

JAN TERM

You Can Go Home Again

By: Lois Gramley

I hadn't read Thomas Wolfe's novel, *You Can't Go Home Again*, but it was just as well. No amount of admonishing could have prevented my going south in January to my birthplace—a tropical Caribbean island—after a twenty-year absence. Antigua is a 108-square-mile island, a "dot" on any map. Its diminutive size does not come close to representing the greatness of its accomplishments within our lifetime.

This West Indian island was formerly a British colony, a notable producer of sugar cane, and yet, until recently, a site of deplorable living conditions. Most of the islanders had no opportunities for employment other than the sugar cane plantations and could know no lifestyle other than that of veritable slavery.

In 1939, the Antigua Trades and Labour Union was founded, beginning the first real representation of the workers and the struggle for their rights. In 1967 Antigua received statehood in association with the United Kingdom; by 1971 the sugar industry was no longer viable; and in 1981 the state (with the island of Barbuda) received its independence and nationality and had a well-established and lucrative tourism industry. The transitions in living conditions during these years have been, in the words of one woman, "like night and day."

Several of the men who were active in leading the island from its

colonial status to political independence—and concurrently from an economy of the poorest standards for the workers to improved living conditions including the introduction of running water, electricity and paved roads—are still active leaders in the island today.

In January I had the opportunity to meet some of these people and to record their impressions of the transitions they have witnessed. The persons I met included the Prime Minister of the country, who was also one of the early and most important presidents of the Trades and Labour Union; the Minister of Public Works and Communications; the current ambassador to Washington; a former vice president of the Union; the widow of a doctor who had been knighted by Queen Elizabeth; and a woman who worked her way from being a fruit vendor in the country to a homeowner in town.

In introducing the island to visitors, one has a propensity for doting on the amenities of Antigua—its 365 beaches ("one for every day of the year"), its coral reefs which protect "sea bathers" from sharks, its white sand and clear turquoise water, its gently undulating landscape, its tropical fruits, and its tropical climate. One may linger on the historical significance of Antigua: its dockyard at English Harbour served as headquarters for the British Fleet in the Caribbean Sea

during the 18th and 19th centuries. The dockyard has been named after Horatio Nelson who was senior officer there in the 1780's. If Moravian, one may mention that the early Moravians were the first to begin educating slaves on the island. But the distinction which Antiguans seem to regard most highly in describing their island is its recently acquired nationality and the rate at which Antigua has developed over the last 25 years. No longer does plantocracy rule; no longer does drought threaten the people's livelihood; no longer are the people restricted to one dehumanizing way of life.

This past January, I asked questions and gathered the words, in oral-history form, of those who were there when the first changes were attempted to improve the lot of the Antiguan people. And the story of the struggle for nationality and democracy came alive. On a personal level, I had the opportunity not only to record history, but to experience a culture where it's always summertime, where afternoon teas are customary, where cricket and soccer (or "football") games are bigger than basketball, baseball, and football. I attended a service in the church that my father built, drove on the left hand side of the street, chewed on raw sugar cane, ate green banana salad, and drank gingerbeer. I had been born an Antiguan, but this January I went home again, and I became an Antiguan.



Photo by Betty Wagner

At a Shang-hai museum, Salem students met face to face with ancient bronze Chinese warriors.

Women As Leaders Conference

By: Kim Rowland

I watched the 7:30 bus go by, had to wait in the freezing cold for the 7:50 bus, and finally got to the Washington Center with twenty minutes to spare! Whoops, wrong place! The note says, "Go to the Woodner Apartments." "Sorry, the 'Women as Leaders' Program is meeting at the Pepco auditorium." I arrive at Pepco and am finally in the right place!

By the way the "Women as Leaders" symposium started I had no idea what was in store for me. Would this be beneficial or a waste of time? Within a few minutes I knew I had made the right decision.

This January I participated in the "Women as Leaders" symposium in Washington D.C. The program was held for two weeks and an optional third week. The first two weeks consisted of lectures given by successful women in the D.C. area. Some of the topics were "Power and People," "How Leaders Become Leaders," "Balancing Personal and Professional Life," and "What's It Really Like Out There?" We also had a guided fieldwork day where we were matched with a professional woman to spend the day learning about her career. I shadowed Susan Fulton of Fulton, Lauroesch & Associates, a financial planning firm in Bethesda, Maryland. I spent the day working on a "real" stock portfolio, going to lunch with Ms. Fulton and her client, and learning all that I could about financial planning in five hours.

The third week consisted of various workshops on such topics as negotiating, stress management, networking, resume writing, interviewing skills, and profes-

sional body language. This was a welcome break from the previous rigid structure. The lectures were informative and will prove useful in the future. The material from the workshops, however, is relevant now.

My favorite session, stress management, I had looked forward to the least. My attitude changed quickly though. Dr. Mary Ryan of the Washington Center conducted this workshop, and she was fantastic! We first identified the causes of stress, and Dr. Ryan offered rational and common sense solutions. Her advice seemed so practical, and I couldn't believe I had not thought of it myself.

The most important thing I learned from this workshop was that stress is a matter of choice. You can identify the stress and deal with it, or you can choose to ignore it and suffer the consequences. I was so impressed with Dr. Ryan that I have been in contact with her since the symposium.

A requirement of the third week was to conduct three interviews, either informative or for actual job possibilities. I was hesitant at first, but I soon realized that this could be fun.

I went to D.C. with no idea of what I had to face and left with the knowledge that I have no limitations. If I can move to a large, unfamiliar city for a month, learn the buses and subways on my own, set up interviews, and put up with three hours of commuting a day, then I can do anything! From my January experience I gained the motivation and the confidence necessary to achieve my highest goals. This alone is reason enough to attend the "Women as Leaders" symposium.



Photo by Betty Wagner

Salem students touring China during January had the opportunity to view the ancient art of acupuncture.