

UNB goes to Washington

Feature and photos by TIMOTHY LETHBRIDGE

We ran into an anti-abortion demonstration. Taken out of the window while being ushered on by policemen.

Mary Abraham - President of the PSSA and chief organizer of the Washington trip.
Janice Boulter - joke teller.
Barb Frair - driver - Canadian/Mexican relations
Kevin White - driver/comedian uproarious laugh.
Bernie McNeill - driver/"Casa Nova"
Mark Weaver - driver/beerdrinker
Peter Atkinson - with a sore face
Rick Branswell - blues singer

Richard "Hutch" Hutchins - comedian/entertainer
June Elder - double rye-er
Timothy Lethbridge - raving reporter
Sarah Abraham - raving reporter's assistant
Mary Strickland - Vice-President of the P.S.S.A.
Leslie Reid - scandals fan
Geoff Prince - peurto ricans?
(One Penguin of the stuffed variety) named Pete and/or Percival.

Entering New York. On the horizon at left is the tip of the Empire State Building. In the centre is our van and on the right...

Statues in the Capitol donated by the states.

When a bunch of UNB students take off down south for an 'educational' trip to Washington, D.C., wierd things are bound to happen.

I am not inclined to abandon my studies with just over 24 hours notice; but that is just what I did upon hearing of an available space, at an SRC meeting. Mary Abraham, president of the PSSA, and the very capable organizer of the trip, was making a pitch for funds, and I was recording the proceedings for the Brunswickian; that was the last the paper heard of me for a week!

Fifteen people, and twice as much luggage jammed into a rented van and left the area Wednesday January 20 at 10 a.m., two hours late. Twenty-four hours later we arrived in Washington, after taking several wrong turns, stopping countless times to change seats, and driving through a snowstorm.

The hotel was directly across the street from the infamous Watergate complex, which most of us took the time to familiarize ourselves with.

Thursday evening, we showed up late at an Italian restaurant. Due to our untimely hour we were shuffled off to a backroom which

turned out to be perfect for our lively group. We insisted that the Iranian waiter translate every Italian dish into English. The rest of the evening was spent at a condemned nightclub called Scandals (condemned in the sense that the building was going to be torn down).

The following day we all rose early to have a tour of the Whitehouse. After leaving Ronnie's abode (we never did see him), we contemplated what to tour next. Suddenly out of a green van, a very friendly, and extremely persuasive tour guide appeared by the name of James 'Daffy' Davenport. After much hesitation, and hard-bargaining on the part of Mary Abraham, we accepted a bargain-rate tour of the city.

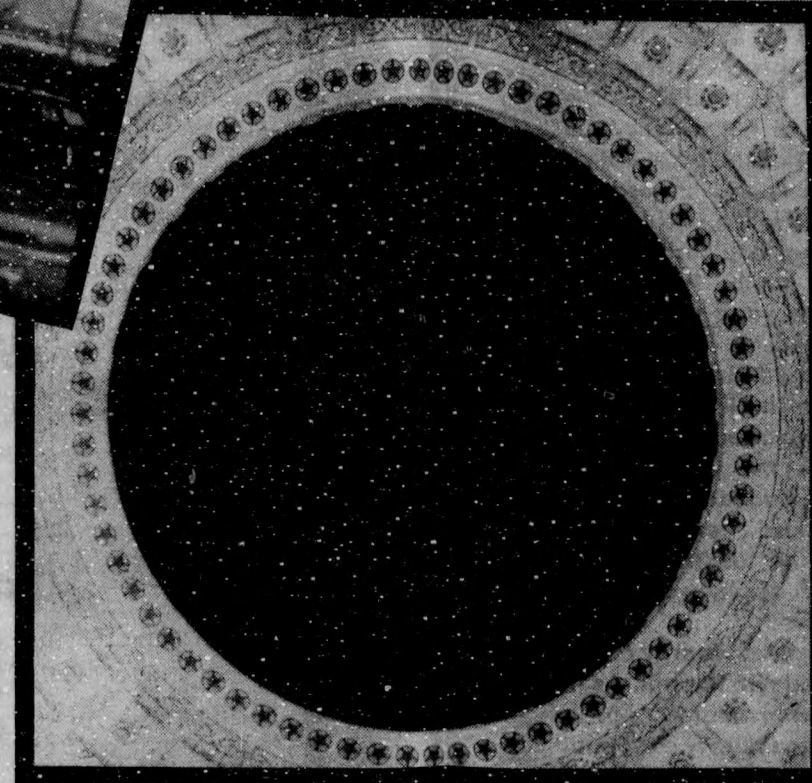
We first headed up to the Capitol for a whirlwind tour. Many of us were dazzled by the fine artistry on the ceilings and walls, which was in fact more spectacular than the Whitehouse. We were shown the Senate chambers, and the House of Representatives chambers from the galleries. Had we been but

three days later, we would have been able to see both bodies in action.

After this it was off to the FBI. The guide on this tour called us one of the most interesting groups she had met in quite a while. An interesting sideline was a lawyer who tagged along with us, he kept asking the woman questions she had no idea about; he was collecting information for a case.

The FBI tour was one of the most informative. We were given a fascinating glimpse into the activities of notorious criminals who have either been captured, or are currently on the FBI's wanted list. We had glimpses of the intricate equipment used to examine evidence, and were told the prerequisites of becoming an FBI agent. For starters, you have to be an American citizen; the only one eligible was Mary Strickland, a UNB student from Alabama.

We had hoped to visit the Bureau of Printing and Engraving, but were held up on two fronts. We first had to wait for a rather



The intricate art-work on the ceiling of the capitol Rotunda.



L to R Back: Peter Atkinson, Leslie Reid, Geoff Prince, Rick Branswell, Daffy, Barb Frair, Bernie McNeill, June Elder. Front: Janice Boulter, Mary Abraham, Mark Weaver, Richard Hutchins. Seated: Sarah Abraham.

unimpressive firearms demonstration at the FBI; then we got tangled up in right-to-life demonstration. The anti-abortionists had arrived in busses from all over the US and Canada; the two-hundred-thousand strong march snarled traffic for hours as it wound its way toward the Capitol building.

Daffy, however had been driving in Washington for many years, and we made our escape to the Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. We saw the graves of John F. Kennedy, and former boxer Joe Lewis; as well as the graves of countless other soldiers who had given up their lives in the various conflicts.

Our amicable guide then dropped us off at the Smithsonian institution, where many of us spent several hours.

Later that evening, some of that group dressed up for a 'night on the town' they managed to get one of the bands to play a tribute to Canada.

The following day, our last full day in Washington, was spent by exploring all the Smithsonian Museums. Among the special attractions were the magnificent Hope Diamond which is the most valuable blue diamond in the world; garments of the First Ladies, and many authentic spacecraft and airplanes. To have spent one minute viewing every object in the Smithsonian collection would have taken 45 years.

In the evening several of the students decided to visit the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials. After leaving the Jefferson Memorial, we noticed we were close to the 14th Street bridge, into which a plane had just crashed. The lure of curiosity tempted us to cross it.

After forcing our way over a sidewalk, we moved onto the bridge. There were no cars in sight, and we were amused to see the road signs were facing in the wrong direction! It turned out there were two-way bridges, and we were on the wrong one.

We spent the next couple of hours trying to return to Washington.

While driving around in our guest to get home, we accidentally ran into the Pentagon, one of the student's said, "That's an octagon isn't it?" (mentioning no names!)

Next morning, we looked towards home, and all the work we had missed. The excitement was not over, however. As seemed to be our habit, we took the wrong highway, and this time ended up in the middle of Manhattan. That is not as bad as it sounds though, as we were able to stay on the same Interstate 95 all the way up the coast as far as Woodstock, N.B.

The trip was educational as well as being fun for all. This brief account tells nothing of what really went on though!

Some of the tours were arranged through the offices of Senator Heflin and Congressman Bevil, from Alabama.

Next year, the PSSA is looking forward to another trip of some sort. Mary Abraham says this one came up during informal discussion with professors, and she hopes to make it an annual event.