

## *The Beer Down Here*



*The continuing saga of the U. Vic.  
Chamber Singers in South Africa who,  
like the Portuguese explorers before them....*

The University Of Victoria Chamber Singers Concert Tour  
South Africa - April 24 - May 13, 1997.



### GUIDE TO THE PHOTOGRAPHS:

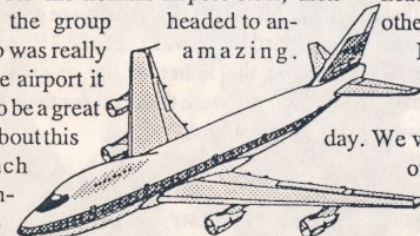
- Panel 1: Westminster Abbey was great, but this!!
- Panel 2: First hand account from Mike Masote of the Soweto uprising of 1975 - Neil and Jenn view the exhibit.
- Panel 3: Zulu Dancer explains to Neil why Shannon won't bring 11 head of cattle, but.....maybe a hind quarter - André with his groupies.
- Panel 4: The many faces of partying..
- Panel 5: The group in St. Thomas Church Garden after another great concert - Dan and Yolanda on the beach at Durban (Thanks for the photos, Yo!!)
- Panel 6: Throw momma from the train! - Off to a particularly remote concert venue.
- Panel 7: The steam train from Knysna to George - Our backdrop for the Mossel Bay concert.
- Panel 8: Guguletu township from the freeway - From Cape Point across Table Bay.

The Chamber Singers in England & South Africa, April 24 - March 14

## Dead Diary

THURS. APRIL 24 - 6:30 PM FLIGHT TO LONDON.

From about 4:00 pm on, people began to arrive at the Vancouver Airport, and of course, most headed to a pub to have some pre-tour refreshments. We did the normal airport stuff, then headed to our gate, where about half the group headed to another pub. The excitement in the group was really amazing. From the attitude of the group in the airport it was obvious that this was going to be a great tour. There's not a lot else to say about this day. We were beginning to get to know each other and each other's little idiosyncrasies. (I think that all I need to say is -Rick-, every-one knows what I mean.) Here's to South Africa '97. Let's party hard, laugh loud, and make lots of beautiful music.



Carrie-Ann

FRI. APRIL 25 - 12:15 PM ARR. LONDON - BUS TO OXFORD ENGLAND

SAT. APRIL 26 - MORNING FREE IN OXFORD, 2:30PM REHEARSAL, 7:30PM CONCERT AT HERTFORD COLLEGE CHAPEL WITH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT YOUTH CHOIR. AUDIENCE OF 75.

Across this great sea, we're on our way,  
making new friendships tomorrow and today.  
Tempers flare in first rehearsal  
always the case, it's universal.  
The flight was long and my legs are sore  
I've finally found the hockey score.  
Our first concert was a great success  
knowing all along we're the best.  
After the concert we're on our way  
hit a local pub to party. yea.  
Patience and understanding is what works best  
Blowing up and frustrated just shows your better than the rest  
So on this day we say good-night  
hoping that tomorrow has no fights  
so until the next day, I say goodbye.



I miss Canada and want to cry.  
Just kidding, I don't cry that easy.

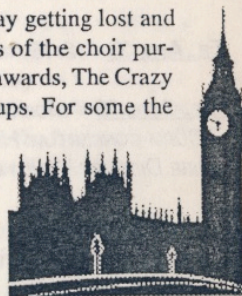
*Andrew*

So far, the Chamber Singers tour has been a blast. These last couple of days in England have been pretty amazing because I have never been in the UK before. Our concert with the Oxfordshire Youth Chamber Choir was a success. The young voices of Peter Hunt's choir sound very mature and sound really good for a young choir. After the concert it was time to drink at the nearest pub. I have never gotten drunk twice in one day before but it happened, before and after the concert. The next day, I spent the whole day in downtown Oxford, and by the end of the day I probably knew that area inside and out because I walked for many hours in that town. My billets, the Paisens, were great hosts and I would like to visit them again. The weird thing was Dan and I were relocated for the final night at the Burts because the father of our original host was returning from New Zealand. In any case we were thankful for their hospitality and kindness. The Burts were just as good a host.

*Bryan*

SUN. APRIL 27 - OXFORD ENGLAND. FREE DAY

Today was our free day in Oxford. The group scattered and each group seems to have had fun. A large group went into London on the train and proceeded to have a wonderful day getting lost and discovering London on their own. Two members of the choir purchased hats that would determine one of the tour awards, The Crazy Hat. Some of the rest of us stayed in small groups. For some the musical highlight were the morning and evensong services at the colleges. Five of us took off in Bruce's billets car to explore places he and I had been while in England before. We saw a lot of beautiful countryside and had a picnic on the grounds of a ruined Manor house before it was time to go back to our billets for dinner. The London group did not return until late evening from their trip.



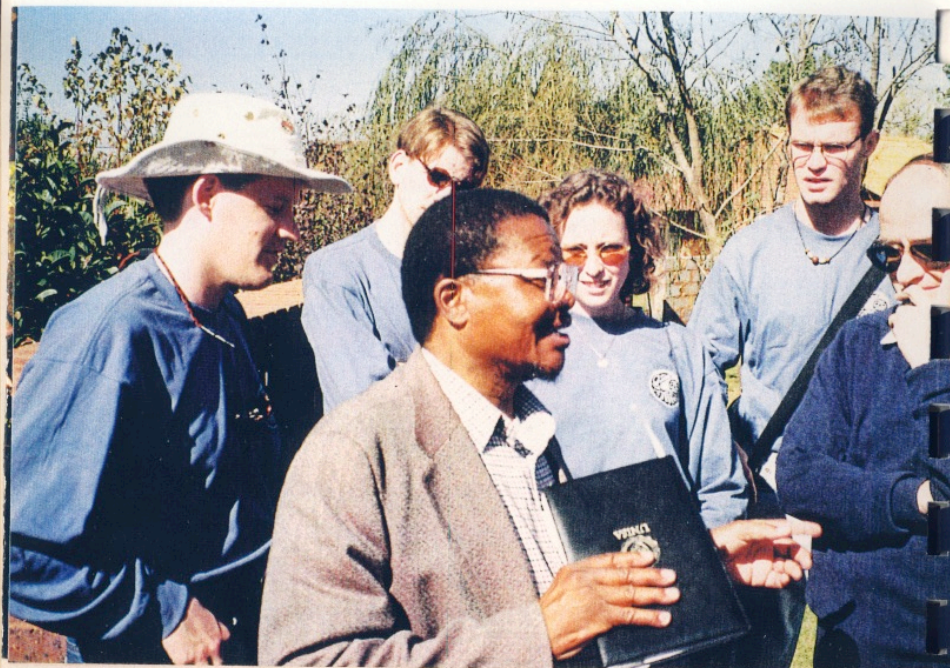
*Alexis*

Sunday was a 100% free day. I didn't see one Chamber Singer on this day. Jet lag was rampant, and I slept in until 3:00 pm. I spent the day walking around the shire and getting zapped by electric fences. The afternoon and evening were spent in the little pub just around the corner. The beer was great. It was a classic English pub, like I mean the real thing. Everyone was friendly and interesting to speak with. I closed out the pub and went to bed.

*Rick*







Mon. April 28 - DAY TRIP TO LONDON, BUS TO TRAFALGAR SQUARE, FREE MORNING, 3PM "CAMEO" PERFORMANCE IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY, 8 PM FLIGHT TO JOHANNESBURG

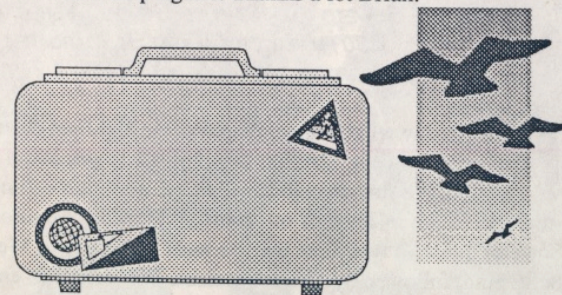
London was an interesting place but I found it too dirty, and since I have some allergies, it affected me in many ways. The prices in England were also a little expensive, but the British pound is strong, so I guess they have their reasons. Overall, England and our stay was a success, and I would love to come back again. Things I will remember most during my stay in England are the pubs, the beers, the fish and chips, and the women. There were a lot of beautiful British women and I wanted some. My biggest disappointment was not meeting the Spice Girls, but I guess you can't have everything. Right now, I am sitting in a plane going to Johannesburg, and it is a long flight. What gets me is that there is only a one hour time difference between London and Johannesburg. I have never been to South Africa either and I hope it will be just as fun as it was in England. So far this tour is going well and it is only going to get better.

**Brian**

Tues. April 29 - 8:35 AM, ARR. JOHANNESBURG, FREE DAY, SIGHT SEEING TOUR OF DOWNTOWN AND MUSEUM OF AFRICA, EVENING FREE AT MOTEL.

It was a dark and stormy night, somewhere over Africa. We are on the plane, watching lightning far below. We left London about three hours ago aboard a 747-400. I am very drunk, and just lost a bottle of wine to Mark. We were playing cards, and Brian A. was helping me. Thanks a lot Brian.

Passed out.  
Woke up.  
Breakfast.  
Plane landed.  
Got Luggage.  
Customs.  
Bus.  
Luggage Vultures.  
Luggage Vultures???



BE WARNED! A new form of life has been discovered indigenous to South Africa. I call them Luggage vultures. These creatures swoop down on helpless unsuspecting luggage resting near a bus and load it into the bus. At which point these merciless beings expect and demand to be paid for their hard work. Protect your luggage at all cost. **YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!**

We checked into the hotel. It is the Best Western in Bedford View, a suburb of Johannesburg. It is a beautiful hotel, with fountains, a pool, nice





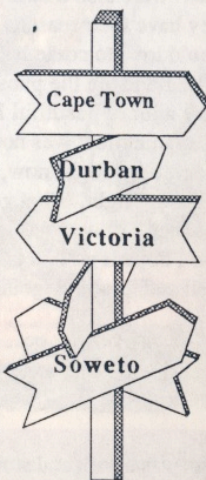
restaurant, gates, 8 foot wall surrounding the grounds with electrified wire on top, and friendly armed security guards.

We had a tour of Johannesburg, led by a former chemical engineer turned tour guide. I learned quite a bit about the history of South Africa. We saw some amazing sites, and went to the black history museum (Museum of Africa).

After that, we returned to the hotel for dinner on our own. We had great food, thanks to Dallas and Mark who cooked up a storm in our room. Thanks guys. I think Robert and I forgot to do dishes. Oops. With dinner, we had some South African wine. It was great. After dinner, we had some more wine, sat around, talked, more wine, talked, more wine, and then went to a party in Andre's room. Lots more wine.

The party had already started when we got there. We joined the drinking games, and I lost count of Roberts synonyms for penis. Way to go Robert! Next came the readings. Readings like this must be experienced, and can not be described. Any attempt would be incomplete, so I shall say nothing else. I left the party early and stumbled back to my room. Apparently I missed the main event. All I know is that a toilet seat got broken, and the phrase "That's ok. I won't listen," are involved. I think I don't really want to know how.

**Michael**



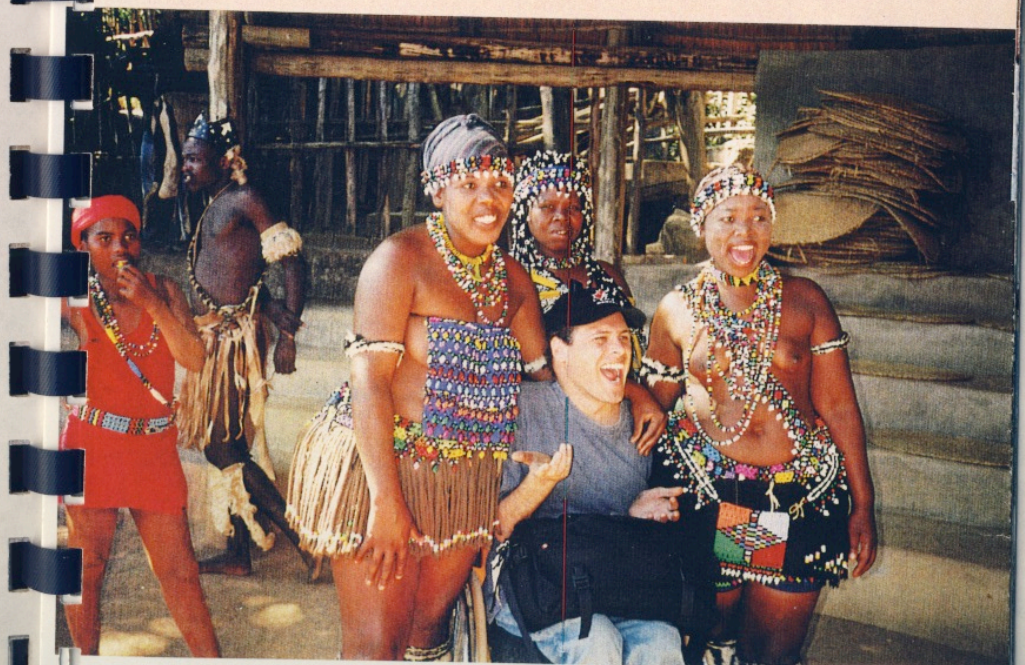
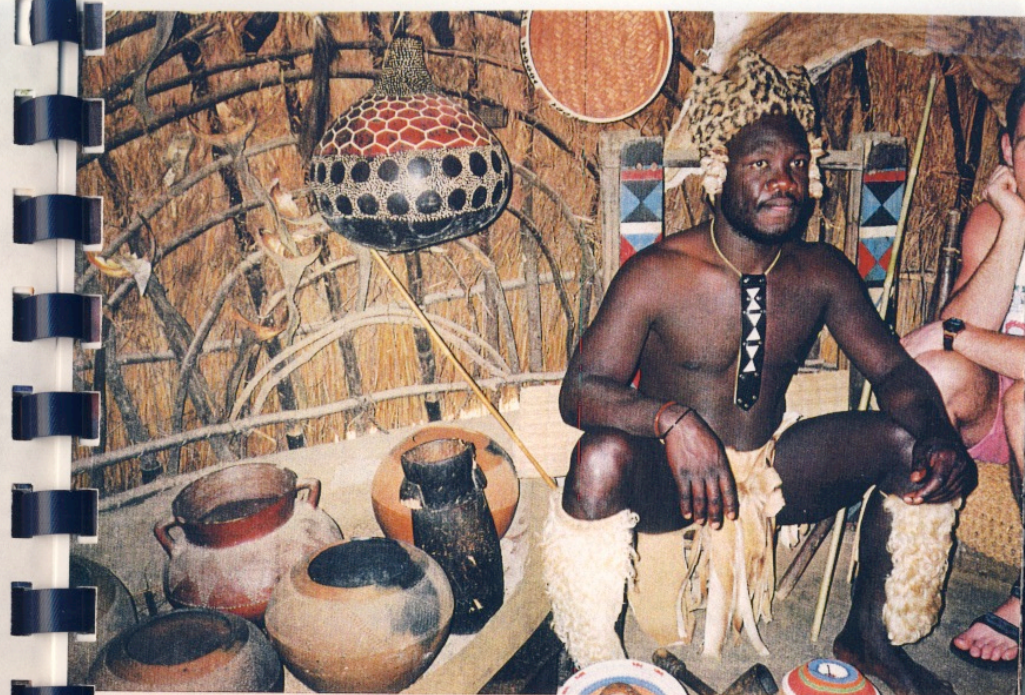
**Wed. April 30 - JOHANNESBURG**

VISIT TO SOWETO AND MNCUBE SCHOOL, PERFORMED TO 400 STUDENTS, 7:30 PM PERFORMANCE AT ST. MARGARET'S (CATHOLIC) CHURCH IN BEDFORDVIEW. AUDIENCE OF 80.

I think this day will be remembered as the highlight day of the tour. We rode the bus to Soweto. The first stopping place was at the memorial of Hector Petersen, the first student killed in the student rebellion of 1976. The next stop was at the in laws of our tour guide, Mike Masoto's (tour guide from Soweto) house. It was there that we meet his relatives. We sang from memory Selig Sind, followed by Shweelo eeleee. We were then entertained by Mike's mother in law, who sang for us.

Our next stop was at Nelson Mandela's house. We proceeded to the Five Roses Bowl. We then crossed the street to a music and drama school where we watched a scene from a play about AIDS.

Then Came the highlight of the day. We stopped at a high school in Soweto. It was quite an experience as we were all greeted with such happiness. The first event was before their choir sang for us, which was the singing of their national anthem we started it, and they joined in on the repeat. They finished the anthem with a different version than we knew. Their choir then proceeded with







their portion of the the concert. I enjoyed this very much as their combination of singing and movement made it a very entertaining performance. Our part then followed, and it seemed to be met with great approval. After the concert that address exchanging began. Most of us were totally mobbed and we were writing and receiving addresses nonstop for a very extended period of time. After much socialising and picture taking it was time to depart. I think we all found it equally hard to leave as we had never been in a place that exhibited such happiness. I am pretty sure that this experience will rank up among the best we will have on tour.

That evening we must still have been riding the high from the days events as we performed a great concert at St. Margaret's Church. I was especially happy because it was the first time I had been able to get my hands on an organ. The concert was followed by some wine and cheese upstairs, then a party in our hotel room that lasted into all hours of the morning.

This days events have made it the best day on tour to date, and it is one that will have to have a very significant event to out do. This will probably remain in our memories for the rest of our lives..

**Robert**

Quote of the day (if not the tour) - overheard from a teacher at the Soweto school.

**"White folks singing in choirs,  
hmmm, I thought they only  
played in orchestras"**

THURS. MAY 1 - COACH TO PIETERMARITZBURG.

7:30 PM CONCERT AT CATHEDRAL OF THE HOLY NATIVITY (ANGLICAN).

AUDIENCE OF 100.

**S**orry folks, but today was ... well ... somewhat uneventful. We left the hotel in Jo-berg at 9:30 am. and drove for three hours before stopping for lunch.

(We saw some armed soldiers at our rest stop - is that exciting? ... No? ... Oh ... o.k. ... Never mind, then.) We arrived in Pietermaritzburg (usually Maritzburg or even P.M.Burg) late in the afternoon, and went to our billets homes for dinner. Our concert that evening was at the Holy Trinity Church, and it went very well (we're awesome, guys). Afterwards, as far as I know, everybody simply went home to bed - unless there was some big party that nobody told me about, in which case, I hate you all.

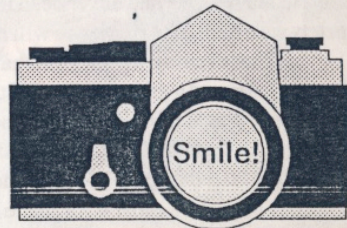
**Brian**





FR. MAY 2 - COACH TO DURBAN, VISIT TO ZULULAND, AFTERNOON FREE  
AT THE BEACH. EVENING WITH HOSTS.

We started the day with a coach to Durban from Pietermaritzberg which was about 1 hour. (We stopped off at "Zululand" a theme park with zulu dancers in costume, authentic huts etc. They danced for us, we sang for them, we hugged, took pictures....another memorable "people" experience.) Then it was off to the beach to catch some waves! We went to one of the main beaches called West Beach. Since it was winter for South Africans, it wasn't too crowded. The weather was beautiful and hot, and the ocean was quite warm too, especially to those who are used to the frigid waters of the Pacific ocean. There were quite a few little vendors around the waterfront and some people bought little trinkets but the prices were inflated for the tourism.



After an awesome day at the beach we met our hosts for the next two nights. Most people were billeted in medium to large groups, and my family had seven of us, brave lady! She had never had anyone stay with her like that before but you wouldn't know it, she was the best host I stayed with!

Just after sun down, the sky was getting dark and gloomy with lots of clouds as the heavens prepared for a thunder storm. The lightning was amazing, because we were so high up over the city. The huge sky was lit with mostly fork lightning but also some sheet lightning. Unfortunately we were too far away from the source to hear the thunder.

After an amazing meal we hung-out for a while and finally decided to go to a bar called "TJ's." Once we got in after being ID'd and searched for guns the bar was cool, half inside and half outside. The music was very loud and the DJ sat in an old Volkswagen van they had mounted on one wall. We tried some different drinks - one called "cane & coke," a mix made with fermented sugar cane. We also tried a "fish bowl" which comes in a huge jug and consists of 1 ounce of all the white liquors and blue cacao. I think it cost somewhere around twenty to twenty-two Rand (\$5.59). Since the bar was right next to the stadium there was a rugby team in their jerseys enjoying a mug of beer with their teammates. As most European sports teams are when they have a few beer with their buds, they get a little rowdy and start to budge up to the bar and start to demand things. Dan was also standing at the bar and had to be restrained from having his face rearranged by some guy. Meanwhile Rick and Brian D. were having their own opinions towards the rugby players also requiring some restraint so they didn't start a brawl! Fortunately everyone kept their cool and we had a good night getting home at about 1 am.

Quote o' the Day:

"I don't need a mirror, my mom tells me how good I look." Rick







SAT. MAY 3 - DURBAN - MORNING SIGHT-SEEING TOUR INCLUDING INDIAN MARKET, 3PM CONCERT AT ST. THOMAS (ANGLICAN) CHURCH, (MUSGRAVE) - AUDIENCE OF 120, EVENING FREE WITH HOSTS.

**A**s soon as the day began, Michael and I were out at a club in Durban. I must say that the girls down in South Africa seem to have a much higher percentage of drop dead gorgeousness. Also, an interesting piece of info, most clubs close here at 4:00 am, you get two hours more to party. We finally got to sleep at 4:00 am only to wake up at 8:30 am. The day continued with a guided tour of Durban, with our guide Melody. As far as outrageous, funny quotables, it was a pretty dry day. But, today was the first time we fell victim to the criminal element. Both Rick and Brian A. got their garment bags stolen, and Neil had his smelly sandals lifted. Apparently they didn't like the shirt in Rick's bag because they took it out and threw it on the fence. Choosy, but odd criminals. Anyhow, not much to say, so, auf wiedersehen!

Mark

SUN. MAY 4 - COACH TO EAST LONDON

SANG 3 PIECES AT 8:30AM SERVICE AT ST. THOMAS. 8 HOUR TRIP TO EAST LONDON THROUGH THE TRANSKEI EVENING WITH HOSTS.



MON. MAY 5 - EAST LONDON

SANG THREE SCHOOL CONCERTS: HUDSON SCHOOL (400), SELBOURNE SCHOOL (400) AND CLARENDON SCHOOL (400). BARBECUE AND AFTERNOON AT BEACH. 7:30PM CONCERT AT ST. JOHN'S (ANGLICAN) CHURCH. AUDIENCE OF 140.

- 7:30 -Woke up to maid bringing in coffee on a tray.
- 8:00 -Deal with Max.(Bull Dog, horny horny, horny Max)
- 9:00 -On Bus.
- 9:30 -Sing at school.
- 10:00 -Sing at other school.
- 11:00 -Sing at girl school.
- 11:30 -go to beach, drink bad coffee, write, trip out.
- 1:30 -eat more chicken.
- 5:00 -go back to billets, deal with "naughty" Max some more.
- 7:30 -concert, went well, one of the funniest.
- 10:45 -go back to billet, deal with Max, listen to music, drink wine, sleep.

André



TUE. MAY 6 - COACH TO KNYSNA.

6 HOUR TRIP, STOP IN PORT ELIZABETH. CHECK INTO GUEST HOUSE (MOTEL), GROUP DINNER AT DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH. EVENING FREE.

**T**oday was a travel day. We were dropped off at the bus early, and spent most of the day on the road again. One stop was to see a deep gorge underneath a bridge - another few dollars in the Kodak coffers.

We arrived at Ashwood, the guest house with the pool, cottages, and pirate restaurant. Dinner that night was at the Dutch Reform Church and the vegetarians had a lot of salad. Parties that night were \*relatively\* subdued and a few people went for a late dip in the pool, naked.

Ian

WED. MAY 7 - KNYSNA

MORNING REHEARSAL, LUNCH AND AFTERNOON IN TOWN OR AT BRENTON-ON-SEA BEACH. 7:30 PM CONCERT AT DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH AUDITORIUM. AUDIENCE OF 250, DINNER FOLLOWING.

**T**his morning we woke up to a foggy day in Knysna, our first city on the famous Garden Route. This was also our first experience of the temperate zone of South Africa (as opposed to the tropical.) After good sleep and wonderful buffet breakfast, we left for a brief rehearsal at the Dutch Reformed Church. After rehearsal, several people stayed in town for the rest of the morning while others of us went to a beautiful beach called Brenton-On-Sea, named by early British settlers. Several people (Neil, Steve, and others) were disappointed that they were not able to get past the break in the surf because the waves were too strong and high with a strong undertow. However, we quickly discovered a huge rock with a sink hole on one side which sent geysers of mist and water high in the air often getting us very wet! This activity kept us occupied for most of the morning. We got a lot of pictures of the waves crashing around us, and of the group of us on the rock. The fun temporarily stopped when Bruce fell while taking a picture of us from down below and scraped his leg on a herd of mussels. OUCH! After several fun filled hours in the sun, we went back to town and joined those who had been there all morning in an afternoon of shopping. Knysna was a little disappointing in this way, as some of us were hoping to find more traditional Zulu souvenirs and they were rather expensive.

