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Yesterday we arrived England at 6:30 AM. I was exhausted as I only slept for a total of one hour on the trip. We got to the Herstmonceux castle around 1:30 PM. I showered and then went straight to bed. I slept until 7 PM.

We had dinner at 7:30 PM—the food was pretty good. I got a chance to talk with Alim, a deaf guy who was born in India, went to an oral school in London as his parents lived in Nigeria, moved to California, and who graduated from RIT. He is now at Gallaudet for his PhD.

We played different card games (Risk, Idiot, and Bull) with the Philippines while they taught us how to play Monkey and “Flower.” It was a lot of fun!

Today was a quick day as well. We had some time to work on our powerpoint before going to the workshops. Denise covered the rules and Gentzke encouraged us to keep journals.

We also had a tour of the castle. It is really a manor, not a castle—but it looks like a castle so no one really cares about the terminology. There is a moat and a secret underground passage that goes from the castle, under the moat, to some place beyond the hill.

Translating into seven languages at once was very interesting to observe. Denise really had to pace herself slowly with pauses so that the voice interpreter could translate into a specific spoken language (like Russian or Chinese). The other interpreters then translated into their country’s sign language. Everyone was patient and the delegates were still willing to participate.

After lunch we had an ice breaker activity hosted by the Buckleys. They used the concept of facebooking and “speed dating” to get to know each other. None of us used an interpreter, instead we gestured or wrote on paper to communicate with the other delegates.

The leadership presentations after dinner were interesting. There are many prominent deaf leaders all around the world—and I never hear about them since they live in different countries. The only deaf leader I heard about from the entire night was China’s “Thousand Hands” dancers.

My group talked about how Laurent Clerc brought education to the deaf, how Veditz brought affirmation for our culture, and how Stokoe proved that ASL is indeed a language.

Afterwards we had a reception. The reception food was all right. During the reception the fire alarm went off—apparently a moth got stuck in the fire sensor and triggered it. The alarm ended the reception/socialization early, but we were all tired anyway.

MJ, Scott Gentzke, and I walked behind Jim and Pat DeCarro back to the dorm. The DeCarros were holding hands—they do make a perfect couple.

I will wrap this up with some cool facts about the castle:

- It's a manor, not a castle. A Lord owned it, not a king.
- Bricks or stone buildings were only designated for royalties. Common people were forbidden to build homes with stones/bricks. If common people became enemies, their homes were easy to destroy
- The gardens resemble the original garden
- The tunnel passage were used by smugglers to transport illegal things
- The sea used to be 200 to 400 meters from the castle, now its much further—you can't even see it
- The headless drummer is said to be the drummer boy who never left the castle/kingsmen after he was beheaded. His ghost supposedly lives on
- People back then were really short because of their diet—so the doors are naturally shorter
- Herstmonceux is actually two names put together
- The man who bought the castle gave it to his wife, but the wife didn't want it so he gave it to the International Study Program
- The castle was once an observatory center for the stars—but light pollution got worse
- The castle feels empty in many ways but there are many workers who are still around.

Good night.

August 23, 2010

Interesting facts about how Cherokees interpret animal behaviors:

- turtle crossing a road in good weather means a drought is coming
- fat squirrel or thick fur on horse in the fall means a very cold winter is coming
- fig tree bloom determines a very early spring

other facts about Cherokees

- resent mixed race living on reservations
- more prone to cancer
- women leaders are very powerful. They make final decisions whether to go to war or not

- Pocahontas is fiction... she was traded for a pot by her father

August 24, 2010

Develop a summary of major issues in the deaf community:

Japan – fire alarms not accessible

Philippines – Government does not pay for interpreters

China – no official laws for job accessibility for deaf

Russia – will not provide interpreters for emergencies and some educational fields due to lack of interpreters in Russia

America – people who are late-deaf often do not receive support/accessibility

Yesterday after dinner Jeff, Denise, Gerry Buckley and I went for a walk in the woods behind the castle. There are massive trees by the end of the trail. By the looks of it they seem to be over 300 or 400 years old. I took some pictures and stayed there longer than anyone else.

Jim DeCarro led a workshop on what traits a successful leader would have. All of the countries had different views on what traits are the most important for a successful leader.

The cultural presentations were entertaining. Japan went first—taking the whole hour teaching us how to make origami hats and play an eating game. For the eating game, a person will be cloaked behind another person and try to feed the person in the front.

The Philippines gave a brief summary of what's in their country, etc before giving us a dance performance. From the slides, their country is beautiful. The dances were traditional and also beautiful. They took the time to teach some of us how to dance as well.

As MJ and I were going back to the dorm, we saw that one of the observatories were open. The dome was open and we could see lights turned on inside. We decided to check it out, not knowing if we were even allowed to—that it was open to public.

I rang the doorbell. Up at the top somebody shined a flashlight in our faces and said something that I did not understand (I only understood “gate!”) MJ and I decided to go around and enter the fenced off lawn through the gate. We were very unsure what to do.

After what seemed to be five minutes the guy came down, dumped his coffee, and asked us where we were from and whether we would like to go inside. He thought that we were from Queens University, the college affiliated with Herstmonceux castle.

Inside were the control panels and a room for generating power for the laser. The guy explained to us that at the top a laser was turned on to track a satellite. The satellite, the size of a school bus, has a ball of mirrors. The laser will reflect on the mirror back to the tracker at the observatory. The time it takes for the particles to travel back will measure the distance of the satellite.

The laser emits 12 times per second—a bright green light that shoots into space. The first satellite was 20 thousand km away and it is used to take pictures of the earth for environmental reasons

The second satellite was much smaller and was only 1 thousand km away. The laser had to move quickly to keep its lock on the satellite—so the light shot quickly through the expanse of the sky.

Both satellites are owned by Russians. The observatory center tracks 40 different satellites. Up at the top were more computer screens to operate and track the travels of the satellites.

While MJ and I were at the top with the man, the Russian delegates stopped by. The Russians were very fascinated in the equipment as well. It was nice to see the observatory with Daria, Elena, and Arthur.

This morning I was awakened by the fire alarm. One of the Americans was using the hair dryer and it fried. Nice wake up call. Haha.

I have to go.

August 25, 2010

Well, yesterday was too busy that I could not take the time to write down what we did.

Our first workshop was about how deaf people can do important jobs—led by the Buckleys.

After lunch Alim and Gentzke had us do a scavenger hunt. We split into four teams. Each team had one delegate from each country. We had to find different things around the castle, take creative pictures, and do some activities like building a human pyramid and thinking of a peacock dance. It was really fun, all of us, including the chaperones, really enjoyed it.

China had their cultural presentation first that night. I was very impressed with the entire presentation. Their powerpoint was very advanced with neat graphics and animations. They painted mini masks, cut out paper art, made Chinese knots, etc. They also performed several dances that were fun to watch.

I learned that there are over 56 ethnic groups in china—but they are all considered as one big family. They value individual opinions and ideas—that’s a lot considering that there are billions living there! :P

Our cultural presentation went well, too. It was very simple but I think everyone enjoyed it. We did Halloween trick or treating activity first. We gave each country a July 4<sup>th</sup> bag to go to 4 different doors to collect candy and silly bandz. Not many people know about the bandz. After that we did the Hollywood hand prints. The last activity was music chair with lights. I think the delegates enjoyed the competition.

Today Alim and Scott Gentzke led a workshop about group dynamics and establishing goals. First we went outside and did the “alligator board” activity. My group got second. It was fun and challenging and everyone enjoyed hands-on activities that minimized the use of interpreters.

Alim and Gentzkes activity after lunch was quite fun as well. We divided into our groups (same as scavenger hunt and alligator boards) and had to discuss, without interpreters, what characteristics a good leader needs, like a good heart, wise insights, etc. It was really challenging but I think we all had the basic idea.

We had a birthday celebration for Gentzke, Bill, and Febe. Cake was served. ☺

After their presentation, a deaf representative from Nippon Foundation, Minoru, came to give us a presentation about what Nippon does. I am surprised that Nippon is a HUGE foundation that manages 9 billion annually. All of that money comes from legal boat racing bets in Japan. 9 billion! Imagine that. They helped conquer the leprosy epidemic in many countries. Not only that, they trained farmers to establish stable farming lands—to irrigate crops and to grow different produce in different countries.

August 26, 2010

Russia gave a really nice cultural presentation last night—a great way to end the cultural presentations since they had a little more time. The delegates wore traditional clothes and gave some dance performances. It was beautiful with the music, video, and the food.

The games were also competitive and fun.

August 27, 2010

The closing night was touching. Each country took turns presenting what we learned and what we will bring back to our communities back at home. We, Americans, were able to present last.

We purposefully wanted to be last so that we could close the presentations with a Hugging Ceremony. Each person took turns hugging one another. The bond between the delegates was established.

The reception afterwards was amazing. There was a chocolate fondue that none of us could get enough of. It was like 3 or 4 feet tall! We moved to the pub where we played pool, danced, and socialized. It was a good closure for the week. It is hard to believe that it is all over so soon.