

Historian measures churches

By USCHI MICHEL-HOWELL

Battalion Staff
How would you like to spend your summer measuring Gothic churches in France?

Unless you are like Dr. Vivian Paul you probably would not consider traveling to southern France and measuring a cathedral's foundations and niches.

But Paul, architectural historian at Texas A&M University, did just that last summer, and without assistance. She wants to go to Barcelona, Spain, and Narbonne, France, again next summer to complete her measurements of French religious architecture of the 13th and 14th centuries.

"It was difficult to measure the cathedral (in Narbonne), because there were always people in it," Paul said. "One time there was a wedding going on and I had to measure something around the aisle of the cathedral where the bride stood," she said.

Gothic architecture can be recognized by its tall, spired buildings and large windows that allow lots of light to enter.

Finding out which design principles were used for building in the Middle Ages was one of Paul's research goals.

Building as high as they did then was a problem, and flying buttresses and piers had to support the large structures," she said. One of the tallest Gothic cathedrals was more than 15 stories tall and fell in after 12 years because it lacked structural support, Paul said.



Staff photo by Pat O'Malley

Dr. Vivian Paul, an architectural history instructor at Texas A&M University, spent her summer in Europe studying medieval Gothic cathedrals.

The layout and the calculations of medieval architecture are still unknown and Paul wants to shed some light on construction principles of the time.

"We have some evidence that architects then used geometrics and even some modular structures," Paul said.

Paul also assembled photographs of cathedrals for one of her courses on great monuments. She collected about 2,000 photos of cathedrals such as Canterbury, Chartres, Saint Denis and the Westminster Abbey.

Of all the cathedrals she works with, the one in Narbonne is her favorite.

Paul's interest in southern France's Gothic cathedrals was sparked by her mentor at the University of California at Berkeley. "Jean Bony, a French scholar on Gothic, really fascinated me. He could make the buildings come alive," she said.

There are only a few architectural historians in the United States. "We are a dying breed," she said.

Only in the past ten years has modern technology been applied to the study of medieval architecture, Paul said.

"Once we know the measurements (of the cathedrals) we could put them through a computer and find out whether or not there was a certain design behind the structures."

Paul, who teaches architectural history at Texas A&M, said she wants to give her students a different view of architecture.

"I choose my monuments to talk about social and political history," Paul said. In the buildings one can recognize ideas and lifestyle of people at the time, she said.

"I use those buildings that draw together as many ideas of the time as possible," she said.

College students learn to locate countries in basic geography class

United Press International
BOULDER, Colo. — College students who do not know the United States and Canada are two separate countries are extreme cases, but a teacher said a rudimentary geography course is a basic need.

The University of Colorado offered World and Regional Geography this semester after it was discovered many students didn't know where to find countries on a map.

"Most are taking the course by choice rather than a requirement because they seem to realize they need it," said Hazel Morrow-Jones, a first year teacher at the university.

She asked Wednesday: "Why should they feel Iran is important to them if they don't even know where it is?" Morrow-Jones said there were 55 students in her

class, a special section of Introduction to Human Geography 199.

"It's even more basic than the introductory course," said spokeswoman Mary Gleason.

Morrow-Jones said most high schools offered a social studies course incorporating history and sociology but containing limited emphasis on maps and other traditional geography tools.

She said some students enter college with the erroneous impressions that Africa is a country rather than a continent and unaware of a border between the U.S. and Canada.

Still others believe Berlin is on the border between East and West Germany and do not realize Russia is only one segment of the Soviet Union.

Student tells tale of Russian trip

By TERRI COULSON

Battalion Reporter

One of the last places one might expect to hear "howdy" is Leningrad, but when you get a group of Aggies over there, it is not only possible, but probable.

A group of students, sponsored by the MSC Travel Committee, and under the direction of Dr. Michal Barszap spent 28 days traveling in Russia this summer.

Richard Stevens, a Texas A&M University student who took the tour, presented a slide show Wednesday night of the sights they saw while there.

The tour began in New York City and concluded in Warsaw, Poland with stops in Helsinki, Leningrad, Moscow and Kiev among other Russian cities. The group covered approximately 8500 miles.

They saw many historical monuments including museums, cathedrals and the Red Square, which included Lenin's tomb.

They waited in lines for over 1 1/2 hours to get into the tomb, Stevens said. Once inside, you see a "glass case with lights shining on it, and what some people say is his body inside, or what others say is a wax figure of him. It was very eerie," he said.

They also went to Siberia where they saw Lake Baikal, the deepest lake in the world. The lake holds more water than the Great Lakes combined, Stevens said. "There are more than 30 rivers going into it with only one coming out."

"Russian art is really nice," Stevens said. They visited one museum which had the largest collection of gold jewelry in the world, Stevens said. There are a lot of gilded things over there.

There are also a lot of beautiful mosaics and tile work and the wood carvings are beautiful, Stevens said.

The A&M Russian Club is sponsoring another tour to the Soviet Union in January of next year. The total cost for the 15 day trip from New York is \$1249.

"Students get a lot of breaks while traveling," Stevens said. "And even if you don't have the money there are loans you can get."

"It might take you 10 years to pay it off," Stevens said, "but it would be worth it."

Carter in opposition to lending rate hike

United Press International

NEW YORK — Morgan Guaranty Trust Co., one of the nation's largest banks, Wednesday raised its prime lending rate to 14 1/2 percent from 14 percent despite President Carter's claim that rates were too high already.

Published reports said the higher prime rate was inevitable despite pressure from President Carter and Treasury Secretary G. William Miller to hold the line or reduce.

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Hostage gets promotion to sergeant

PUEBLO, Colo. — Marine Cpl. Billy Gallegos, one of 52 American hostages held for nearly a year in Iran, has received a raise in rank.

A family spokesman visited Gallegos' home Tuesday, bringing official promotion documents and Gallegos' new sergeant stripes.

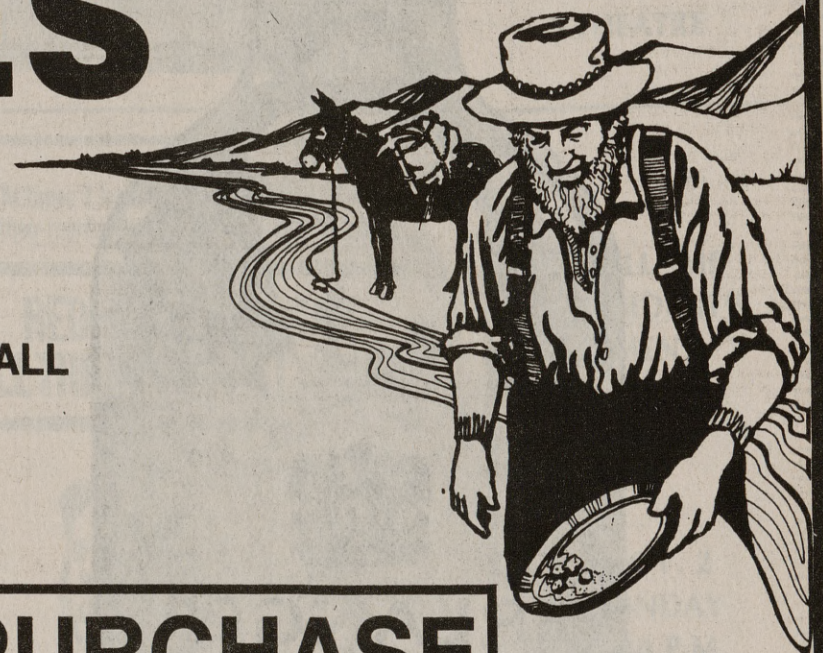
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