

term for dehydrated foods.

As the food was being prepared, the rest of us pitched our tents and either showered or took a walk along the beach watching the sun set. Two hundred miles due west across the Aegean rose the metropolis of Athens, another day's destination.

After two hours, following the blessing, we were served meatballs, mashed potatoes and vegetables from large skillets and pots. We returned for a dessert of apple custard, with instant coffee or tea. The meal was a success with many of us going back for seconds.

The cleanup detail heated water in the two large metal tea kettles which they poured into two square plastic dishpans--one to wash and the other to rinse. Each diner did his or her own dishes drying them on towels. The cleanup detail then washed the pots, pans and utensils, and packed everything back in the baskets.

After cleanup, Elizabeth and Cindy presented a group program of trio and solo singing, guitar numbers and poetry recitations. To conclude, these ingenious organizers sang a medley of thirty-four songs--one for each of us. My song was a personalized version of "California Here I Come!"

Kusadasi to Troy to Mocamp Trova
Tuesday, April 27

The rattle of pots and pans from the camp kitchen awakened me around 5:30 A.M. Soon we were folding our tent and carrying everything to the bus. By 6:15 we were breakfasting on cereal,

eggs, bread, jam and instant coffee or tea. By 7:00, we were

milk, bread, jam and instant coffee or tea. By 7:00, we were heading north along the west coast of Turkey delighting in more scenic stretches of coast and farmland.

After sixty miles, we passed through the busy and charming port city of Ismir, known formerly as Smyrna. Like Ephesus, Smyrna was another of the seven churches of Asia addressed in the book of The Revelation. We learned from Neil that Ismir had been ordered rebuilt by Alexander, and that Tamerlane had sacked it in 1402. More recently, in 1906, it was the birthplace of the late Greek tycoon, Aristotle Onassis.

In the afternoon, we arrived at the site of the abandoned city of Troy known in ancient times as Ilium or Ilion. It was located approximately four miles east of the Aegean Sea and four miles south of the Dardanelles (known in Alexander's time as the Hellespont).

The entrance to Troy was marked by a replica of the hollow wooden horse so instrumental in the Trojan War chronicled by Homer in his Iliad. Now, grass covered mounds and scattered rubble were all that remained of a site where nine successive cities had once thrived.

Neil reviewed the history of this site stating that the earliest of these cities dated back to the Neolithic period around 3500 B.C. The ninth city is recorded to have existed from about the 1st century B.C. to 500 A.D. According to Greek legend, the Trojan War began around 1200 B.C. and continued for ten years when the Greeks entered the walled city inside an enormous hollow wooden

horse rescuing Helen and capturing Troy. The Iliad, acclaiming Achilles as the Greek hero of the drama, is said to have been Alexander's constant companion. He quoted passages from it to his comrades and even slept with it and a dagger under his pillow on his marches.

At the beginning of his campaign for world conquest, Alexander visited Troy to pay homage to the reputed tomb of Achilles from whom his mother, Olympias, claimed descendency. In 300 B.C., Troy came to be called Alexandria Troas.

Robert finished the expose telling us that it was here on Paul's second missionary journey that he received the vision to cross from Asia to Europe to preach the gospel--a first and irreversible step in spreading Christianity to the Western World. Neil gave us an hour and a half to explore these ruins.

Back on the bus, it seemed only minutes until our eyes beheld the Aegean again and the Dardanelles and beyond the Gallipoli Peninsula, a tip of the European continent. Pulling into Mocamp Trova, we set up camp on the breezy beach. While dinner was being prepared in the camp kitchen, several of the girls took a walk along the beach while I sat on the sand with some others watching a magnificent sunset.

I began to ponder our upcoming trip across Europe to London, and to reflect on our Asian experience as this would be our last night on Asian soil. Although my goal had been and still was to return home, it was with some reluctance that I would leave Asia. Driving across this vast continent had indeed been an experience

of a lifetime.

The call to dinner echoed from the camp kitchen, and we lined up for a hearty beef stew, fresh bread and banana custard with coffee or tea. Again, many of us returned for seconds. Then, I returned to my tent for soap, towel and clean clothes and headed for the hot showers. I was in bed before my tentmates, contemplating Europe. What surprises did this continent hold for us?

Mocamp Trova, Asian Turkey to
Gallipoli to Istanbul, European Turkey
Wednesday, April 28

We were up early to meet the ferry which would take us the few miles across the Dardanelles to the Gallipoli Peninsula. As we waited in the bus for the ferry, we learned about the disastrous World War I Gallipoli Campaign of 1915-16 from Neil. At that time, the Dardanelles had been mined, and nearby, in the Aegean, German submarines had been sinking British warships. The Peninsula had been fortified by the Turks who had covered the beaches and shallows with submerged barbed wire against the Allies.

The immediate objective of this Allied assault was to open the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara, the Bosphorus Strait and the Black Sea for their Russian ally who was in dire need of munitions. But the Campaign was a total disaster costing approximately 250,000 British, Australian, New Zealand, French and Assyrian Jewish lives. In retrospect, had this campaign succeeded for the Allies, these strategic waters might now be controlled by the Soviets.

A large ferry finally arrived and we drove inside. We all left the bus climbing the stairs to the deck to have a last look at Asia and a closer look at Europe. We were back on the bus very soon heading for Anzac Cove where the Australian New Zealand Army Corps (Anzac) had landed during the campaign. From what Neil had understood, they only advanced to the lower slopes of the hills where they held on determinedly before meeting with crushing defeat. We had a few minutes to walk along the cove and then drove into the mountains to the Australian cemetery of Lone Pine. Here, we walked among white headstones where soldiers, some no more than sixteen years old, were buried.

I left the cemetery for a solitary walk through the surrounding pines to a place overlooking both Anzac Cove and Sulva Bay where the only casualty-free maneuver of the Gallipoli Campaign occurred--that of the Allied withdrawal. Now, so still and peaceful in the morning sun with chipmunks scampering in the underbrush, it was difficult to imagine the bloody battles that had ensued here sixty years ago.

I could have spent more time here, inhaling the tangy salt air, basking in the warm sun and viewing the miles of sandy beaches and the jagged green coast thrusting into the blue Aegean. However, we were soon on the road again.

Driving to the seaport city of Gallipoli, we were given an hour for lunch. This gave the cooks a chance to stock up on needed groceries for our evening meal. Nino, Tanya, Jen and I found a waterfront restaurant overlooking a small harbor busy with fishing

craft. Sitting at a table on the dock, we enjoyed a very tasty lunch of fish and then took a short walk before returning to the bus.

Continuing east, many of us napped until we arrived at the Londra campsite in the environs of Istanbul around 3:30 P.M. We set up our tents on grassy lots divided by drives for autos and buses. The camp had its own kitchen, restaurant and nightclub plus commodious bathrooms and a much needed laundry.

I showered and changed into my last clean outfit. Then, with all my dirty clothes, detergent and plug, I waited in the congested laundry for a washtub. By the time I had finished my wash, the whole camp had been transformed into a Chinese laundry with clean clothes hanging from portable clotheslines fastened to tents and trees.

By dusk our cooks had a marvelous dinner of spaghetti, fresh bread and wine ready for us to devour. Following the meal and cleanup, many of us strolled over to the nightclub to share an evening of entertainment with the Turks.

We entered the smoke-filled club, and were seated at two long tables on one side of the large room. Men in suits or sports outfits sat at small tables. Their attention was focused on a coarse looking blonde singer wearing tight white jeans, a snug silk blouse and heavy dark eye makeup. Stepping down from the stage with her hand mike, she sauntered among the tables singing in her native tongue to the customers accompanied by a small band. As the fervor intensified with each song, the audience began clapping in

rhythm and many men reached into their pockets handing her liras.

She was followed by an exotic belly dancer dressed in yellow pantaloons and matching jewel studded chiffon top exposing her midriff. Tiny cymbals clinked in her hands as she gyrated to eastern music. Before she was through, she was dancing on the tables receiving liras and much applause.

The entertainment over, the band began playing eastern and western popular tunes to which some of us danced. It was another fun and memorable evening with the Turks.

While most of the group returned to camp, Nino and I lingered on dancing and talking. By midnight we also left, Nino walking me to my tent. Strangely enough, I found my plutonic intensions towards him being strongly overshadowed by his manly charm and the romance of the evening.

Istanbul (Eclipse around 2 P.M.)
Thursday, April 29

Around 8 A.M. with Neil at the mike, we left the Londra campsite for Istanbul. He told us that during the Byzantine Period, 300-1453, Istanbul, then Constantinople, reached its greatest glory making cultural contributions equal to those of Athens, Rome and Jerusalem. Under Constantine the Great (ruled 306-337), the city became a hub for Hellenism, and Christianity became the recognized religion being adopted by succeeding Roman rulers.

It was here that the Byzantine Emperor Alexis I Comnenus

(ruled 1081-1118) sent out an appeal to the West for help against the Muslim Seljuk Turks who were encroaching on Constantinople and were already in control of Jerusalem. From this appeal and other contributing factors, the First Crusade began in 1096 after Pope Urban II challenged European Christians to rescue the Holy Land from the Muslims.

With the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453, the direct trade route to the East was closed. This forced western nations, such as Spain to look elsewhere for new sea routes which eventually led to the discovery of the Americas by such explorers as Christopher Columbus. During this time, Greek scholars sought refuge in the West impacting the Renaissance while Islam reigned supreme throughout the Ottoman Empire.

As for Alexander and Paul, they never set foot in this metropolis, but Marco Polo traveled through it on his way home from his vast eastern travels, and earlier his father and uncle had begun their travels from its port.

The streets of Istanbul teemed with western cars and age-old animal drawn carts. We were amazed by the mixture of peoples from three continents and their dress which varied all the way from peasant clothes to western fashions. Some lined and wrinkled women wore scarves, but no veils were seen.

Our first stop of the day was the Blue Mosque, unique for its six minarets. Removing our shoes, we entered it quietly and were struck by the illusion of unlimited space inside. The exquisite stained glass windows, the rich predominantly red Persian carpets,

the blue tiled walls and colossal columns for which the mosque is famous were fabulous. Standing in the midst of the mosque, under the spell of its magnificence, I was approached by a very irate caretaker who scolded me for entering with bare arms. I was wearing a T-shirt and jeans. Quickly I covered up with my cardigan, otherwise I would have had to leave.

Next we walked to imposing Topkapi Palace, now a museum, where we were given an hour and a half to browse through the buildings and grounds. A former home of Ottoman sultans, this palace was begun by Muhammad II in 1462 but was not completed until the 19th century.

At Topkapi, we saw one of the world's finest collections of Chinese porcelain as well as other of the sultans' memorabilia including costumes, embroidery, jewelry and weapons. In the palace treasury, we viewed the jewel encrusted Topkapi dagger incased in glass. This infamous weapon had been used in bygone days to eliminate certain heirs to the throne. Nearby, mounted in another display, was part of the skull of John the Baptist and a portion of his arm, the latter covered in bronze except for a small opening exposing the bone.

Before leaving the grounds, Neil led us to a restaurant terrace for a spectacular view of this sprawling port city. From here, we looked out on the Bosphorus Bridge which links European to Asian Istanbul. This suspension bridge, opened in 1973, is one of the longest of its kind in the world. This would have been an ideal spot to capture Istanbul on film--the blue waters of the

Golden Horn and the Bosphorus both speckled with ferries, boats and ships of varying size and vintage, the low but impressive skyline with domes and minarets of innumerable mosques and the graceful bridge--but, due to military security, pictures were forbidden.

We then walked to Santa Sophia, Mother of Churches, which today serves as a museum for Byzantine art. Built in classic Byzantine style by Emperor Justinian between 532-537, it had been a Christian church for 916 years. Thousands of pilgrims from all over the world came to visit it, and for in its day it had been considered one of the wonders of the world. Although other great churches were built in the same period, none could compare with Justinian's temple in size and magnificence. However, after the Ottoman conquest, it was converted into a mosque by making interior changes and adding minarets.

Despite the greatness of this structure and its significant history, some of us had had our fill of sight-seeing and decided to forego the Byzantine exhibits. As we waited for the others who had gone into Santa Sophia, we sat outside on stone benches amidst the landscaped grounds writing postcards, making journal entries, watching people and basking in the sun.

Around 1:30 we all met again in front of Santa Sophia. Twenty of us (5 fellows and 15 girls) had decided to go to the Old Turkish Bath, Cagaloglu Hamami. Neil had made our reservations earlier for 2:00. The remainder of the group would experience other aspects of Istanbul. Neil told us to meet him and Graeme at 4:30