



YFA TRAVEL DOCUMENT

Seeing the world with the YFC Discovery Programme

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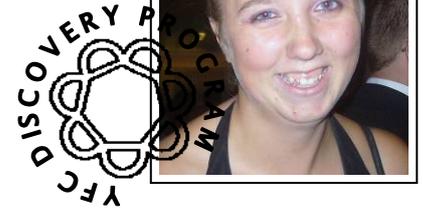
CLUB: Stone YFC

DESTINATION: Junior Farmers of Ontario, Canada

TYPE OF TRIP: Homestay

DURATION: 12 weeks

DATES OF TRAVEL: 2005



DESCRIPTION OF TRIP:

I was very fortunate to be chosen to represent Staffordshire and England as a representative of young farmers. For 13 weeks I visited the province of Ontario in Canada.

My tour started when I arrived at Toronto airport and was whisked away to my first zone. (Zones are like areas and in the areas are counties.)

I moved to a different host each week and a different zone every 2 weeks. Altogether there are 6 zones.

The first 6 weeks were spent touring the south and west borders of the province. And my second 6 weeks I was touring the north and east. Each zone had to plan tours of farms and interesting sights in the areas surrounding them. In the middle of the exchange I had a break week so I had the chance to work as a milk recorder.

I visited many farming operations ranging from 80 cow tie stall dairy farms, 400 cow parlour farms, 32,000 beef cow feed lot, sheep milking, tobacco, organic fruit and vegetables, chicken, arable unit, horse ranches, elk, buffalo, and fish farms.

It has been said that Ontario is the dairy capital of the world and I have to agree after seeing so many dairy farms.

There are also people in Ontario called Mennonites who are people in a community who don't have every day amenities like we have (electric, heating, water and machinery). They use horses and cows to do the farm work and travel to places on horse and trap.

I also had the chance to visit tourist attractions.

I visited Niagara Falls and got to go on the maid of the mist and travel behind the falls. I travelled to Detroit and watched a major league baseball game; I travelled to Ohio State in USA and went to the biggest theme park in the world. I was very fortunate to have a plane ride over Ottawa (Capital of Canada).

I visited Montreal in Quebec to see the French way of living in Canada.

I saw Toronto and went up the CN tower (tallest tower in the world)

And the biggest underground shopping centre in the world.

As well as all this I had the chance to help work on farms and participate in many junior farmers competitions.

I took part in a tractor pull, many baseball and broomball games (ice hockey but with no skates).

I also got to participate in a bit of the social side of junior farmers by going to country-dances and going on all night boat cruises.

I would recommend this trip to anyone who wants to do the discovery programme. I have made many new friends and seen places I have never thought I would see.

I also found that the province of Ontario was very large as it took 8 hours to drive from the north to the south.

I also realised that I was only a short way into Canada as it would take me 4 days to travel by car to the western provinces of Canada e.g. Alberta.

It has opened my eyes to realise what other countries do in there every day lives and how things are done in agriculture and in junior farmers.

I learnt that the Canadian public recognises and appreciates what farmers do. (Producing food and every day produce) and they were reminded by billboards and signs saying "IF YOU ATE TODAY, THANK A FARMER". Perhaps the government and general public in England should also do the same.

*Alex Mackellar
Stone YFC*