

given to us explaining each dance:

CHIMAL CULTURAL GROUP  
Introduces Nepal in Folk and Classical Dances

Chimal is the flower that blooms on the high mountain above 12000 ft. It is a very beautiful flower. The fragrance of Chimal is very sweet. It is a multicoloured flower too. As Chimal enchants the wilderness with its gay colour, similarly it is expected that the dances presented by the Chimal Cultural Group will please the visitors.

1. BANDANA The entire Nepalese culture is based on religion. The religion blended with Hinduism and Budhism.

It is the Nepalese customery that before any work is started some prayers are offerded to some god and goddess. Some Bandana is done to the many gods or goddess. according to the nature of work his Bandana is particularly dedicated to the goddess of dancing NATESWARI.

2. SEBRU The meaning of Sebru is the Rythmic feet. The dance is quite popular among the Sherpa community settled in the Himalaya region. The Sherpas are the people who have acclaimed the fame as the Master of Mountaineers in the world. Though they have to bear great hardships in their lives yet they are happy and smiling In festvals they

drink lots of CHHYANG, the Nepales rice beer, and keep on singing and dancing throughout the whole night.

11. LAKHEY Lakhey is a mythcal demon. It had terrified all the children of Kathmandu. Still the parents use the name of Lakhey to stop the crying children. The children are so scared that they stop crying when the name of Lakhey is heard.

The religious belief is this that Lord Krishna had killed this demon. Every year in order to mark the coming of on great festival, this dance is performed for a week.

12. JHANKRI Jhankri is the witch doctor. These sorts of doctors are still in use among the people of the remote parts of the country where the medical facilities have not been able to be provided.

This is a premitive dance. To cure the sick people Jhankri playes the drum, eats the fire, enchants mystic hymns and dance.

15. KUMARI Nepal is the home of Gods and God-esses, Ganesh and Kumari are worshipped first Kumari is the vestal virgim Goddess. She dances in a very pleasant mood. This dance has

taken place as the classical dance of Nepal.

We returned to our hotel just in time for the meeting. There, in a cold reception room in heavy sweaters and parkas, we sat in a semicircle on wooden folding chairs and listened as Neil and Graeme briefed us.

Neil told us that we would be staying in hotels until we reached the Mediterranean where we would begin to camp. Turkey was the only Asian country on our itinerary which had suitable camping facilities. We would pick up our camping equipment in Isfahan, Iran. Tomorrow he would draw up a rotating work roster for the group which would consist of three work details of four persons each. The bus detail would begin its duties in Birganj, Nepal, where we would finally board our London bus. But, the cooking and cleanup details would not become active until we started camping.

Graeme informed us that in addition to cleaning the bus inside and out, the bus detail would be responsible, in most cases, for loading and unloading it. Neil continued by saying that the cooking detail would buy food in local markets, prepare it, and serve it for breakfast and dinner. The cleanup detail would set up and dismantle the cooktent, and provide boiling soapsuds and rinse water for individuals to wash their own dishes after each meal. This detail would also wash and dry the pots, pans and utensils, and repack them in the two large baskets.

Anyone "acting up" or disobeying orders could be terminated from the trip. Both Neil and Graeme emphatically warned us not

to have drugs in the bus or on our person, a rule which, if broken, would terminate the trip for the guilty party. Also they warned us to keep our handbags and shoulder bags securely closed and guarded while going through customs. Drug peddlers had been known to drop contraband into travelers' bags and retrieve it after the unsuspecting traveler had cleared customs. But heaven help the innocent traveler who got caught!

Neil also cautioned us about the use of lomital during a siege of diarrhea, also known as the trots, the wog or the Delhi belly. Lomital would hopefully keep your insides intact until the next loo stop. But it could be misused as in the case of a girl who had taken an overdose on one of Neil's trips. True, it did stop her diarrhea, but it also clogged her system so severely that she was hospitalized. If we became too ill, we would have to choose between leaving the group or continuing on in agony with the hope of recovering. Neil told us to continue to eat and drink while under an attack so we would not become dehydrated.

He then introduced us to the term baksheesh used by Asia's beggars and strongly discouraged us from giving to them. The average westerner, giving out of naive compassion for these deprived ones, ran the risk of being mobbed. Should any of us become involved in such a situation, Neil would not support us at all!

Finally, Neil told us about his notebook in which he had gathered facts and information about each country we would

visit. From this notebook, he would brief us daily on each region's relevant history and noteworthy facts. Anyone interested in reading his notebook was welcome to do so. With this in mind, he gave us a mini expose of Nepal and Katmandu, explaining that of this country's approximate 13 million inhabitants, 350,000 lived in Katmandu. He told us of our 50 mile proximity to the Tibetan border, and of the ancient trade route which passes through Katmandu linking India to Tibet, China and Mongolia. Because of this route, Indo-Aryans from the Ganges Plain to the south have intermingled with Mongolians from the north for centuries.

Neil ended the meeting by saying that our remaining days in Katmandu were free; no organized tours had been planned. He spoke fluently and was professional in his presentation. I was not surprised to learn that he was a product of private Australian schools. With Graeme's experience in international driving procedures and his apparent strictness about bus rules and duties, and with Neil's serious leadership and experience, I felt confident that these two men would get us to London safely. I was ecstatic about the overland and couldn't wait to get going.

Returning to our room, Carol and I discovered that the toilet was overflowing. We mopped the floor and partially emptied the bowl hoping the water would not invade our sleeping quarters. We used Jen's facilities, retired to our soft clean beds and drifted off to the mournful howl of a distant dog.

Katmandu  
Tuesday, March 2

A free day! After eight days of nearly constant activity, I welcomed a change of pace. To our delight our dribbling toilet had stopped. Breakfast was served from 7:30 to 8:30 in the hotel dining room where our group sat at two long tables. As we consumed hard boiled eggs, tasteless heavy white bread smothered in apricot jam and dry cereal with goat's milk, we discussed our plans for the day.

Breakfast over, Jen and I took a quick walk to a small Christian bookstore near the hotel to browse. On our return, we joined some of our girls who were relaxing in lawn chairs scattered about the hotel grounds. The fellows had rented bikes and were off to see more of the city and countryside.

With the foothills before us, in 70 degree weather, we visited, wrote letters, made journal entries and watched another Australian bus group prepare to leave for London. This was one of several Australian bus groups in town, the first we had met.

Around noon, Jen, her roommate Janet who was a spunky university student, and I had lunch in their room. Janet had brought a compact camper's set of aluminium dishes and a two-cup electric water boiler which she used to make our tea. With the shuttered windows open, we sat cross-legged on the beds enjoying tea and shared portions of small cans of meat, fish and chicken, crackers, dried fruits, nuts and cookies.

After lunch we took another walk and saw our first wild boar.

trotting along the road near the hotel. I don't know what we would have done if this tusked animal had come our way. We remarked at the many pock-faced natives we passed and wondered why they seemed to ignore us. Perhaps they were used to westerners or maybe they didn't like women. We had no idea.

In town, I was surprised to discover the American Library. It was commemorating the American Bicentennial celebration in the States. A small building, its windows displayed scenes and books of the American Revolution. Seeing this reaffirmed the fact that I was going home at just the right time.

Our walk came to a halt when Jen began to get sick again. She thought she would make it home, so we returned and she went to bed.

Katmandu  
Wednesday, March 3

Jen awakened with the same nauseous feeling, and decided to spend the day in bed. Janet brought her breakfast from the dining room and prepared tea for her. Ross and the other girls were having their good and bad days also. By now some of the others had been laid low by the wog.

After breakfast the rest of us decided to take the trolley to the end of the line. Thirty minutes later, we disembarked to the view of the 9th century hilltop village of Bhaktapur about a mile away. Several of us started down the dirt road toward the village, while the rest followed some natives who were pulling

a handsome white goat up a hill.

Bhaktapur was surrounded by fields and pastures, some green and some barren. The road changed into a narrow bridge fifty feet above a stream beside which squatting women were slapping wet garments on flat rocks. The clean clothes were then spread on the ground to dry in the sun.

We were midway across the bridge when a large dump truck approached from the opposite direction forcing us to climb onto the cement railing, legs dangling over the water. The truck crossed at a snail's pace. Fortunately, no one was hurt.

Beyond the bridge, two students from the university in Katmandu started talking to us. They were glad for the opportunity to practice their English. Wearing bellbottoms and solid colored shirts, they were very polite as they tried to answer our questions. They considered themselves fortunate to be counted with the few people of Nepal who could read and write-- Nepal's literacy rate was a mere twelve percent. They also told us that the average Nepalesecitizen was allowed to travel only as far as India.

As we wound our way up into the village, we watched women beside the path prepare twenty foot lengths of bright yarn for weaving. We concluded that the path served as a gauge for measuring the yarn. ~~the way~~

The path eventually led us to an outdoor pottery factory. Here three women seated on mats worked intently making clay pots. The dozens of drying pots around them showed their day's output

thus far. Nearby, two young boys were using a potter's wheel.

Across from the factory, several women sat on a shady porch stripped to their waists. They were rubbing oil on each others' dry backs. Other women sat on mats with children in their laps picking lice out of their hair. Delousing one another was a common practice. Some of the children had shaved heads. Perhaps this was a way of controlling the lice problem or perhaps a shaved head was part of a religious rite.

The men of the village either sat or squatted in small groups visiting. They appeared to be idle.

We soon came to the central square consisting of a shrine guarded by two enormous lion statues of stone and a temple guarded by a stairway of idols. We noticed a small gathering of people standing in a semicircle on one side of the square. Our curiosity aroused, we joined them.

There, seated cross-legged on dirty blankets and skins were six wandering sadhus. They wore only a loin cloth, and their lean bodies were smeared with dust, mud and ash. Their long dark oily hair was also powdered with dust and ash. A trident (symbol of the god Shiva), a water pot, skins and blankets were their only possessions. Women sat quietly behind them as these holy men smoked hashish and gave enlightenment to the gathering.

Here we saw asceticism in an extreme form. The sadhus' withdrawal from the world and preoccupation with Brahman appeared to be the main purpose of their existence. Living on one meal a day, they might have come to this village to eat, since Hindus