific. I would not hesitate to go back."

"It is something every student should experience. Just reading about it in books is far different from being there and actually experiencing the life around you."

Unfortunately only 20 students will be able to go on this 11-day excursion. The trip is offered for next March

and although it will not be identical to the Bonnettes trip - the most interesting parts of the country will be visited.

What better way is there to appreciate another country, than being part of it for a few days!



MEDILLIN, COLOMBIA was visited by the Bonnettes on their visit to that country. The city was very clean and beautiful.



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No bell-ringing in town

A proposed anti-noise bylaw for Halton Hills prohibits ringing bells and blowing horns, but Mayor Tom Hill doesn't plan to abide by it on New Year's Eve.

He told council, "You'll have to catch me, because I ring the church bell in the Glen every midnight, New Year's Eve." He warned there better be no chivarees.

Wicked Willie on the air

Wicked Willie, or Bill Johnson, well known for his fight against pollution will team up with Peter Love of the University of Toronto for a talk show on a Brampton radio station.

They will answer questions on solid waste and garbage disposal, Friday at 1 p.m.

Bigger room

The Halton Hills representative at the Ontario Good Roads Association 81st anniversary convention at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto, from February 24 to 26, 1975 will hopefully have a bigger room than last year, it was decided at the work's committee meeting on October 15.

Pet of the week



PRINCE is a very talented Collie. He will sit and stay on command, he will shake a paw and he knows the difference between his right and left paw. One thing that Prince especially likes is being brushed by Tommy Feenstra, his owner. Prince is so playful that he even gives Tommy a big kiss once in a while.

Region drops appeal

Halton Regional Council overruled its planning committee Wednesday when council agreed with pleas from members from Halton Hills to allow a land separation to go through.

The planning committee had agreed to appeal the decision of the land severance committee to grant the separation. The committee felt the separation would be in contravention of the official plan for the area.

John and Doris Wilson of Ashgrove had applied for the separation to create an additional building lot. That application will not be objected to by the region.

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