

Nan Ruffy Travels To Russia

By Nan Ruffy

My trip to Russia began by driving to Charlotte where my parents took me to the airport and I flew to Kennedy International Airport in New York and spent one night at the Hilton in order to make sure I would get to the BOAC building by 8:30 A.M. the next morning.

The first time the twenty-eight of us on the tour met was in the BOAC manager's lounge, while having coffee and buns. We came from Washington, Oregon, California, New Mexico, Texas, Kentucky, Georgia, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Canada. There were three dancing teachers, a dancing school owner, a music professor, two bankers, a college student, two engineers, a public relations man, retired people, widows, an ex-ballerina and one independently wealthy gentleman. We were introduced to Mr. Walter Terry, dance critic for the SATURDAY REVIEW MAGAZINE; Mr. Stuart Sebastian, an upcoming choreographer and Mr. Murray Maxwell, our Lindblad Travel host.

We took off for London at 10:20 A.M. and the flight was excellent with plenty of food. I was seated with Mr. Terry and Mr. Sebastian and we talked about Agnes deMille and Mr. Terry's books but they were reading Agatha Christie and I was reading a dance book.

My roommate in London and throughout the trip was Marilyn James, a twenty-four year old philosophy graduate from Mt. Holyoke. She was a banker in Concord, New Hampshire and we got along very well, being very much alike. After a big breakfast the next morning we took off in an Aeroflot plane for Moscow. (We left at 1:20 P.M. after waiting over an hour to take off; air traffic was lined up at Heathrow).

On landing in Moscow we were met by ice, freezing wind and Lucy (Ludmilla), our Intourist guide. We had to declare how much money, cash and traveller's checks, we were bringing into the country and keep up with this receipt, for it was to be surrendered on leaving the U.S.S.R. along with another declaration of how much money we were leaving with. No Russian rubles were allowed out; however, you could keep the kopeks as souvenirs.

All of us got into an Intourist bus and rode to our Intourist Hotel which took around forty-five minutes. The bus was very warm, the countryside industrial, the city busy with more traffic than I had imagined. Along the way bus stop shelters were foggy from the cold, just as our warm bus caused our windows to frost up.

At the hotel we were assigned rooms and our passports were taken up. Our room was nice, clean and warm. All of the windows were double glass for insulation. We had a television and watched a little when we had time. Supper was served around 9:00 P.M. and afterwards several of us walked up to Red Square, about two blocks away, and it was breathtaking: the icy sidewalks, Gum's Department Store, St. Basil's Cathedral, the Kremlin Wall and Lenin's Tomb with two guards that are changed every hour, all lit by lights. Walking back we were numb; my knees (I had on a skirt and long boots) and mouth did not move too well.

The next day Saturday, January 31st we took the Intourist bus to the Kremlin where Lucy guided us to the Church of the Assumption, where the Czars were

crowned; the Church of the Annunciation, where the Czars were buried; the Church of St. Michael with beautiful icon paintings and the Armory Museum where we saw ancient thrones, royal attire, crowns, carriages, armor and works of art by Faberge, etc.

Saturday evening we went to a cocktail party at the International Hotel where we met the Bolshoi dancer Marius Liepa (who danced the part of Crassus in *Spartacus* when the Bolshoi was here this summer). Then off to see the Bolshoi production of the ballet *Don Quixote* in the Kremlin's Palace of Congresses.

The Palace seats 6,000 people and everyone must check his coat before being seated: a true madhouse before and after the concert! The audience gave the performance a cool reception.

We had a late dinner that evening. All of the food was excellent, if you liked it. By that I mean I did not like caviar or sturgeon but the people who did really got quite a lot of it; the food was prepared well and presented attractively. A general meal would begin with delicious bread and rolls and hors d'oeuvres such as sardines, fruit or cabbage done in various ways followed by borsch (soup), an entree with meat (beef, turkey, chicken or fish), potatoes and another vegetable (usually cold peas and carrots) and a delicious dessert (chocolate bakery pastries or ice cream). To drink we always had fruit water, coffee or tea, sometimes beer for supper; no wine or vodka unless it was a special occasion, like the cocktail party or Georgian luncheon.

On Sunday we were guided to the Tretyakov Museum where we saw beautiful examples of Russian and Soviet art. The recent works went through the periods of western art; cubism, impressionism, etc.

That afternoon we met Marius Liepa at the Actor's Club and saw his personal films of *La Spectre de La Rose*, *Hamlet* and excerpts from *Spartacus* — brilliant dancing. He spoke English well.

In the evening we went to the Moscow Circus which is world famous for its performing bears. The performers did some of the most dare devil aerial balancing acts I ever saw.

February 2nd was the coldest day we had. We took the bus to the outskirts of the city and visited the Palace of a wealthy aristocrat who had 10,000 serfs. The Palace was wood with exquisite parquet floors and works of art. All of us said our feet "fell off sometime during this palace tour. Then on to the Aragvi Restaurant for a three hour Georgian luncheon which was delicious!

That evening we attended the Theatre of the Stanislavsky for their production of *Swan Lake*; exciting choreography, a version never seen in the West. After a late dinner Mr. Terry spoke about the ballet.

On Tuesday many of us stood in line to see Lenin's body. It took over an hour, a short line our guide said, and it was certainly worth it. He was on a black four poster canopied bed, surrounded by four guards and numerous guards were along the path you walked. Behind the tomb along the Kremlin wall were buried Stalin, cosmonauts, political, military, scientific and artistic Soviets.

After lunch we rode the Metro from the Revolutionary Station to the Kiev Station, four stops, getting off at each stop to admire the decor: marble walls and floors, chandeliers, painted ceilings and

sculpture. Lucy said there are over 100 stations and all are different. It was spotless, no graffiti or advertising.

In the evening we attended the Bolshoi premiere of *Much Ado About Nothing* in the elegant Bolshoi Theatre. It was a beautiful ballet with interesting choreography. After the performance we took the midnight train (soft class) to Leningrad.

Our compartment was six feet by six feet, close quarters to change for bed but we managed. Then turned out the lights, opened the curtains and looked at some of the countryside: nothing but miles of snow with an occasional buried wooden house. We slept well and arrived in Leningrad the next morning at 8:30 A.M. with music blaring at the railroad station.

We bused to the Intourist Hotel, got our rooms and went down for breakfast; after which we had a bus tour of Leningrad with another Intourist guide also named Ludmilla. She was quite different from Lucy and our group felt she was a card carrying Communist for she talked about Lenin, the virtues of socialism, peaceful co-existence, etc.; however, she was very attractive and knowledgeable. Some of the sights in the city were St. Isaac's Cathedral, the Peter and Paul Fortress, Smolny Institute, the Aurora Battleship, Palace Square and the frozen Neva River. Leningrad is more modern than Moscow because it had to be rebuilt after World War II.

That evening we attended the Maly Ballet's production of *La Fille Mal Gardee*, the oldest extant ballet and a delightful comedy.

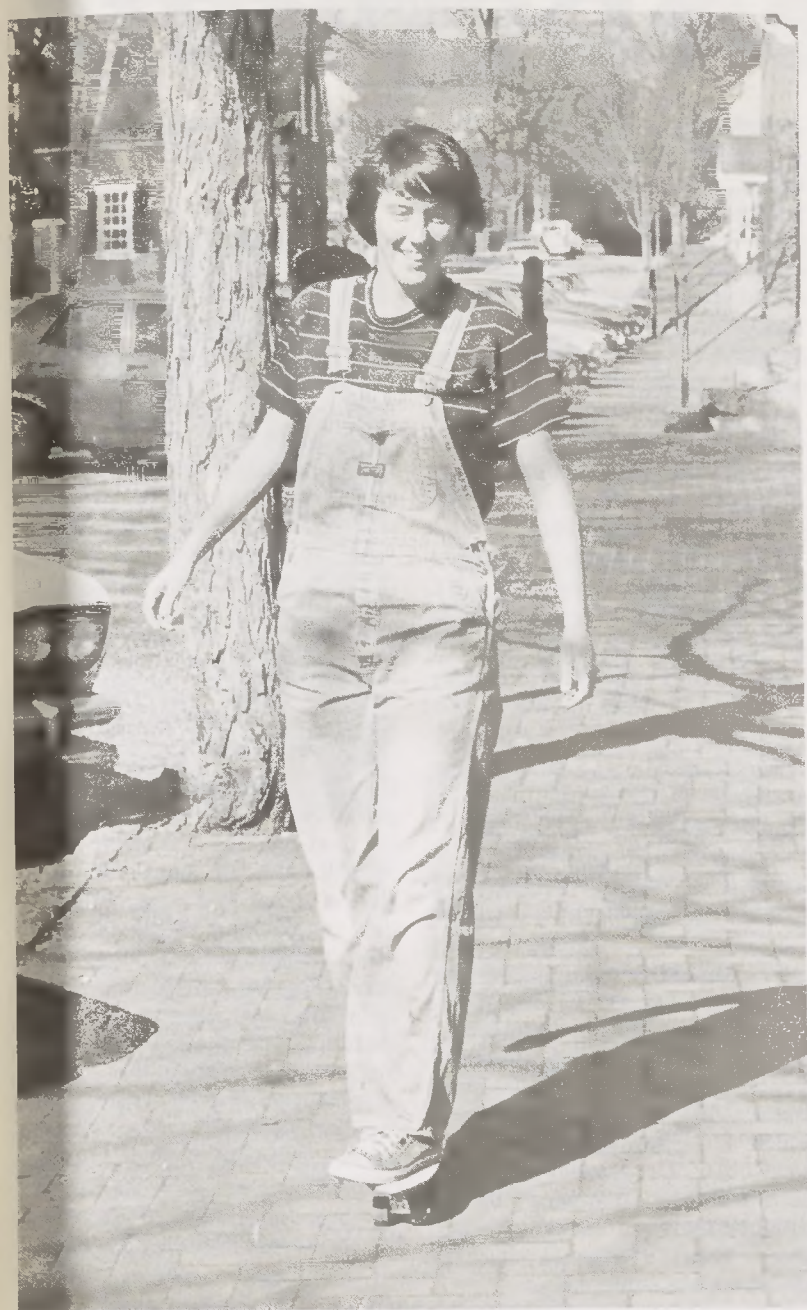
Our last day in Leningrad we went to a matinee (11:30 A.M.) performance of the Kirov ballet students doing *The Nutcracker*. Following the performance we met Konstantin Sergeyev, the artistic director of the Kirov and with Lucy as interpreter we were able to ask him whatever we desired. He told us that out of 500 students that are trained the Kirov only keeps around ten, the others return to ballet companies in the soviets. The students study classical, historical and character dance as well as their academics which include art and humanities. At the end of the first grade the girls begin pointe work. Then Mr. Sergeyev asked Mr. Terry about Rudolph Nureyev and Martha Graham and about George Balanchine.

Supper that evening was an especially fancy meal and the hotel had a floor show with dancers and a singer.

On February 6th, my birthday, we had breakfast at 8:00 A.M. and took the bus to the airport where we left at 11:45 A.M. in a snowstorm. The icy plane was cleaned with a hot air blowing machine.

Aeroflot landed in Copenhagen and we ran to the terminal just to look around. There was a six hour lay over in London and we went to the hotel for day rooms. On the BOAC flight to New York the group sang "Happy Birthday" to me and the stewardess brought me a bottle of champagne. One strange but nice woman in the tour gave me a sachet; a truly funny girl gave me a scarf and another vivacious girl sent me a lovely ballet book, so my birthday continues on and on.

It was a marvellous trip and I would love to talk with anyone about it. I shall be showing my slides at 6:30 P.M., Tuesday, March 2nd in the Choral Ensemble Room of the FAC for anyone who would like to see them.



E. A. Skates by Sisters

(Photo by Avery Kincaid)

January In England

By Harriet Powell

A group of 14 Salem students went to England and Wales for January and it was a love affair with the "Mother" country for them from the beginning!

The main focus for the month was a study of the gifted and handicapped in the communicative arts which allowed them a broad view of the country in both the historical and present context.

Ms. Judy Samson, a professor of music at Salem, and Dr. Lucia Karnes, director of the Center for Special Education with the Orton Reading Center at Salem, sponsored the group.

In the gifted area they saw Rudolf Nureyev in the ballet *Manon*, several plays including *Happy As a Sandbag*, a musical about WW II; *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*, a spoof on Shakespeare; and *No Man's Land* with John Gilgud.

Also, they saw *Mousetrap*, the long running mystery by Agatha Christie (ironically they had tickets on the night Dame Christie died), and *I Do, I Do*, a musical comedy with Rock Hudson and Juliet Prowse. Several viewers commented that Rock couldn't sing!

Museums, art galleries, historical sites, and concerts were also part of the gifted area.

In the handicapped area, the group visited schools and clinics including St. Bartholomew's Hospital's dyslexic unit, a normal state school at Colchester, and a school for the blind.

In Manchester they visited the Royal Academy for the Deaf with a special section for the multihandicapped, and in Bangor, Wales they observed Professor Timothy Miles testing students for learning disabilities.

Special engagements included

sherry with the Mayor of Bath, and a visit to Longford Castle where they viewed the art collection of Lord Radnor which is said to be second only to the Queen's in England. The group then had tea with the Earl and Countess.

Salem students on the trip were Marie Plonk, Dee Stout, Karen Smith, Carol Robinson, Cary Rominger, Lee Caldwell, Jan Warner, Mary Kim Andrews, Lori Furches, Carolyn Davis, Harriet Powell and Rieves Jones. Two students from other colleges joined the group, Candy Wilcox from Michigan and Joane Conte, from New Jersey.

New York

By Karen Reagan

This year Salem Forum will again attend the United Nations sponsored simulation, the National Model United Nations. The delegates to this session will have a unique opportunity to experience and learn the work and frustration of the actual United Nations.

The 1976 NMUN conference will begin on Tuesday, April 13 and run through Sunday, April 18. (Because this includes Easter weekend, the Salem delegates will return on Friday, April 16.) Along with the regular sessions, there will be mission briefings, sessions at the U. N. and a cocktail reception with the U. N. delegates. By entering into this simulation, a person gains a deeper understanding and insight of United States foreign policy.

Salem Forum will meet Wednesday, February 25 at 5:00 in the Alumnae House to discuss the trip. An estimated cost is \$275, which includes plane fare, meals, hotel bill, and a few miscellaneous expenses. For further information contact Karen Reagan, Anne Piedmont, Mary Sparks, Missy Benkley, or Dee Ligon.