


# Concert Tour '03 – The Diaries

Rio, Petropolis, Floriznoaolis, Sao Paulo.

THE NATIONAL

## CHOIRER

May 19, 2003



### Singers Attacked By Bull Elephant!


ALSO IN THIS ISSUE ....

The true, uncut, unsensationalized story of the UVic Chamber Singers fabulous 4 week, 20 concert tour to Brazil and South Africa.

EXTRA

#### Hot stories inside:

- Conductor trapped in quicksand in Africa.
- Soprano nearly drowned in killer current in Durban.
- Singers robbed at knife point at Ipanema beach.



#### Soap Opera News

- Torrid and sordid tour love affairs.
- After concert activities
- "Mingling" with the locals in Brazil and South Africa

Pretoria, P'maritzburg, Grahamstown, Mossel Bay, Cape Town.



## Press Release: May 22, 2003.

After nearly 4 weeks and 20 concerts in Brazil and South Africa, the Chamber Singers and conductor, Bruce More are home at last!

The UVic group was housed by singers, state and municipal organizations in Brazil and families in South Africa. They performed 13 formal concerts in venues including the Noel Rosa Theatre at the State University of Rio, the San Francisco Church in Florianopolis, the Crystal Palace in the Brazilian Colonial Capital of Petropolis and the Adventist University Chapel in Sao Paolo. In South Africa, they sang in the University of Pretoria Chapel, the Cathedral at Pietermaritzburg, the Memorial Church at Rhodes University and the Maritime Museum in Mossel Bay. Audiences were highly enthusiastic and the Singers set an admirable record of 100% standing ovations (sometimes more than one in the same concert!).

Of the informal appearances, probably the most moving for the singers was at St. Mary's Church in the township of Guguletu, north of Capetown. A UVic Chamber Singers group attended this same church in '97 and were so moved by the 3 hours of congregational 3 part singing, that they gave a fund-raising concert upon their return to Victoria. Since the church had no musical instruments, the singers collected \$1500 to send to the church to buy a marimba. Of this year's visit, conductor Bruce More says, "I can't describe the emotion and excitement which I felt upon arrival to see not one, but four marimbas which the church had purchased with the funds, being expertly played as part of the service."

Other "people" experiences included much "partying" in Rio with their hosts, members of the "Altivoz" chorus, and the enlightening and sometimes contrasting experiences of visiting Black township schools in Soweto and Mamelodi, and staying with white Afrikaaner hosts. One singer put it succinctly: "In spite of our own feelings on racial issues, we learned that we could not begin to understand how a white South African family who had experienced years of turmoil, break-ins and robberies feels about their new political situation. We learned how to listen and to not judge too quickly." On the other hand, the great enthusiasm, warmth and outgoing nature of all the black people the singers met left a profound and life-changing impression. In Florianopolis, the group was treated to 3 nights of excellent accomodation and wonderful meals at SESC Cacupé - a vacation resort for Brazilian commerce employees, sponsored by offices the state and municipal governments.

In addition to the overwhelming response of the audiences, each day brought a new and unique experience. In Brazil: the vibrant life and superb vistas of Rio de Janeiro, the beaches at Florianopolis, the cool mountainous surroundings of Petropolis and probably the most lavish buffet the singers have ever enjoyed - in Sao Paolo.

In South Africa: visits to Black townships, game farms and cultural centres plus a visit to the International Library of African Music at Rhodes University, at which the singers were enlightened and entertained by curator Andrew Stacey performing folk songs with a wide variety of instruments from all over Africa. This institute also employs a quartet of Khosa men who sang and improvised African songs. Add to these experiences the exquisite scenery and beaches of the Cape area and the result was a tour which will last forever in memory.

As in past Chamber Singers' tours, this trip had no shortage of dramatic events including a knife point robbery of one of the singers on Ipanema Beach, a near drowning in the surf at Durban, and a quicksand incident near Mossel Bay. The last day of the tour was particularly dramatic when, after 24 hours of travel from Capetown, the flight from Sao Paolo to Newark was cancelled. The substitute flight 3 hours later put the singers at JFK, 2 hours after their scheduled connection home. Since no flights could be found which would allow the Victoria contingent to catch the last ferry, the airline put the group up at a hotel in Newark until the next morning's flight. As one singer put it, "this was the icing on the cake for a perfect tour", and the singers spent an unscheduled afternoon and evening in Manhattan. It is an ill wind that blows nobody good...



## Saturday, April 26 - Sunday, April 27 -Johnny Popoff

Once again, we're all gathered at YVR, ready to disembark on the wildest trip imaginable!!! The anticipation of going "down under" to Brazil and South Africa has been building tremendously all year... for some of us, it has been building for nearly TWO years, ever since that first hint from Master Bruce that the "Tour of all tours" was just around the corner. It's amazing that an entire year has gone by since the tour to East Asia, and for those of us that were standing here at Vancouver International Airport last year, the sense of déjà vu must be enormous... how time flies when you're a seasoned Chamber Drinker... uh.. I mean Singer... yes, CHAMBER SINGER!

So this time it's not Cathay Pacific non-stop to Hong Kong... no, this time it's Continental to Rio via Houston - a SIX HOUR LAYOVER in Houston at that! Do we have a problem???

Well, lo and behold, we arrived safely in Houston, and the first order of priorities was an impromptu choir rehearsal located in a corner of the airport... a remote area near some escalators... could the situation have been any more abnormal? To the well-seasoned Chamber Singer, such a scenario was as normal as... well... being a Chamber Singer!!! Squished into this corner as we were, it seemed like everyday business to us as we sight-read Bossi's Cantate Domino - a piece that we weren't going to be performing until we got to Grahamstown some two weeks later. There was something eerie and beautiful about that particular piece of music, which was to become forever associated with the memory of our unique little choir practice at Houston International Airport - the very first leg of our never-ending journey-to-be...

Of particular note during that rehearsal (which even attracted a small crowd) was a semi-unexpected and bizzare moment - we were in the middle of singing the Bossi, and suddenly Cassia sneezed, ever-so-innocently, and some airport official who just happened to be passing by our group en route to the escalator, ever-so gracefully turned towards the alto section and said the only thing he could say, "Bless You!" It was enough to make the entire group smile, some even laugh, in only the way that such a normal occurrence could seem amusing to the Chamber Singers. Thus began the tour of a lifetime, plum full of more bizzare scenarios than a combined episode of Survivor and Family Guy.

All was well in Houston (were we REALLY at George Bush International Airport???) as Celia diligently wrote a lengthy essay for some exam she was missing, while some of us attempted to swallow down the American version of a SUBWAY sandwich - the way a sandwich should NOT be!!! And what the HELL was that awful stench in the air??? (Oh... excuse me, that would probably be ME!)

Ah yes, the freshness of air... the growing anticipation of boarding that flight to Rio... and alas, we left North America once and for all, into the evening sky...

Most of us awoke that Sunday morning, as we flew over western Brasil, to the most spectacular sunrise one could ever imagine from the vantage point of an aircraft 38,000 feet above sea level. Looking down over the green misty landscape, now caressed by the early morning colourful sun rays, was truly breathtaking! We were far away from home - the overnight flight had taken us over the equator to the other side of the globe!!! It no longer mattered how little sleep anyone got - we were almost there!!!



and dramatically as follows:

-we met our hosts -we went home with our hosts -we ate with our hosts -we were all supposed to meet at Ipanema Beach -we all arrived at different times -some never even came that night -don't ask me why -we rode the tide under the night sky -and did I mention all them cab rides? -hang on tight, it's suicide! -worry not, no one will die... -can someone give me one more line? -is there a point to all this rhyme?

But that wasn't all... various members of our group got a more authentic welcoming to Rio.

Marissa got "flashed" on the bus by an intoxicated pre-pubescent boy, who overtly indicated that he was "ready to give'er"... pretty impressive, no?

Poor Andrew got mugged at knife-point while passively strolling along Ipanema Beach, and thus, his watch was forsaken without hesitation... hey, could have been worse... a lot worse!

Now Evan, on the other hand, found himself in a bit of a "sketchy" situation... his late-night "affairs" resulted in him being stuck in a cab for over two hours as he desperately tried to find his host's home. At one point, he was certain that it was just up this one hill, but to his grave astonishment, the cabbie looked at him strangely and mimed a machine gun being fired as he pointed towards the hill, leaving poor Evan to assume with a degree of certainty that it was the WRONG way to go! According to "the man" himself, it took the eventual light of dawn and Evan's own unique method of TRIANGULATION between specific landmarks in Rio, before he miraculously arrived safely at his billet's - how much was that cab ride again, Favro???

## Monday, April 28 -Alex Dunn

It was a good day which commenced with a morning meeting at the University of Rio, where we bussed to the gondola which carried us, in two separate trips, to the summit of Pao de Acucar (Sugar Loaf). While absorbing the stunning views of the bays, beaches, and sprawling, smoggy Rio, the choice members of the Chamber Singers enjoyed a

After a brief stopover in Sao Paulo, our group finally arrived in Rio de Janeiro. We were welcomed by our radiant host Gloria at the airport amid very warm temperatures - I'm talking HOT! We then proceeded to take two buses to the State University of Rio de Janeiro - it was quite an exhilarating ride, with much to view (like the dirty air, the dirty streets, and yes, the dirty, dilapidated homes of the poor). The rest of the day and night proceeded quite eventfully

refreshing Caipirina. Upon descending Sugar Loaf, we experienced technical difficulties when Geronimo and Cassia became separated from the group and the rest of us had to fend off annoying street vendors. Finally we broke away from the hawkers and headed through the Bohemian district to a charming tiny sushi restaurant. While it struck us as strange to be eating Sushi in Rio (Megan tentatively chewed raw fish), it was delicious and cheap. Now it was time to attack Corcovado, or "Cristo Redentor", who protects either the very rich or the very poor - he clearly doesn't have time for both. A local offered the explanation that Cristo's front side embraces the rich, while his backside presides over the favelas - shocking shacks that house Brasil's many poor. We caught the tram down to meet Altivos for a brief rehearsal for the Tuesday Concert. While waiting for the end, many of us went to 51 - a pizza/beer establishment. Many large SKOLS were consumed. As our first full day of the tour, this was an interesting and entertaining start to the remainder of our time in Brasil. I personally fell in love with that beautiful filthy city and its inhabitants who stride around the beaches and streets in skimpy bikinis - LONG LIVE RIO!

## Tuesday, April 29 - Bruce writes for Trish.

We sang at Collegio Pedro II - a fairly enlightened public school with an active and excellent choral programme. We've been to this sort of concert on a number of occasions, (250 kids) but the enthusiasm was even greater than Cuba if you can believe that and we were just "mobbed" by the kids wanting autographs and e-mails. It has been brutally hot in the last few days and it was easily 110 after the concert. They fed us a really nice buffet lunch following, then back to the university for a rest and showers before our 7 pm concert with Altivoz. Another great reaction from an audience of 200. Met several high level Rio conductors all spouting superlatives. Its a great programme and its connecting well with a variety of audiences. Our dear friend and hostess, Gloria is still the great "mother" to all of us providing the bus, most meals and of course the wonderful billets who all the singers rave about.

## Wednesday, April 30 -Lucas Marchand

Tour Journal: The Architecture of Purgatory

This day was one of tour judgement: a day that would decide whether the tour goes down in history or falls flat on its face. This day was, in my opinion, the TSN turning point of tour.

The day started well with an opportunity to sleep in! (our first of the tour so far). The choir met at 1:30 to take a bus to Petropolis, the Imperial retreat of Brazil. All in all, a standard beginning to the day.

It was then that the true "tour moments" began to unfold. As our bus was approaching the outskirts of Rio, the bus driver's window shattered, spreading a wave of shock through our crowded bus. We were forced to return to the University and repeat the trip to that point.

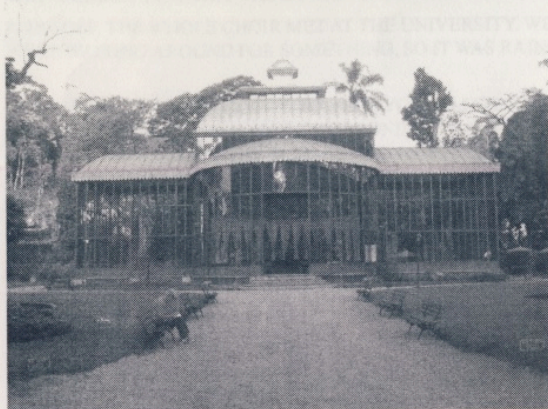
This day was a day on which tour awards were conceived in abundance. Tristan, with an unfortunate slip of the tongue, had half the choir believing that his "was small so it looks like (he) has no foreskin". Poor Tristan. Evan continued on his path of courage toward the "Canadian Ambassador to Brazil" award by flirting (successfully) with girls in a shop while on the bus! Who says language is a barrier? Finally, a tour moment that brought a smile to everyone's face. While changing after our concert at the Crystal Palace, some keen-eyed individual snapped a picture of Bruce



in nothing but teal-green tighties.

On the concert front, our performing also took a turn in the right direction. Our performance at the Crystal Palace was focussed and well-executed.

With all of these factors taken into account, I believe this tour will live forever in the annals of Chamber Singers history. We are a group that shall not be denied!



#### Thursday, May 1 - Bruce writes for Marissa.

Our last day in Rio was pretty much unscheduled, but at the last minute, Altivoz arranged a pot-luck party at someones apartment (booked party patio). So on Thursday morning, Gloria took Jordie and I to the market to buy ingredients to contribute to the potluck. I made Tiboulleh and Jordie made devilled eggs. You know me, going to the market and shopping was one of major highlights of our Rio stay. The party started at 1 until the bus picked us up at 5:30 to go to the airport. It was lots of great food, beverages and an endless programme of singing and Brazilian dancing. It was another hot day and we were all pretty sweaty by the time we boarded the bus.

This was the first near-disaster: the bus took us to the wrong airport and we had to speed back to the other one, just in time for our flight. But it all worked out fine. When we disembarked at Florianopolis, Cesar and Luci Valente were there with a first quality bus (unlike the unairconditioned "Toads Wild Ride" style of bus which we had come to know and love in Rio). About ten of the local choir were there to welcome us also. They took us to an Italian restaurant since there was no supper on the plane. It was a really excellent sort of up-scale place but the prices were really great (under \$10 for a huge plate of gourmet pasta and beer or wine.) By the time we got to the "resort", it was 2 am. The guys were in a 10 bunk room and the gals in 26 bunk rooms in a large building. Alex and I got a smaller family cabin with separate rooms and a small kitchen. This was the beginning of a much needed laid back schedule. The luxury bus is free for us to use for the duration of our stay and the meals are all buffet style and REALLY excellent - also free to us. This is a really excellent hosting!

#### Friday, May 2 - Lisa Shaw

I'm in paradise!!! This was my favourite day of this tour thus far! I love Florianopolis! We started the day with a South Island tour and wound up at one of the most beautiful beaches I have ever seen! As we were on the bus approaching this surfing haven, I was becoming increasingly more excited every second, and Bruce proposed to the group: "Someone give Lisa a hose," and "Somebody give Johnny a downer!" But I'm sure we weren't the only people who were getting excited! So, we spent about an hour on the beach, in which everyone basked in the extremely warm water and did some body surfing, and somehow Johnny managed to persuade some local (named Andre, ironically enough) to let him try his surfboard! (by the way, do you think that I could possibly end a sentence without an exclamation mark?) After our time at the beach, which was enjoyable but rather short-lived, we all went back to SESC Cacupe where we enjoyed another LOVELY meal in the cafeteria (could somebody please get me a bucket?) and then most of the group headed off to a jazz club. We were having an okay time, but then Evan decided there weren't enough girls between the ages of 18 and 30 there (we were definitely the youngest in the whole place), so Johnny and I went with him to a pretty hip place where there was live Brazilian music. Johnny and I had a good time trying to pick up on some dance moves while Evan scoped out the place for "babes" (whoa, major case of deja vu) and then we walked back to the Jazz club and got a ride back with Cesar (our host) where we listened to a Brazilian woman sing Beatles songs! An exciting end to an exciting day!

May 2 - cont'd (Bruce) Lisa really was at the concert yesterday .... honest! We did a sound check in the afternoon, at the Church of San Francisco and back to the resort for a rest and dress for the concert. I really had low hopes for an audience, since it was supposed to be members of local choirs, and we had had the disappointing behaviour of the group in Petropolis - but I was very wrong! It was a comfortable 150-200 people and the strongest response yet (and that's really saying something). At least 4 times during the programme we got a standing - yelling ovation and sold a ton of CDs - Yayyy! a TV cameraman with floodlights blaring stepped in front of me and recorded the sopranos during the entire middle of the piece. The kids were very proud of me - that I didn't stop the piece. I felt that I wasn't at home and I should probably behave myself. I really felt like taking the camera and examining his rear-end with it though! At the end of the piece I quietly asked Cesar to tell him "No more". He took more shots anyway, but this time from a distance. Then back to the "compound" and dinner which Cesar had arranged to be held for us - another great meal.

#### Saturday, May 3 - Tristan Carl

Our bus driver this morning decided that the scheduled, optional, trip to North Beach would be too far out of the way and too crowded, so he took us to a closer, less populated, unsurf-worthy [much to Dotchin's chagrin] beach. Regardless, most of us took advantage of our relatively free time wandering on the beach, catching some sun, swimming, bikini shopping or catching some waves on a high speed floating banana. After we'd all piled back onto the bus, our driver took us to a lookout point where we could see the amazing beach he thought we wouldn't have liked. We returned to Cacupe to get ready for our casual concert there,

in honour of the bedbugs in the dorms. After the concert [the bedbugs were impressed I could tell; I only had a couple of fresh bites in the morning] we piled into the bus to join our Florio hosts, the Associatao Coral de Florianopolis at their clubhouse where they plied us with food and drink. We ate. We mingled [a little]. They sang. We sang. We left, full and happy. Later, a group of us expressed interest in seeing some night life, and were recommended a pub which had live music. We took the bus there and found a live jazz trio, led by a manic drummer [who seemed to resemble a human incarnation of Animal; though far outdoing the irrepressible muppet with his skill with the sticks]. Most of us enjoyed the mellow atmosphere and good music, though there was a minority upset at the lack of prey [\*cough\*Evan].

#### Sunday, May 4 - written by Bruce for Dan.

Our flight to Last Sao Paulo was uneventful (a hell of a lot better than the 8 hour bus ride we were facing initially). Our concert at the Adventist University was another blast - except this time it was to 700 people and 2 encores. I'm getting too old for this excitement. I think I'll start a rock and roll group - it would be less stress..... A couple of general comments about the tour thus far:

1. Acoustics - ranging from excellent to superb - really not what I had expected - which was "challenging acoustics" like everything else about this trip, superb!!
2. Weather - Clear blue sky for the first sight-seeing day in Rio, then VERY hot and humid - but one of those days was spent in the cool mountains of Petropolis. Much cooler (70's) in Florianopolis even though it is on the 27th parallel (we're on the 49th!!!) Sao Paulo is also in the 70's and they're right on the tropic of Capricorn.
3. My fake tooth: after the concert a little girl came up and asked for my autograph. She proceeded to put her pen tip in her mouth to pull it apart - so I said no, no - do you want to end up looking like me and took my tooth out to show her the gap. Her parents though it was hilarious, but I thought the girl was going into shock - her eyes were so wide!
4. Food - different things include a lot of exotic fruits, some I've never tried before; the staple of the Brazilian diet: manioc (taro root) served as french fries or just boiled for breakfast with butter; and of course lots of "Moors and Christians" black beans and rice. A lot of chicken, sausage, beef and pork. The food was especially good at the resort in Florianopolis. The worst was last night in the cafeteria here. Remember that 7th Day Adventists are vegetarians and the "meat" was "fake" - I had forgotten this little matter, but I always eat what is on my plate.....

#### Monday, May 5 - Jordie Robinson

Today was my birthday... and they bought me a drink... so I don't remember anything... even though it was only one drink... it must have been a strong drink, then... as it wiped out the whole day's memory... both before and after the drink... if that can happen... so... that's all I can remember... so... sorry...

But... I felt a little guilty... so I asked Geronimo's backpack to write my entry for me... I guess his backpack is the greatest backpack I have ever known, so... yeah... I hope he does it...



I DON'T NORMALLY WRITE BECAUSE I DON'T LIKE WRITING. BUT JORDIE'S A COOL GUY AND IT'S HIS BIRTHDAY AND ALL, SO I WRITE. BUT I WRITE ABOUT ME. MY PERSPECTIVE.

MY DAY STARTED ALRIGHT. I HAD BLISSFUL PEACE AND QUIET IN THE EARLY MORNING. THEN GERONIMO AND THE 3 DUDES HE WAS BILLETING WITH WOKE UP, AND IT ALL STARTED. ONE-LINER JABBER THAT DIDN'T LET UP ALL MORNING. THESE GUYS WERE LIKE PIGS AT A WATERMELON! SHIT! I COULD TELL THIS WAS GOING TO BE A LONGISH DAY.

FIRST OFF, THE WHOLE CHOIR MET AT THE UNIVERSITY. WE WERE WAITING AROUND FOR SOMETHING, SO IT WAS RAINING.

I GUESS NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO TELL YOU A LITTLE BIT ABOUT MYSELF. AS YOU KNOW, I'M GERONIMO'S BACKPACK FOR THIS TOUR, AND THOUGH I'M AS OLD AS PIGS AT A WATERMELON, I WAS PLEASED WHEN HE DECIDED TO TAKE ME. AT FIRST, I HAD REAL RESPECT FOR THIS GUY. HE WAS KIND TO ME, NEVER OVER-PACKED ME, AND EVEN DESCRIBED ME ONCE AS "A PORT IN THE STORM", WHICH IS TOO TRUE. BUT, LATELY, MY RESPECT FOR HIM IS BEGINNING TO FADE. IT STARTED WITH LITTLE THINGS, LIKE THE WAY HE CARRIES ME, BY ONLY ONE STRAP! SURE, THAT WAS FINE IN MY YOUTH WHEN I WAS ACCOMPANYING THE LITTLE STREB KIDS TO SCHOOL. BUT WE'RE ADULTS NOW, AND I... SHOULDN'T DWELL ON THIS.

BUT THIS MORNING, GERONIMO HEIGHTENED MY DISTRESS BY SUDDENLY HAVING TO GO SOMEPLACE DURING THE WAITING, AND HANDING ME TO BRUCE, WHO PLACED ME ON THE WET GROUND SHORTLY AFTER! LUCKILY, JORDIE CAME TO MY RESCUE AND PICKED ME UP. THAT'S WHEN I REALIZED HOW MUCH OF A SAINT THAT KID IS. BUT I'M NOT HERE TO WRITE A BOOK, SO I'LL LEAVE THAT TOPIC ALONE. OF COURSE, GERONIMO THEN TOOK ME BACK, AND THEN "HE" PLACED ME ON THE WET GROUND!

ANYWAYS, THOUGH MY INJUSTICE IS IMPORTANT, IT COULD ALSO FILL A BOOK, AND I'M SUPPOSED TO WRITE ABOUT THE DAY, SO I SPEAK OF THE DAY.

ALL THE USUAL THINGS THAT HAPPEN HAPPENED ON THIS DAY. YA KNOW, WE SPENT MORE TIME WAITING THAN WE DID DOING (MAYBE THIS IS WHY CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS IN THE CHOIR SAY "DOOOOOOOO IIIIIIIIIIT" ON A REGULAR BASIS). JOHNNY YELLED OUT "YO YO MA!" AT RANDOM POINTS OF EXCLAMATION (WHEN HE WASN'T FARTING AND/OR TALKING ABOUT FARTING, THAT IS). AND I STILL DIDN'T MANAGE TO FIND OUT WHAT KIM'S RIGHT EAR LOOKS LIKE, AS THERE WAS A PAY PHONE COVERING IT WHENEVER I LOOKED AT HIM! FOR ALL I KNOW, HE COULD HAVE A SKANK DRESSED IN ALL BLUE COMING OUT OF HIS RIGHT EAR. I WOULDN'T KNOW!

ANYWAYS, APART FROM ALL OF THE USUAL THINGS, WE DID STUFF TOO. WE WENT TO A MALL (I STAYED IN THE BUS), AND PEOPLE BOUGHT THINGS. TIM FINALLY GOT HIS LEATHER JACKET, AND NOW HE LOOKS AS SLICK AS PIGS AT



A WATERMELON! OTHER PEOPLE BOUGHT STUFF TOO, BUT IT'S TOO BORING TO TALK ABOUT.

THEN WE WENT TO A BARBEQUE LUNCH, AND FROM ALL THE HYPE ABOUT IT AFTERWARDS, I GATHER THAT IT WAS A PRETTY RIP-YOUR-FACE-OFF BUFFET! I HEAR SALLY MADE A GOOD OBSERVATION: "THIS PLACE IS CRAZY! THE MORE YOU EAT, THE FULLER YOUR PLATE GETS!" THEY ALL FELT A LITTLE SORRY FOR THE VEGETARIANS, THOUGH, BECAUSE THEY KEPT GETTING HUGE SLABS OF FRESH, DRIPPING MEAT IN THEIR FACES. BUT EVAN WAS FEASTING LIKE PIGS AT A WATERMELON. MAN PIG WAS IN HEAVEN.

THEN WE WENT TO THE SAO PAULO AIRPORT, WHERE GERONIMO ABUSED ME FURTHER, BY USING ME AS A CUSION WHILE HE TOOK A RIDE ON THE LUGGAGE MOVER THINGY.

THE ACTUAL FLIGHT TO SOUTH AFRICA WAS NO BETTER. BECAUSE OF THE FREE ALCOHOL, THE CHOIR GOT AS DRUNK AND ROWDY AS PIGS AT A WATERMELON. NO ONE GOT SLEEP, AND WE LOST 5 HOURS. A SORRY-LOOKING BUNCH WE WERE. AND THAT'S IT. THE END.

BUT I GUESS I SHOULD QUICKLY ADD SOMETHING ABOUT JORDIE'S 21ST BIRTHDAY, AS IT WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THE DAY. HE SAYS THAT EVERYONE GENEROUSLY GAVE OF THEIR TIME AND ENERGY TO MAKE HIM FEEL SPECIAL ON THIS DAY. A HOMEMADE CARD, LITTLE GIFTS, DRINKS, AND EVEN PUNCHES ON THE ARM! IT WAS ALL WONDERFUL, HE REPORTS. BUT EARLIER HE ALSO REPORTED THAT HE DOESN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING, SO MAYBE HE'S JUST FUCKED IN THE HEAD... LIKE PIGS AT A WATERMELON.

### Tuesday, May 6 - Geronimo Morris

airplane... airplane... airplane South African Airlines is great, good food, lots of room, super-hot stewardesses.

Bruce is in 1st class... ha, ha.

get to South Africa - a lot colder than Brazeo. Customs... wait, wait, wait...

-Hey, the other choir is here, great! ...bus to Pretoria and then a lame bus tour of Afrikaner glory spots... not so glorious for the Zulus.

tired, tired, tired.

University is really nice, host family is really nice. rooming with Timotei. fell asleep during boy's choir.

TUKS University Choir is REALLY good. Good strong bass section, although the bass beside me was quite hesitant during rehearsal.

home to dinner, very nice family. Very Africans - offensive opinions about "them" but otherwise nice people.

quite odd.

sleeping to Tim's snoring

goodnight

LONG LIVE CAPE AGULHAS!!!

### Wednesday, May 7 - written by Bruce for Hailey.

Today's trip was to Soweto, where we saw the "Soweto uprising" memorial which has changed greatly from '97 - where the 2 trailers with the photographs were is now a memorial park and plaque including a large building with photos, TV clips and a movie. It's a wonderful place with a lot of information. Like most public things in SA now there seems to be an attempt to provide both sides of 20th C. history. Unfortunately (or as I believe: fortunately) there is much evidence of racist thought from many of our Afrikaaner hosts - both in Pretoria and in PMB. I say fortunately, because I believe we had a somewhat sheltered view last time with our mainly British hosts. The Brits don't speak their mind the way the Boers do and we may as well know how people really feel if we are going to make the world a better place. I have very real sympathy (although not empathy for these people).

Between the oppression of the British, attacks of the Zulus, the crippling boycott of the 90's and the current urban crime (mostly black - but so is 95% of the population) which is the inevitable result of their total economic "restart" they have gut reasons for feeling the way they do and we, with our comfortable idealism really know little of what they feel. However, I still don't feel that their somewhat paranoid views are right and I know that much of what they believe is counterproductive to the development of the new South Africa. However, I do see enough change in this wonderful country that leads me to believe that succeeding generations will gradually temper these views and at some point in the future, white will come to terms with black on a national scale and vice versa.

We saw more of the worst and best of Soweto than in 97 - the barracks where the pre-apartheid miners lived and the quite nice suburban houses which are growing in Soweto - also the most successful BMW dealership in SA - also in Soweto. We had lunch in Soweto at "Wandy's place", a wonderful buffet of South African traditional food. The meat dishes were on simmer for hours, so overcooked, but some of the veggie dishes were quite stunning.

We returned on a brief drive through Joburg which looked pretty much the same as in '97.