

1983 - 15th World Jamboree, Kananaskis Country, Alberta, Canada

5 – 15 July / Participants 14 752 / Countries 102 / South Africans 226

On Our Way *(The Pre Jamboree Tour)*

At the shakedown camp all our equipment was checked along with all our visas, passports etc. Our hair had to be a good 2 cm. above our scarves, and because the barber cost R5, we cut each other's hair. Eventually we departed to Jan Smuts Airport, a scene which I will never forget. Four 'planes were leaving at the same time so there were hundreds of people including parents of the Transvaal Scouts. We boarded the 'plane first and departed at 7.30 p.m. The flight over was long but enjoyable (18 hours). Except for a two hour stop at Monrovia, West Africa, the flight was unbroken and this gave us a chance to get know one another. We had countless cooldrinks and the meals were good.



About 7.00 a.m., New York time, we approached John F. Kennedy International Airport and the sight of the Manhattan skyline was a welcome sight. After passing through immigration we climbed onto our buses and drove to the city centre. The idea of New York being all tall buildings is incorrect as most of the time we drove through lush forested areas on the approach to the city centre.

On arriving at the Edison Hotel, on the corner of 47th Street and 7th Avenue, we washed and then went to have brunch at Arby's Restaurant.

During the afternoon a few of us decided to visit Macys, the world's largest department store, which was an experience in itself. It took us fifteen minutes to find our way out again. Walking through the streets was not as easy as we expected as there was a constant tide of people walking along the sidewalk. Crossing the street was impossible without the aid of robots as there were hundreds of cars.

The second night we went up the Empire State Building and saw some breathtaking views from 86 storeys up. From New York we flew across to Seattle where stayed on the Washington University Campus. The Space Needle was impressive while the Science was fascinating (especially the laser show).



From Seattle we ferried across to Vancouver Island and then to Vancouver. We did not manage to see much of Vancouver as we were short of time. The next day we entered the Rockies which were snow capped and with wooded slopes. After arriving at Lytton, in the Rockies, we went white-water rafting down the Fraser River which was exhilarating and soaking. This is a unique experience and at times frightening. We then passed on up Roger's Pass, which was beautiful with its tumbling streams and snow capped peaks. We spent the night at Canmore, just next to Banff, where we visited Lake Louise and the spectacular Columbia Icefields. We had fun attacking each other with snowballs and building snowmen.

The next day we departed for the Jamboree.

BRETT FINLAYSON
MATROOSBERG TROOP
1st Camps Bay

The Jamboree

On Tuesday, 5th July, the South African contingent arrived in Kananaskis country (*near Calgary, situated west of Alberta in Canada in the foothills of the Canadian Rockies, North America*) to start the part that most of us had been waiting for - the Jamboree. Within fifteen minutes of arrival the whole Jamboree knew that the South Africans had arrived, due to the fact that we wore bright orange jackets, traditional Scout Hats with Springbok skin bands and looked the smartest. We were taken to our Sub-camps and shown our sites. No sooner had we changed into camp dress when the American Scouts were there trading patches or neckerchiefs for our hiking caps (at the end of the Jamboree one could obtain jackets and whole uniforms for our hiking caps). That evening Buffalo Sub-camp had their Opening Ceremony. Due to the fact that it only got dark at about 10 p.m. most night activities started late in the evening.



The official Opening Ceremony was on Wednesday night. As our Sub-camp was walking to the ceremony area we had the heaviest downpour that was experienced through out the entire trip. Our shoes filled up with water and our lovely straight Scout hats turned into Stetsons as the sides curved up. The roads were awash and some tents were flooded. After a few speeches were made, mostly in French, we realised the Jamboree had been opened (at the back one could not see or hear anything). A band was brought on and once they started playing the true feeling of spirit was released. They played familiar tunes and the Scouts (and Girl Scouts) started dancing, jumping and running around the arena. After that we saw a fireworks display which was fantastic. We then retired to our very wet tents.

The following eight days were spent doing whatever one chose to do. There were numerous activity bases at the campsite and one could also visit Banff and the Calgary Stampede, go on hikes or merely visit or trade with other Scouts from 100 different countries.

There were two BMX courses and after the rain most of these were muddy, which made riding very tough, an assault course with very difficult obstacles and a shooting range were in the one area. The South Africans acquired a reputation for being excellent shots at the trap shooting base. Using real shotguns one had to shoot clay pigeons (or an occasional human that was clever enough to walk behind the range). At Programme Area 'B' one could play various sports, i.e. soccer, American football, basketball, rugby, etc. or do pioneering or western activities. At the western activity base there were things to be done like making your own rope, log rolling and cutting, branding, lassoing, chuckwagon racing and riding bucking broncos (our Patrol record was 1½ seconds).

Other centres consisted of tree planting, archery and the challenge centre. At CapHandi (or Handicap) you had to do obstacles as if you were a handicapped person. There was typing without hands, feet bowling, crutch obstacle course, crutch soccer and a wheelchair obstacle course. (Try moving in a muddy pool in a wheelchair. The guy behind you knows all about it.)

On various nights we had to perform our gumbot dance at tea parties, Troop campfires, Sub-camp meetings, or in the main arena. Other Troops often invited us to have dinner with them and this often brought about good friendships.

On the Sunday the whole Jamboree played a wide game. The object was to make the word "Friends - Amis". Everyone was given a letter and one had to find Scouts with the letters to make up the word. After that we had a skydiving show and other activities including a Scouts Own.

At the Katimavik (pronounced Ka-teem-avik) one could buy shirts, belts, hat pins, etc. There were also Indian crafts and a leather works (where one could print anything on leather and make belts, key rings or peaks) as well as a Post Office, a Bank, a First Aid post, a Lost and Found Centre, a canteen, a pizza den, a fish and chips shop, a trading post, a commissary (where one could buy soap, toothpaste, etc.), a film and developing shop to be found in the Katimavik.

At the main entrance to the Jamboree was the Gateway to the World. Here all the flags of the countries represented at the Jamboree were flown and most countries had a display tent. The Closing ceremony was held on the 14th July and was very disappointing. Most Scouts expected something grand, but all we got were a few speeches by Lord Baden-Powell's Grandson. Buffalo Sub-camp had a more spectacular closing than the official one.

The next morning the South Africans left the Jamboree after an incredible, unforgettable experience filled with the great spirit of Scouting as the theme of the XV World Jamboree states "The Spirit Lives On".

GLEN MANNING
MAGALIESBERG TROOP
1st Camps Bay

The Home Run (Post Jamboree tour)

The twenty first day of our tour, Friday, 15th July, was freezing cold as we packed up our tents and left our campsite at the Jamboree for the last time. We loaded the coaches and set off for the second half of the tour. We left Kananaskis and headed for Calgary where we dropped off the Scouters going to the International Scout Convention in Detroit.

We arrived at Fort Macleod after travelling through the scenic countryside of Southern Alberta. We spent an hour at the 19th century Mountie outpost before pushing south to the 49th Parallel and crossing into the United States of America. We camped at St. Mary's campsite just south of the border.

The next day the guys had a choice; to stay at the campsite or go for a hike up the mountain. On the mountain we slid down a snowdrift on our raincoats. On Sunday, 17th July we had a 430 mile journey alongside the Rocky Mountains to Virginia City. On our coach, the "lipstick phantom" struck at one-hour intervals, and anyone who was asleep got his face painted. At Virginia City we were given a curfew of one hour, and after one hour we left - without our Scoutmaster!



We camped at Yellowstone and went on a tour of the Park the following day. I saw the best examples of geysers I would ever see, and I timed "Old Faithful". It was 64 minutes between outbursts. That evening some bright spark noticed that there were fireplaces at the campsite, so we let the Kontiki staff off the cooking and treated them to a traditional South African braai. The following day we set off for Jackson's Hole, passing through the Grand Teton National Park.

We had set up camp at Snake River Park by 2.30 and our river rafting was due at 5 p.m. So we decided to try some out ourselves. We armed ourselves with our airmattresses and went rafting down the creek at the edge of the campsite. After three people had punctured their mattresses we decided that it would be safer to wait for the official rafting. We went back to camp and occupied ourselves with tasks like polishing our shoes and keeping that accursed diary up to date. At last we went rafting and it was one of the highlights of the tour. That evening we went into the town of Jackson's Hole which was a classical tourist trap.

After yet another morning of packing the bus, we set off to the Mormon state of Utah. We stayed in Salt Lake City a short while and had a tour of Temple Square, the centre of Mormonism. We went into a shopping mall across the road and bought ourselves supper.

On Thursday, 21st July, we did not have breakfast at our campsite, but went to the Area Scout Campsite, Camp Maple Dell. It was the first decent meal I had had in a long time - scrambled eggs, sausage, bacon, an orange, a banana, a piece of cake, milk and orange juice. We spent the morning in the Boy Scouts of America campsite doing activities like shooting, archery, swimming and canoeing. We had lunch there too before heading on to Bryce National Park. That evening some of us went to a film on the Bryce Canyon. In the morning some of us went on a horseback trail ride, while the others went on a hike through the canyon.

Then we went on to the "Big Hole" - the Grand Canyon. It was a pity that they never let us go down into it. We camped at the Grand Canyon Camper Village. In the morning some of the guys went on a 10 minute helicopter ride over the canyon, while the rest went for a tour of the rim, before heading towards the 'City of Lost Wages', Las Vegas. We went via Hoover Dam, which is one of the highest dams in the world.

At Las Vegas we spent the evening and had dinner at Circus Circus, a casino circus tent, hotel and shopping centre complex. We had a wonderful buffet for 4 bucks. I saw a million dollars cash, and played some one-armed bandits while the guards weren't watching.

We had breakfast at Circus Circus and then set off for California. At Anaheim we stayed at the Ramada Inn and enjoyed the Jacuzzi, swimming pool, sauna, TV and other luxuries of a hotel. The following day we were dropped at Disneyland at ten in the morning and picked up at midnight. In the fourteen hours I spent there, I managed to go on 55 of the 56 attractions. In the evening they had a fireworks display and although it only lasted three minutes, it was the best fireworks display I have ever seen.

The next day we toured Universal Film Studios. In a stunt where 'Jaws' attacked the coaches, my hat fell into the water and was warped for the rest of the tour. That afternoon we went shopping, and swimming at the beach (there were no good waves!).

At 4.30 a.m. the following day we left on the first leg of our trip home from the United States of America after what has been the most wonderful experience of our lives.

CHRIS OLD - WATERBERG TROOP
1st Camps Bay

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