

LA ZONA DI ROMA 2

COLLEGHI



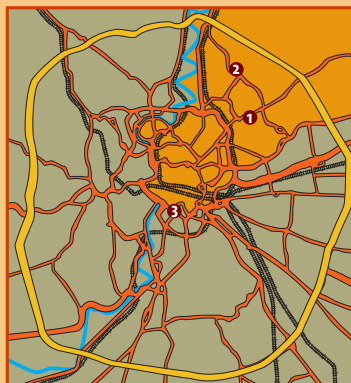
► Joey Splan
Fresno, California
July 7–September 14, 2004



► Jason Merrell
Draper, Utah
July 7–August 10, 2004

► Apartment mates:
Sam Lambson (July 7–September 14), Matthew Durham
(July 7–September 14)

LA ZONA



- ❶ Mission Home, Office
- ❷ Villetta
- ❸ Downtown Rome



Rome 2 included the area
between Via Tiburtina
and the Tevere and all of
northern Lazio.

INFORMAZIONI IMPORTANTI

Arrived: July 7, 2004

First transfer ended: August 10, 2004

Left for Rome 3: September 14, 2004

Other important dates:

- July 21 Elder Neal A. Maxwell died
- July 31 Elder David B. Haight died
- August 15 Festa di lavoro

Baptisms: None

Important investigators:

- Sara (Viterbo)

Back in Rome!

To Everyone

Thursday, July 8, 2004 4:00 PM

Hey! My train just got here a couple of hours ago and I'm now here at the office. I'm typing this on Thursday because the office had p-day yesterday—a big 4th of July BBQ. But yesterday, I was up in Florence still, so I missed out. Therefore, I'm writing this today, and it has to be short, at least this one, because I have to go unpack and apply for a driver's license and all that cool office stuff (I'll be a crazy Roman driver in less than a week now!).

Being in Florence was fun. Being with a Zone Leader was even cooler! We worked so hard! In our time together, we set two baptismal dates with a family we found doing house my first day—Blanca and Suzy Wong, from Peru (the dad is Chinese). On September 13th, they will be baptized in the Florence 1 branch. Cool stuff!

Ack! There's not really much time right now. I'll write a good big report of Florence now that I have lots of unlimited e-mail time. I'm just glad to be in mosquito-free Rome. 42 mosquitoes got me in Florence. Ouch. I itch.

So, I'll talk to y'all later! Have a great week!

► Anziano Heiss

Send me out!

To Dad; Mom

Saturday, July 17, 2004 6:30 PM

Hey! It's me, from the office of the Italy Rome Mission, in my second week of being an office elder. It's been a really, really crazy week. Hmm . . . how to start . . .

Okay, the ideal day at the office starts at 9:30 and ends at 2:30. We then go home, eat, study, and then go do regular missionary work. That's the ideal. Throw that ideal out the window now. We've only left the office by 2:30 once.

Last Saturday, we were here until 9:30 finishing the mission newsletter, so that it could go out to the Napoli Zone Conference with President Rhien on Sunday. We spent all day on that thing, and other projects too—all in preparation for all the zone conferences. Then on Monday, we did more ZC preparation. On Tuesday we had to go down to Termini, the main train station, to pick up a member from Firenze 1 who is going on her mission to Milan, but has to go to the Spain MTC for 3 weeks. She was actually one of my favorite members while I was up in Florence—she came to lots of appointments with us, so it was great to see her off on her mission. While down at Termini, we applied for my Italian driver's license. We finally got home at 8:00 that night and studied and slept.

Wednesday was the one day where we got out of the office on time, but we had a fun adventure at home. I've got to describe home first. We live with the APs in a building affectionately called the villetta. It's a three story apartment building that's really old and actually condemned and falling apart and infested with ants and some termites. The only reason missionaries live there is because it sits on the 14 acre lot owned by the church for the stake center and temple that will be built. The building has to be inhabited, otherwise the gypsies move in. So, on this lot is the villetta, a smaller bathhouse (sometimes bums and gypsies get in there), a pig sty, a wood oven for real Napolitano pizza, a barn, another barn, and a chicken coop, with lots and lots of open field space, with an olive tree grove (see Jacob 5). The Villetta itself is a nicely equipped place for 5 missionaries (usually 4)—3 showers, 2 washing machines, 5 hot water heaters, 2 kitchens, 4 fridges, three floors of pure space with the APs room, our room, the hair-cutting room, the clothes drying room, the washing machine room, the old mattress room, the Book of Mormon



▲ We moved all the beds up to the roof and slept under the Roman sky every night, regardless of rain. The Italian summer was absolutely perfect.

and pamphlet room, the drum room (there's a drumset), the antique room, the wine rooms (the place used to be a winery and all the old bottled wine is down in the basement in two rooms. In a few weeks we'll have to dump it all out) and the lounge room (all the couches and surround sound-ish speakers). (That list was not exaggerated either. All that does exist). We sleep on the roof, where we have moved our 5 beds up. It's so nice at night in Rome! The Villetta is an amazing little place.

So, back to Wednesday afternoon's story. Because the villetta is so big, we find random things left by old missionaries. We got home, ready to eat lunch, when we ran across a metal baseball bat. Wow! Baseball! So, we started hitting pine cones and mattress springs out into the massive field, having a blast. We also kept looking for new things to hit. Anziano Merrell (one of my comps) found a basketball. Wow! So, we started hitting that. Basketballs are a little heavier than pine cones, though, and they don't let the bat follow through—the bat springs back. It took us a while to get it, but once we figured it out, we were able to hit the ball over the olive grove. At one point, Anz. Splan (my other comp) was pitching to Anz. Merrell. The ball came straight

la VILLETTA

sul terrreno della chiesa

Before the Church bought the Villetta and the surrounding property, the land was a lucrative vineyard, full of olive trees and grapevines.

When the property was sold, the former owners left everything, from farm equipment and wood burning ovens to a basement full of vinegar and vintage wine.

So, the largest missionary apartment in Europe had a basement full of alcohol, which was proudly shown to every visiting general authority.

More text will go here as well . . .



la VIGNA

sul terreno della chiesa

*“E il Signore della vigna disse loro:
Andate, e lavorate nella vigna con tutta la vostra forza. Poiché ecco . . . la fine è alle porte, e la stagione viene rapidamente; e se lavorerete con me con forza, avrete gioia nel frutto ch’io mi metterò da parte per il tempo che verrà presto.”*

—Giacobbe/Jacob 5:71

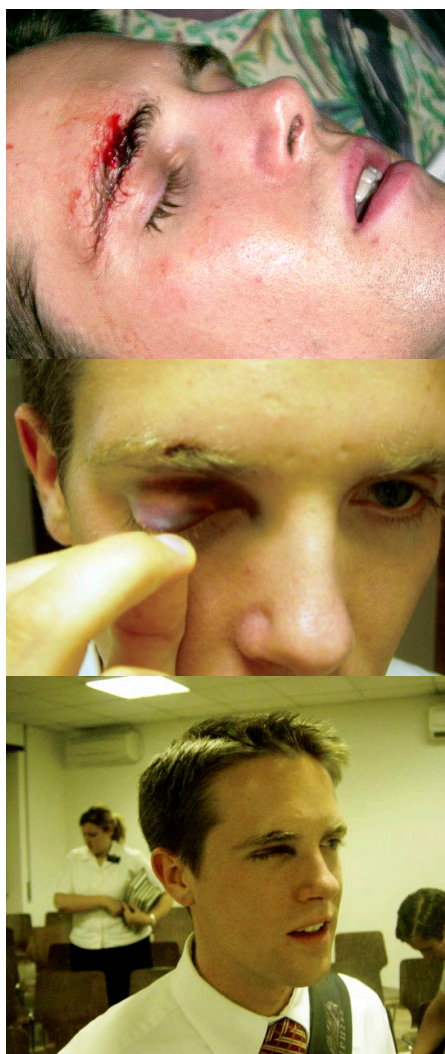
In the mid 90s, the Church purchased an old and abandoned fourteen acre vineyard in northeast Rome. Italian and Roman building code requires that a full archeological study take place before any construction can begin, so nothing has been developed yet. No definitive or official plans have been released by the Church regarding the land.

Regardless, speculation has made the land a symbol of hope for members and missionaries alike. During my time in Rome, the rumor was that the land would become the Italian Temple Square, with a temple, stake center, visitors center, and mini MTC for Italian missionaries.

The highlight of the property is the large olive grove, which members of the church cultivate. Every new group of missionaries is taken to the grove upon arrival and given a lesson about the allegory in Jacob 5. The parable becomes more real and tangible as a missionary standing in a real Mediterranean olive grove.

Living right next to the grove provided me with dozens of opportunities to study the scriptures in its peaceful quiet. My studies among the olive trees provided the perfect mid-mission introspection that helped continue to change me.





▲ Anziano Merrell after getting hit in the eye with a baseball bat

towards his head, and instead of ducking, he whacked the ball. Anziano Splan and I both watched as the ball easily cleared the grove, but we didn't hear any celebration from Anz. Merrell. Instead, we discovered his head held in his hands; in pain, with blood. The bat had bounced back

when he hit the ball and hit him above the eye, cutting him pretty deep and almost knocking him out. So, we stayed home for the rest of the day by the direction of President Rhien, who's a doctor. Anz. Merrell's just fine—no concussion or anything. Just a really big black eye and a cool story. The crazy villetta life never ends . . .

On Thursday, we had our zone conference here at Rome and had to deal with the requests of all 40 missionaries in Rome 1-2-3. That took a while.

On Friday, I got my license, and got to finally drive. Roman driving is crazy. There are only a few laws—you can't turn right on a red light, even if you are clear, and you can do whatever else you want as long as you don't hit someone else. There are no lanes or speed limits. I've passed people in intersections already, I've done some crazy maneuvering. It's great to drive the little Fiat Punto (Fiat is an Italian car company, punto means dot or point. I drive a car called Dot—and it's about that big too!) After working in the office until 5, we headed out to the middle of nowhere—80 km out of Rome, to go to a member's house. We thought it was going to be a family night with a nonmember family, so we were way excited. However, it turned out to be a big party of members from Rome 2 and 3, with 3 nonmembers there. It was fun anyway, as I got to see old friends from Rome 3.

Today we had our P-day and went out 50 km away from Rome to Bracciano, a little medieval city with a castle. We went with the Chases (the missionary couple assigned to the office—2 year office mission) and President and Sister Rhien. It was way fun to be with them all day and get to know them way better. They are amazing people!

So that was an average week in the office. Missionary work here is totally different from the normal stuff. Instead of teaching people the

gospel, I had to teach myself how to program and make a financial program for Sis. Rhien and Bro. Chase to use to give reimbursements to missionaries. That's been the major project of the week, and took many long hours. Different kind of work, but fun and worthwhile work too. I'm still helping the mission, just not the way I was before.

So, that's what's up out here. Hopefully all is going well for you out there! Have a great week!

► Anziano Heiss

Hola!

To Dad; Mom

Saturday, July 17, 2004 7:06 PM

Hey! It's me! Like I said in the group e-mail, life is absolutely crazy here. There is not one normal day ever. Those were just a few of the many adventures that happened last week. A few hours after Anz. Merrell whacked his eye, we saw smoke coming from the edge of our field and heard the crackling of fire. The three of us took

▼ Screenshot from the Mission Finance program I wrote

Super Easy Input Form for Mission Expenses

Mission Expenses

Date (DD-MM-YY) 17-07-04

Cost € 56.24

Summary Capit Conference

Account Number 000-5491

Finish

Next...

000 Administration

400 Missionary Support

600 Vehicles

800 Missionary Couples

900 Other

5200 Office supplies

5220 Literature and supplies

5370 Telephone and fax

5379 Postage, freight, and duties

5461 Bank charges

5491 Visitor meals

5500 Miscellaneous

5776 Equipment

5860 Building and grounds maint

5862 Rent - mission office and home

5869 Utilities - mission office and home

BRACCIANO

e il castello Orsini-Odescalchi

Here's where I'll type something about Bracciano when I get the official, full book printed this summer. Here's some dummy text to show what this will look like, though.

Caption-esque descriptions will also go here.

Unt lut eugait, voloborem et acipsum sandipi smodolor sed dunt volore velessenit, volorpe riureetum vent vel ullut volor sustis adignismolor sum dolorem quat ing et lobor aut eugiam quisim num autatum el ut vel dit diam venit ilis dip enim ad del dolor sim deliquis dipit, quamcommy nulla feuguer si blam, quam, sectem iusciduis el ipit aliquipisi blandreet, cortie dunt lortincin et lumsan vel eugiat, vulput wis niam quat.



off running through the tall, uncut, prickly, sticky grass (one of us with no depth perception), to see where the fire was. The farmer in the next lot was burning his field, unattended, and the flames were moving quickly towards the wimpy chain link fence. We had to run around to his lot and find him and have him put out the fire. Crazy life.

Also like I said in the group e-mail, the type of work here is tremendously different. Bro. Chase (pretty much my adopted Idahoan grandpa) asked me to make a program for Excel—just a simple input form, so he and Sis Rhien could input receipts for reimbursements. So, I had to teach myself Visual Basic for Applications 97, reading a book and the help files. It works though, and the mission reimbursement system goes a lot better. I've also been working on rebuilding the network, making Sis. Chase's (my adopted Idahoan grandma) computer be a gateway server for the other computers in the office. I'm also using my GenRef office assistant skills with getting everything nicely organized and making thousands of copies. I've knocked doors once since coming back to Rome from Florence.

I want to get out more and teach and find and teach and help Rome get the stake in September so the temple can get announced, especially since I live on the temple land and can imagine temple there. The three branches in Rome are really stepping up to the challenge of President Hinckley though. A family with 3 kids is getting baptized in Rome next week, there are several baptismal dates that have been set in all the branches, and more inactives are coming to church, all because of this huge challenge. It's so amazing to see the changes in Rome over the past month since the challenge. The relationship between the members and the missionaries is way super strong now, and they are giving

us referrals and family nights like crazy. I think Rome will make it by September. It's an exciting time here!

My companions are great too—Anziano Splan was with me in the MTC, in my room actually, and Anziano Merrell is a great missionary too. We all get along great and have good adventures together here at the office.

The Rhiens are amazing people too! They are totally different from the Jensens. Sister Jensen was a delicate type, heavy on fashion and diet and emotions and stuff like that. Sister Rhien got her degree in Animal Science and almost got her degree in parasitology. While driving to Bracciano today, she told us good stories about carrying dead coyotes across campus to inspect their intestines that were full of worms, or the trout that had eye worms that killed them (which she would eat at home after). While driving, we saw a horse who had his bum sticking out the back of a barn, and she said "That's the part of animals I see the most!" —the complete opposite of Sis. Jensen. She reminds me a lot of a mix between both of you, Mom and Dad. She served her mission in Santiago and spent the entire mission in Santiago, helping with humanitarian stuff and giving gamma globulin shots to missionaries. President Rhien is an amazing guy too—he jokes around a ton, but still has that doctor feel to him. He reminds me almost exactly of Dr. Koehler from the IHC place at home. He's pleasant and nice and a great guy. He's technologically challenged though, and since President Jensen was the CEO of a huge software company, the mission is pretty hi-tech. We've spent lots of time training them both on how to use their cell phones, turn on their computers, type their passwords. It's like working with Uncle Rod. Fun stuff!

So, that's life out here. Crazy and fun. Sounds like your lives out there, with the wedding and scout camp and Grandma and Grandpa and all



▲ The Rhiens and the Jensens at the Mission Home.

From L-R: Sister Beverly Jensen, President Daniel Jensen, President Robert Rhien, Sister Rebecca Rhien, Taylor Rhien

that fun stuff. Is Layla's wedding still going to be at our house? Tell her to e-mail me, so I can say hi.

Well, I've got to go to the branch family night now, so I'll talk to you later. I should in theory have more e-mail time—any down time we get (like that ever happens . . .)—so I can write longer letters and even get more personal letters out. I also have access to 5 digital cameras (the Chases, the Rhiens, both APS, and one of the sister missionaries here), so I'll be able to e-mail some pictures of the villetta and other stuff here in Rome.

Vi amo!

► Anziano Me

Response to Dad's long letter

To Dad; Mom

Saturday, July 17, 2004 7:46 PM

About the promptings of the spirit thing. I've been learning a ton about recognizing spiritual promptings during my whole mission, and the quality and quantity of these promptings have been changing. For example, in Napoli at the beginning of my second transfer there, Anz. Bozzuto and I were kind of lost. I knew that there was a bus that passed by the street where we were, but I didn't know which one. So, we let a couple