



Tour Notes

PERFORMING ARTS NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

2001-2002

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Colorado Children's Chorale in the south of France



Greater Dallas Youth Orchestra performing with Vox Iuvenalis in the Rudolfinum, Prague

GREATER DALLAS YOUTH ORCHESTRA AWE-INSPIRED IN PRAGUE

It was with a strong sense of history and a feeling of awe that Richard Giangiulio, conductor of the Greater Dallas Youth Orchestra, stood on the stage of the Rudolfinum

COLORADO CHILDREN'S CHORALE IN THE LONDON 'PROMS'

It started with a request from the BBC to ACFEA's London office for a very high quality choir to take part in one of London's famous Promenade Concerts in the Royal Albert Hall. Many weeks of discussion and negotiation followed, and to everyone's delight the Colorado Children's Chorale was able to accept the invitation.

Time in London formed the book-ends of the tour. The group started with two days there, during which they attended Choral Evensong at Westminster Abbey, took a sightseeing tour and, most importantly, had rehearsals for the Promenade Concert a week later. The work to be performed was Benjamin Britten's *Spring Symphony*, and the other participants were the Southend Boys' Choir, the BBC Singers, the London Symphony Chorus and the BBC National Orchestra and Chorus of Wales, all conducted by Richard Hickox.

From London it was a quick flight to Marseille, in the south of France. They

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in Prague, waiting to begin the rehearsal. "This is Vladimir Ashkenazy's home," he said, referring to the conductor of the resident Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. "And think of all the world-class groups that have performed here."

Then the musicians started to join him on stage. It was a joy to see these young Texans stop, look around the beautiful hall and mouth some emotion that was, at the very least, "Wow!" They took their seats, prepared their music, and waited in much greater quiet than usual to begin playing. The hall was casting its musical and historical spell.

The program consisted of Bernstein's overture to *Candide*, Stravinsky's suite from *The Firebird*, Poulenc's *Gloria* and, after intermission, Dvořák's *Symphony No. 9*. The symbolism of an American group playing the *New World* symphony in the composer's home country (and in Dvořák Hall) is none the less poignant for being obvious; more telling, perhaps, was the performance of the *Gloria*, in which the orchestra joined with Vox Iuvenalis, a youth choir from Brno, and Kateřina Hájovská, a Czech soprano. The same forces had

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MADRIGALS RETURN HOME

Hailing from Greenwich, Connecticut, the Greenwich Academy Madrigals Singers are a select choir of 18 young ladies. This tour, the choir's third with ACFEA, took the Madrigals back to their musical roots in Italy, introducing them to the homes of Monteverdi, Verdi and Palestrina. As the Madrigals boarded an airplane bound for Rome, excitement and expectation were evident in their faces.

The group began their tour in Rome by participating in a Mass in the Chiesa San Agostino. It was a lovely afternoon, made even more perfect by a successful performance. Two days later they followed this up with a concert to a full house in the charming town of Marcellina.

The beauty of their next stop, Perugia, stunned them, and that evening's concert in the Basilica di San

Francesco in nearby Assisi was presented to yet another packed house. The Madrigals were also experiencing another wonder of Umbria: the food. One favorite restaurant was nestled in the ancient walls of Perugia and offered an awe-inspiring view across to Assisi.

After another splendid concert in Perugia, it was time to head to Florence. With their hotel situated directly next to Florence's famed San Lorenzo market, the ladies kept themselves quite busy investigating the local wares. Here and at other places throughout the tour, family

and friends who were also traveling in Italy dropped in on the girls to share the fun. The group continued through Venice, then on to Mantova where they were pleased to be joined by the Greenwich Academy headmistress, Patricia Howard, and their Upper School president.

Mantova was the home of Monteverdi and the Madrigals felt right at home. The group's concert in the stunning baroque Teatro Bibiena was hosted by the Brigata Corale Tre Laghi, a local men's choir. Beth Raaen, director, could never have anticipated the host choir's reaction to her singers. Each piece was followed by thunderous applause and, after the second encore, the director of the Corale asked the Madrigals to sing the Italian anthem, to which they agreed on the condition that the Corale join them. Guided by Raaen (at the insistence of the men's choir), the two ensembles joined in a rousing chorus.

The tour culminated in a relaxing visit to Como and an informal farewell concert in their medieval castle hotel honoring those Madrigals who would be graduating. Together they had come far and experienced much in their exploration of their musical heritage. The memories they created together would be cherished for a lifetime. 🎵



Madrigal Singers posing with a poster for their concert in Assisi

ERIC WHITACRE, CHORUS AMERICA, COLORADO CHILDREN'S CHORALE AND ACFEA

Eric Whitacre, one of today's finest composers and Pacific Chorale's composer-in-residence, generously donated a 2-to-3 minute work to

Chorus America's fund-raising auction at their 2001 conference in Toronto. ACFEA was lucky enough to submit the winning bid, and immediately presented the commission to the Colorado Children's Chorale, hosts of next year's conference from June 5 to 8 in Vail, Colorado.

It is hoped that the work will receive its premier performance at the conference and that there will be further opportunities for similarly productive collaborations in the future.



– *Colorado, continued from page 1*

spent five nights in Aix-en-Provence, using that most beautiful of cities as a base for concerts in surrounding towns. Their four performances were all very well received, in venues that included a theatre in the charming Mediterranean town of La Ciotat, an amphitheatre in Cavailon and a church in Marseille. The first concert was part of the festival *Musique en Vacances*, and others were part of the *Festival Choral International de la Sainte Baume*. The final concert was shared with *Les Petits Chanteurs de l'Espérance*, a children's choir from Marseille.

Between the concerts there was ample time to experience the many delights of Provence (well, not the wine!): the countryside, the Roman remains, the beaches, the food...

Then it was back to London for the final two nights. After lunch at Planet Hollywood and settling back into their London home, they had some free time before an evening reception for some of their supporters and sponsors. Then it was time for bed to rest before the final concert.

A day that starts with a tour of the Tower of London and ends on stage in the Royal Albert Hall as part of a live

broadcast on the BBC with some of Britain's finest professional musicians is surely one to be remembered. It is wonderful that the hard work and dedication not only of the young choristers but also of the staff and parents can result in such remarkable experiences. Furthermore, the Chorale gave great pleasure to many, many people in England and France through their politeness, maturity and professionalism - and their skillful, polished and entertaining performances.

"The tour was a wonderful combination of cultural enrichment and performing," said artistic director Deborah DeSantis. "We especially appreciated the attention to detail and sensitivity to the needs of our organization. Venues were well suited to our performing style and the mostly sold out audiences were very welcoming and enthusiastic." 🎵

"My appreciation to ACFEA for helping us change the lives of our students."

**Ralph Sanders, Director
Strake Jesuit Triple Trio**

SOUTH AMERICA DEEMS IRVINE DIVINE

A long-standing personal interest in South America, with positive reinforcement by native Paraguayan and colleague, Daniel Luzko, spurred director

Janice Wyma to take her choir to South America this summer. The inspired decision resulted in the Irvine Valley College Chorale's unforgettable concert tour of Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil. The diversity of sites, people and cultures in these countries proved to be a rich and wonderful combination – from the lively and sophisticated capital of Buenos Aires to the fledgling struggles of Asunción, capital of a young democracy; from the proud and charming townfolk of Encarnación to the breathtaking natural wonder of Iguassu Falls and the splendor of Rio de Janeiro.

Beginning in Buenos Aires, the Chorale spent three beautiful winter days in this cosmopolitan city, visiting the renowned Colón Theatre, taking in a tango show, and touring the neighborhoods of Centro, Recoleta and La Boca. Most memorable, perhaps, was their performance in the auditorium of the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, where the choir responded beautifully to the fine acoustics and evoked an enthusiastic reception from the listeners, who called for three encores. One singer remarked that this concert setting and audience had been the most incredible she had ever experienced.

It was hard to imagine topping this opening concert, but the Fourth of July festivities at the US Embassy in Asunción provided a very different, but equally moving, opportunity. Visiting Paraguay had always been central to the tour planning, in part because of the contacts of Irvine Valley College professor, Daniel Luzko, a native of Encarnación who also spent time studying at the university in Asunción. With his assistance and the opportunity to talk with several international diplomats, the Chorale slowly began to understand the history of this small country and the challenges it currently faces in protecting its fragile democracy. Singing during the morning flag raising ceremony at the Embassy gave the Chorale unexpected cause to reflect on the achievements of democracy and to realize that it is not something to take for granted – in any part of the world. Later that day, the Embassy hosted a formal reception for colleagues and dignitaries of the country, including the President of Paraguay; the Chorale sang during the reception and was a highlight of the festivities.

The group gave another performance at the Paraguayan-American Cul-



South American treasures greeted Irvine Valley College Chorale, including the spectacular Iguassu Falls

tural Center (Centro Cultural Paraguayo Americano) in Asunción before heading for Encarnación, where they were hosted by local families for two days. Here, the Chorale was overwhelmed by the hospitality of these Paraguayans, who welcomed them with genuine warmth while feting them with music and dance and food. A concert was presented in the local cathedral to a packed house.

Then it was on to Brazil! En route from Encarnación to the Brazilian side of Iguassu Falls, the choir stopped to visit the reconstructed ruins of several Jesuit missions in order to learn about their history and the impact they made on the Guaraní Indians. It was the Jesuits who, having initially used the power of music to make contact with the Guaraní, learned their language and taught them how to write it.

A visit to Iguassu Falls is a 'must' when traveling through South America. This wonder of nature must be seen to be truly appreciated! With over 200 chutes spanning nearly two miles across the Brazilian-Argentinean border, it is a magnificent vision.

Rio de Janeiro presented its own magnificence to the Chorale when they arrived for the last stop on their itinerary. With a stunning coastline nestled closely against a dramatic mountainscape, few

would dispute the claim that Rio is one of the world's most beautiful cities. Excursions to Corcovado and Sugarloaf offer breathtaking views while an afternoon at Copacabana beach is an unforgettable way to experience another culture. A final concert was presented at the Federal University where, once again, an enthusiastic welcome which typified audience reactions throughout the tour was bestowed on the Irvine Valley College Chorale. 🎵

"The tour was a terrific success! Once again, we know why we go with you. You run a first-rate operation, and I tell everyone that. All the concerts were wonderful and memorable and the welcomes heartwarming. We get the credit for the success from our families, but we happily transfer it on to you."

Susan Basu, Manager

Rochester Philharmonic Youth Orchestra

A WARM WELCOME FOR ST JOSEPH'S YOUTH CHOIR

St Joseph's Youth Choir, a very fine Seattle high school ensemble under the direction of

Rick Boyle, departed for Paris and England on June 17, 2001. Most of these talented young people had never been to a foreign country, and experiencing Paris, the City of Light, was a splendid way to begin. The group was appropriately delighted with the Eiffel Tower, Nôtre-Dame and the Musée d'Orsay, but the highlight of the Paris experience was performing in the German Church. The acoustics were magnificent, the organ superb, and the audience very appreciative. The choir even performed part of their repertoire in the upper section of the church around the perimeter. What a thrilling start to this two-week tour! The Eurostar train then easily transported all of the participants from Paris to London via the Channel Tunnel and a coach transferred them to Oxford where an impromptu concert was arranged at Keble College. Already on the schedule was a performance in Marcham Parish Church, which turned out to be a most memorable experience. The group was served wonderful tea, cakes and cookies, and the Marcham vicar opened up his house to everyone. Director Boyle commented that there is much to be said for the 'village community coming together' kind of experience.

On to Bath and the opportunity to experience family life in England and form bonds of friendship during two nights of homestays. Of course the glories of Bath were not to be underestimated – from the Roman baths to the



St Joseph's Youth Choir before Marcham Parish Church, England

stunning architecture.

One of the main features of the tour was performing in the Bournemouth Musicmakers Festival, complete with a grand parade, mayoral welcome, civic tea and joint concert. Their participation culminated in a first place award from the International Choirs Competition Day at the Winter Gardens. During the Bournemouth stay, the choir was treated to yet another highlight of the tour in the form of a side trip to Stonehenge and Salisbury, then on to Stonehouse to perform in the Leonard Stanley Priory as part of its annual festival. The group was again deeply touched with the warmth

and hospitality extended to them.

The tour concluded in London with visits to famous historical sites and the opportunity to see *Phantom of the Opera*. Add to that a guided 'Jack the Ripper' walk, a recital in St James's Church, and a farewell dinner at the Hard Rock Café for a total experience that was truly life-shaping.

In the words of director Rick Boyle, "I am so impressed with all the work you did. I had heard that ACFEA is the premier company for being sensitive to the needs and wishes of musical touring groups, and that was certainly the case with our tour." 📌

– Dallas, continued from page 1

performed the work two days earlier in the magnificent Spilberk Castle in Brno, and now brought to a triumphant culmination the combination of American instrumentalists, Czech singers and French music in this Prague hall. The internationalism of music is rarely more keenly felt than on this occasion, especially when, backstage at intermission, the orchestra presented gifts to the singers, who reciprocated by singing a beautiful Czech folksong.

The audience loved the concert. Giangiulio and the orchestra seemed hardly to believe that the large audience was on its feet demanding encore after encore – and would have been happy to stay longer had the orchestra not simply run out of music to play! A very happy

group of young musicians spilled out into a warm Old Town Square to amble, unwind and assimilate what they had just achieved.

Though perhaps the aesthetic climax of the trip, the Rudolfinum concert was only one component in a very fulfilling tour. With the advantage of over two years' planning, the group performed in interesting and appropriate venues in Germany and the Czech Republic, was accommodated all together in fine hotels and on non-stop flights (no small achievement for a group of over 100), and had the services of Ken Graham Trucking, Europe's leading orchestral trucking specialist. A full and varied cultural program included a reception in honor of youth and music in Thalbürgel, a tour of Terezin (a Nazi ghetto near Prague), and a dinner and disco river cruise.

The group is already planning their next tour. Charles Moore, executive director, says, "What a joyous, successful tour this was. As I told you in Prague, we don't plan to waste any time interviewing tour companies for 2004. I hope you will put us on your schedule. Thanks to everyone for making this tour an unqualified success." 📌

"I will recommend ACFEA to my colleagues who tour and will ask for your services again in planning our next tour...you made our tour to the UK positively memorable and most enjoyable."

**Charles E. Ruzicka, Director
Minnesota State University Concert
Choir and Chamber Singers**

SPRINGTIME IN EUROPE FOR THE SONORAN DESERT CHORALE

Leaving the hot, dry desert of Arizona behind, the Sonoran Desert Chorale (director, Jeff Harris) embarked on a stunning two-week journey through Austria, Switzerland and Italy, enjoying the majestic city of Vienna, sparkling lakes beneath snow-peaked Alps, the hospitality of a small Italian village, and the wonderful acoustics of such venues as Salzburg Cathedral and Venice's Basilica San Marco.

With plenty of advanced planning and exceptional promotional material from this very fine musical ensemble, several important venues on the itinerary were confirmed in good time. This allowed plenty of opportunity to secure delightful hotel accommodation and to refine a schedule which offered a comfortable balance between exciting sightseeing and time at leisure.

Early on, it was decided that a relaxing two days in Vienna would be the perfect way to begin this tour, providing time to recover from jet lag and to visit some of the sites that figure so prominently in the Western music tradition: St Stephen's, the Joseph Church and the Opera House, among others. The choir enjoyed a festive *Heurigen* dinner on the edge of the Vienna Woods prior to heading off for Salzburg where, despite a light rain, the city did not fail to enchant. A guided walking tour of the city included a visit to Mozart's Birthplace and a glimpse of Salzburg Cathedral where the choir was able to squeeze in an impromptu sound-check – a good preview for their Mass participation in the cathedral two days following. Meanwhile, the first performance of the tour took place in Bergheim, a small town outside of Salzburg with a delightful parish church and welcoming congregation.

Crossing the Austrian-Swiss border, the choir then made its way to the charming town of St Gallen, where they enjoyed their lovely hotel, a guided city tour and visits to the cathedral and abbey, including the renowned Abbey Li-

brary, which houses manuscripts dating from the ninth century. Another performance was presented in the nearby town of St Mangen for a small but very appreciate audience. Continuing through the breathtaking Swiss countryside, the choir then headed for Locarno, on Lake Maggiore, a popular vacation spot for Europeans. The choir took advantage of the spectacular scenery, some riding the funicular and cable cars up to the mountain peak, others traveling by train or boat to Bellinzona, Ascona and other lakeside villages. These three days, which included

a very enjoyable, standing-room-only performance in the parish church of nearby Tenero, were described by one tour member as a "vacation within a vacation".

Italy welcomed the choir as it always welcomes visitors – with warmth and magic. Having stopped en route in Milan to visit its splendid cathedral, the choir then made its way to Verona. A midnight stroll featured the sounds of *Aida* wafting from beyond the walls of the Arena where it was being rehearsed. The final concert performance took place

in Salo Cathedral, a Gothic structure fashioned after Verona Cathedral with marvelous acoustics. The concert was a joint event with the Salo Cathedral Choir, honoring a local priest and his 50 years of priesthood – and everyone was there to enjoy the moment.

The tour finale featured an excursion to Venice where the Sonoran Desert Chorale had been invited to participate in Mass at the Basilica San Marco and a festive farewell dinner in a country-style Italian castle.

The words of director, Jeff Harris, seem to sum up this tour best: "I must say that the tour far exceeded my expectations; wonderful performance opportunities, spiritual heights and scenes that will be etched in our memories for years to come." 📷



Sonoran Desert Chorale in Locarno, Switzerland



Cantori Domino trades Southern California for a taste of Spain and Portugal

"Wonderful cathedrals and palaces for singing, and very appreciative audiences...It is always a pleasure working with you."

**Donald Kendrick,
Conductor**

**Sacred Heart's
Schola Cantorum**

CAMERATA SINGERS – FROM VATICAN TO VIGAUN

Italy, Slovenia and Austria were the destinations of the Camerata Singers, an excellent community choir from Pocatello, Idaho, directed by Scott E. Anderson. Many in the group had not traveled outside the United States and several had never even left Idaho. To behold the architectural wonders, stunning beauty and magnificent art of Europe became a spiritual journey; a



An impromptu moment of music making for the Camerata Singers in Florence's Duomo

life-changing series of events.

The group touched down in Rome. Wasting no time, they rehearsed on their first full day abroad and were ready for an extraordinary opening performance – a Mass participation nowhere less than St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican! This was followed the next day with a concert in the nearby spa town of Fiuggi, then the group headed north.

The trip to Florence afforded en route visits to Siena and San Gimignano. These two medieval towns were a feast for the eyes, and the architecture and historical significance imparted feelings of awe. In Florence, a major highlight was the concert in the Chiesa Santa Maria dei Ricci, where the choir sang to a very appreciative audience in a church with superb, reverberating acoustics. From sacred and classical music to spirituals and American folk songs such as *Shenandoah*, the choir blended in a way that brought tears to the eyes of many.

Director Anderson remarked that it was very gratifying to watch the group grow musically. He enjoyed watching their reactions the first times they opened their mouths to sing in the stunning, old churches and heard the extraordinary

reverberation. He added that the people who comprise a community group – from all walks of life and religious convictions – are very diverse and to see them become a cohesive ensemble in so many ways, surrounded by world-class art, was profoundly satisfying. The very nature of their environment caused the ensemble to exceed even their own performance expectations.

After the bustle of Florence, the group departed for Stresa to experience the sheer beauty and relaxation of the lake district. The choir explored the gorgeous wonderland at leisure and participated in a Mass in the Chiesa San Ambrogio. Then on to Venice: sightseeing, a fine hotel, and a concert in the hall in Jesolo.

When the group arrived in Ljubljana, Slovenia, they were charmed by this gem of a city. Courier Heather Davies had arranged impromptu concerts for the singers at many locales throughout the tour in addition to the scheduled concerts, and in Ljubljana the choir had just such a spontaneous opportunity at St Nicholas Church. As an unscheduled performance in an empty church, this was a very different experience. The choir was able to go in, sing by themselves, and let emotions flow freely – very moving.

The final destination was Salzburg, Austria, and a concert in the Festsaal of the Kurzentrum in Vigaun. A farewell dinner in a typically Austrian restaurant in Vigaun was a wonderful conclusion to this profoundly moving journey. As Scott Anderson pointed out, it is always a sign of success when the vast majority of a group would have liked to go on for several more days, as was the case with this trip. The entire tour was "various levels of wonderful", he concluded. 📍

"Everything was the consistent high quality that we have come to expect from ACFEA."

**Arthur Buckley, Director
St Agnes Academy**

CANTATA ACADEMY REDISCOVERS EUROPE

While this year's tour was Cantata Academy's first with ACFEA, they were quite familiar with Europe and wanted to

create a tour that would be new and exciting to all of their members. The community choir from Michigan, under the direction of Michael Mitchell, decided to begin their tour in the lovely Italian region of Tuscany, and who could blame them?

Based in the centrally located city of Arezzo, they began with a sightseeing excursion to Florence. Siena was next on the list and they happened upon a feast day, complete with flag throwers, jesters and brightly dressed citizens lining the streets in celebration. The people are part of what makes Italy so much fun to visit and this was confirmed in Chiusi, where the choir made many new friends after their performance in the Cathedral of San Secondiano.

Venice greeted the group with the sounds of waltzes, marches and all the local clamor rising from the Piazza San Marco. At their performance the following evening in the Chiesa San Salvador, director Michael Mitchell was treated to some of the finest acoustics in all of Italy. The choir eagerly anticipated their upcoming concerts, and rightfully so.

As they arrived in Slovenia, the group could feel that they were about to experience something entirely new and exciting. During two days based in the capital, Ljubljana, a visit was made to the resort town of Bled. The group spontaneously burned off some nervous energy by rowing out to the Church of the Assumption located on a tiny island in the middle of a lake. There they climbed the 97 steps to the church and gave an impromptu concert. The next day was spent in Ljubljana where, two days before their arrival, Slovenia celebrated the tenth anniversary of its independence from Yugoslavia. The city was electric and that enthusiasm contributed to a spectacular concert in the Jesuit Parish Church of St James in the town center.

The group left Slovenia, driving through the scenic Alps to Tamsweg, Austria for the first of three homestay nights. Greeted by 'Elvis Presley', (Europe's leading Elvis impersonator is the son of the police chief of Tamsweg), the group gave three splendid concerts in Austria and were then off to the Czech Republic. Visiting the small town of Ceske Budejovice en route, they arrived in Prague. Many members of Cantata remarked how much Prague had changed

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MINNESOTA'S SEWARD CONCERT BAND TOURS EUROPE FOR THE FIRST TIME

Community bands are going to Europe more than ever. The Seward Concert Band from Minneapolis spent two weeks in Germany and the Czech Republic performing everything from Sousa marches, national hymns and George Gershwin tunes to a commissioned work by Minnesota composer Libby Larsen. When director Chuck Boody asked ACEFA to make their tour arrangements, his priority was the music.

"I wanted the band to have the best performing opportunities," he said. "ACEFA really came through for us."

The ensemble began their trek through Germany by stopping first at Bach's hometown of Eisenach. There they experienced Eisenach's many charms, including the Georgenkirche and the Bach museum. Outside of Eisenach lies the quaint Thuringian town of Schmalkalden, where a local music society band hosted a joint concert with

the Seward ensemble, followed by dinner together. "It was a great opportunity for us to perform alongside our new German friends," commented Boody.

The next morning they left for cosmopolitan Dresden in pouring rain; nevertheless, the intrepid band was able to tour the opera house and the magnificent Zwinger palaces. Their two days in Dresden were spent sightseeing and preparing for their concerts in the Czech Republic.

Crossing the border between European Union and non-EU countries such as the Czech Republic can still be tricky today. However, with their carnet in hand, the band crossed the border without any incident whatsoever, reaching Prague in just a few hours.

On their first full day in Prague, the band performed a concert in one of the city's prominent old squares to open the

European Day of Music. Later that evening, the very same stage would feature the Czech Symphony Orchestra and Josef Suk, the world-renowned violinist and great-grandson of Antonin Dvořák.

From Prague, the band made an excursion to Podebrady, one of the Czech Republic's famous spa towns. After performing in the Colonnade Hall, director Chuck Boody met Czech composer Jaromir Vogel. "I was pleased that the band played very well. Mr. Vogel offered to send us scores, and I'm sure we'll soon find something of his to include in our next season."

The band also visited the Czech Republic's best known spa town, Karlovy Vary, sampling not only the waters, but also the fine and affordable food and drink. Just outside Karlovy Vary, the band played its final concert at Marianske Lazne in its spa colonnade.

"ACEFA planned a very thoughtful itinerary for us. For example, walking tours followed sitting in the bus," said Boody. "The choice of performance locations was great for the group, and it was good to have a balance between concert days and free days."

Seward Concert Band is 24 years old. Dale Panton, one of the founding members on this tour, said that "This tour was the best thing the band has done since it was formed".



Seward Concert Band in front of St Nicholas Church, Prague



A warm reception for the Rochester Philharmonic Youth Orchestra (NY) in l'Eglise Abbatiale Notre Dame in Beaugency during their April tour of France

– *Cantata, continued from page 6*

since their previous visit and were pleased to rediscover the exciting, unique city.

As their tour came to an end, the group visited some dear friends in Kreuzwertheim, Germany. They were greeted by the mayor and treated to a lovely dinner in the town center after their concert. Old friends were reunited, new ones introduced and memories were created for years to come. When the group finally boarded their plane back to Detroit, they were understandably reluctant to say goodbye to the beautiful locations, impeccable acoustics and standing room only audiences that had characterized their European concert tour.

"Excellent performance venues and audiences"

Eugene Dowdy, Conductor

Youth Orchestra of San Antonio

PLU'S CHOIR OF THE WEST CONQUERS THE LAND OF THE VIKINGS

Following Pacific Lutheran University Orchestra's highly successful tour of Germany in 2000, PLU's

Choir of the West took flight for Scandinavia this spring, returning to the land left by PLU's founding fathers over a century ago.

Oslo awaited as their first port of call. The group visited the renowned Viking Ship Museum, the famous Holmenkollen ski jump above the city, and Gustav Vigeland's Sculpture Park.



PLU's choristers adopt an honorary member

There the choir adopted one of Oslo's most famous mascots as their own: Vigeland's 'The Little Hot-Head', a life-size bronze of a pouting little boy. This inspired not a few singers to pantomime the figure's whimsically hunched shoulders and frowning face shortly before singing to a large crowd in front of the park's dominant pinnacle, a granite obelisk of swirling human figures in family groups. The choir fit in perfectly.

Originally, Oslo Cathedral was the designated venue for their first formal concert, but because of renovations underway for the Crown Prince's upcoming marriage, the Margaretakyrka, with its high painted ceiling and warm acoustics, was selected.

Attending all the concerts were members of PLU's alumni community,

traveling parallel to the choir on their own ACFEA tour. The Alumni Tour provided a unique opportunity for alumni (including PLU's president Loren Anderson) and students to interact, perhaps most prominently on their common journey to Trondheim by train.

The train passed through ancient forests, subarctic tundra, and Norway's most famous village, Lillehammer, site of the 1994 Winter Olympics. As the choir and alumni traveled north, the sun shone longer and longer. Then Trondheim's most dominant feature came into view: Nidaros Cathedral.

"Nidaros was one of the most memorable concerts we gave," remarked Richard Sparks, director. The choir sang in the west end of this glorious medieval church, the final resting place of Norway's patron saint, St Olaf. They began with Thomas Tallis's spectacular 40-part motet, *Spem in Alium*, in which nearly all the singers had their own part to sing. Selections from Brahms and Mendelssohn followed, with a cycle by American composer, Morten Lauridsen. The audience gave multiple standing ovations after their renditions of American spirituals, and there was not a dry eye in the house after their rendition of the beloved Lutheran hymn, *Beautiful Savior*.

The choir then took a short flight to Bergen, Edvard Grieg's hometown and their last stop in Norway. After shopping in Bergen's famous markets, the choir gave a splendid concert in the Mariakirken, a high Gothic building with warm acoustics and a receptive audience of locals and tourists.

From Bergen the choir flew to Stockholm where they stayed in the Chapman, a tall sailing ship converted into a youth hostel. The choir enjoyed Stockholm's elegant shopping districts, the Vasa Ship Museum, and the Royal Palace.

Their concerts in Sweden were extremely successful both at the Gothic Uppsala Cathedral with a full summer audience and likewise at St Jacob's Church in Stockholm, where among the listeners were the US Ambassador to Sweden, Lyndon L. Olson, Jr., and other dignitaries.

It was fitting that Richard Sparks would lead his choir to Scandinavia, after finishing a book about contemporary Swedish choral life, *The Swedish Choral Miracle*. Sparks loved touring in Norway and Sweden. "It was great that ACFEA organized such a fantastic tour in Scandinavia as a farewell to my 18 years at PLU," he said.



Alaska Children's Choir outside the Royal Albert Hall in London

OTTAWA CHORAL SOCIETY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

In October of 2000, the Ottawa Choral Society and the Chamber Choir from the Crane School of Music (Potsdam, NY), directed by Daniel Gordon, traveled to

Belfast, Northern Ireland. There they joined forces with the Ulster Orchestra and the Belfast Philharmonic Choir to give a performance in Ulster Hall of Michael Tippett's *A Child of our Time*, under the direction of Sian Edwards, which was broadcast nationally on BBC television and radio.

This concert was part of a tour that visited Cheltenham and Bristol in England, and Dublin in the Republic of Ireland. They gave performances with the English Symphony Orchestra and the Bath Philharmonia, conducted by Daniel Gordon, in Monmouth and Bath, as well as an *a cappella* concert in Dublin. 🇮🇪

"This was an OUTSTANDING trip. You provided my students with experiences that they eagerly seized and consumed. First-rate concert venues, well thought-out excursions, truly outstanding courier."

Rob Kolb, Director

Hamilton College Choir

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED: BERKELEY PRESBYTERIANS IN CENTRAL EUROPE

Mitchell Covington, director of the chancel choir at Berkeley's First Presbyterian Church, knew that an overseas tour would create a lasting musical and spiritual bond among his choir's members. However, he was not sure how to incorporate the church's missionary spirit into a concert tour. In his view, music itself has a missionary essence in that it is something you give away. But they were looking for something more – an act of love to provide a Christian focal point to their tour.

Their inspiration came from some visiting missionaries who were living in Hungary and mentioned their work with a refugee camp outside of Budapest. A light bulb went on for Mitchell, who knew the choir was planning to begin their tour in Budapest. That began the ball rolling, with the result being 11 boxes of medical supplies and children's gifts, which the choir brought with them on their very first European tour.

The choir arrived in Budapest and, after plenty of persuasion by Mitchell and the group's couriers, was allowed by Hungarian customs officials to proceed with boxes in hand. Before the group visited the refugee camp, however, they experienced two action-packed days in Budapest. The first was filled with rehearsals, culminating in a stunning performance at Budapest's beautiful and historic Matthias Church. The program featured the music of Hungarian composer László Halmos and the evening concluded in a brilliant collaboration with the Pest County Symphony Orchestra in a performance of Mozart's *Coronation Mass*.

On the second day, after performing a short *cappella* recital at the Calvinist Reformed Church of Budapest for over 300 listeners, the group was finally able to relax and enjoy the fabulous sights of Budapest before heading to Bratislava the next morning, by way of the Bicske refugee camp.

The trip to the camp was indeed memorable. The camp currently shelters about 500 refugees from many different eastern European countries plus some African nations. As the choir arrived, curious residents quickly surrounded the bus, eager for hope and news of their futures. While the boxes of supplies were being unloaded, the choir members began mingling with the crowd. Despite the lack of common language, there was an ease and joy among the small groups

forming, visiting and communing together. Before long, Mitchell and the choir began an abbreviated program for the refugees in their only outdoor concert of the tour. The entire choir was struck by the enthusiasm and appreciation beaming back at them from their audience's faces, reaffirming their belief that music indeed overrides all barriers of race, age, language and experience.

The choir proceeded with their travels, performing in Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, Prague, the jewel of the Czech Republic, and Karlovy Vary, a spa town whose healing waters have been restoring visitors for centuries. In the words of Mitchell Covington, "All of the sites where we performed were stunningly beautiful with super acoustics in great locations. We had an incredible tour. Exceeded my expectations by miles. We will definitely use ACFEA for our next tour!" 📺



Berkeley Presbyterian choir in Karlovy Vary's Tepla Monastery

SONGS OF PEACE AND HARMONY

While the United States continues to refine its relationship with Russia, the University of Evansville Choir did their part by delivering a message of goodwill through music. In early May, the choir embarked on a brief yet meaningful tour that combined three of Russia's most impressive locales.

The trip began in the imposing city of Moscow, where they were met by Olga Yemelyanova, ACFEA's Russian representative. It was an exciting time to be in Moscow since their visit coincided with the celebration of Victory Day, a patriotic holiday commemorating the end of World War II. The choir was somewhat intimidated by the sight of Red Square teeming with marching soldiers and masses of people but, very close by, the group took pleasure in staying at the Hotel Rossia, 'the world's largest hotel'.

The first concert of the tour was at Moscow's Gnessin Academy of Music under the baton of the choir's director, Johnny Poon. Unhindered by cultural differences, the singers from Indiana performed Mozart's *Requiem* with the State Symphony Orchestra of Russia. It was an exhilarating experience for the students to perform with such accomplished Russian musicians.

Departing from Moscow, the choral group boarded an overnight train for Novgorod. The contrast between the two cities was remarkable and the group was amazed by the quiet, peaceful surroundings in which they found themselves. Novgorod is a charming town with hospitable people and the Evansville students took advantage of glorious weather by strolling through the Novgorod Kremlin and the city's antique wooden houses.

The next evening, the choir had a wonderful joint performance with the local Boys' and Young Men's Choir of the Rachmaninoff School of Music. The Russian boys were excited to meet Americans and learn about their culture. The Indiana students were impressed to hear the Russians sing *One* in English. During the reception, the choir learned a bit about the boys' hobbies and pastimes, and were surprised at the similarities between the Russians and themselves.

Finally the choir headed for St Petersburg, the crown jewel of Russia. The students were immediately struck with the beauty and grandeur of St Petersburg's architecture, every block of which looked as if it belonged in a museum. They were also overwhelmed by the Hermitage, where they spent a few hours immersed in one of the world's most astounding collections of art.

The last day was spent preparing for the musical climax of the tour: the group's performance at the world-renowned Glinka Cappella with the brilliant Glinka Cappella Orchestra. The choir's diligence and hard work were fully complimented by the nearly perfect acoustics of the hall. The result was a fantastic concert to a packed hall of enthusiastic listeners. The audience especially enjoyed hearing traditional American sounds from the University of Evansville's barbershop quartet.

Still basking in the warm reception of the St Petersburg audience, the choir enjoyed a final banquet and a chance to join the dancing and singing of a local Russian folk group. The group returned to Indiana the next day, thrilled and changed by the experiences they had shared with the people of Russia. 📺

ACFEA OVERSEAS STAFF

THOMAS AINGER is an Operations Manager in London. A graduate of Leeds University, he has

worked as Choral Courses Organiser for the Royal School of Church Music, for Gamma International as Tour Manager for ballet companies and orchestras, and as Orchestral Manager for The Hanover Band.

ELISABETH CAWOOD is an Operations Manager in London. She studied Italian and music at London University before working in the travel business in Switzerland. She has worked as a press officer and on the administration of the Consort of Musicke and its associated recording company. She speaks German and Italian and, as a singer and violinist, has performed with choirs and orchestras in Italy and Britain.

TRICIA GEORGE is Head of Operations in London. Before joining ACFEA in 1979, Tricia worked for the British Government Bureau dealing with international exchanges. Educated at Aberdeen University, she has traveled extensively in Europe and North America. She sings with the Islington Choral Society in London.

LEONE GRUEBNER is ACFEA's Manager in New Zealand. She has been in the travel industry for 22 years, having owned a travel agency as well as managing coach companies and she now operates her own inbound tour company. Her singing has spanned a lifetime including 20 years in the Auckland Dorian Choir and five years with her current group, the Orlando Singers. She has been associated with ACFEA for several years, arranging the New Zealand portion of their Australasian Tours.

VANESSA HADLEY is an Operations Manager in London. While earning an honors degree in music and Hispanic studies from the University of Birmingham, she spent a year studying at the Universidad de Oriente in Cuba. Before her degree course, she taught English at a primary school in Mexico. She plays the cello, which she studied at the Académie de Musique in Sion, Switzerland.

TONY HASTINGS is European Projects Director. He is a graduate of Sussex University and has worked in the music publishing industry with Oxford University Press. Tony has also run his own music store and booking agency. He currently sings with the Bath Camerata.

ESTHER JONES is the ACFEA Representative in Spain. Born in England, her foreign language studies and subsequent

occupations resulted in extensive travel throughout Europe and the US. She has performed on clarinet with several orchestras and now lives in Barcelona, publishing a monthly English guide to the city.

ROBERT LATIMER is ACFEA's Manager for Australia. Robert has been an educator and businessman, having taught at both primary and secondary levels, and been involved in the photographic and cinema industries. As an amateur musician, he has sung in choirs and choral groups in addition to performing in musical and dramatic productions. He is well traveled with extensive experience in organizing and conducting study tours of North America and Europe. Robert, who lives in rural Victoria, has been associated with ACFEA for over 15 years.

ELFRIEDE LEIMER-RIZZOTTI is the Regional Representative in Italy. Although born in Austria, Friede has been ACFEA's consultant in Italy since 1983. Before joining ACFEA, she worked for the Austrian diplomatic service.

SYLVIA MARIN, ACFEA's Representative in France, is based in Paris. She graduated from Georgia State University with a degree in business administration before moving to France. Since then, she has been involved in organizing music tours and accompanying groups throughout the Mediterranean area using her linguistic skills.

ANNABEL MOORHOUSE is an Operations Manager in London. She has an honors degree in English and French studies from the University of Lancaster and has taught English at the University of Perpignan. She has recently worked as a courier for ACFEA and is an active musician, both as clarinetist and singer.

SUE PETER, ACFEA's Representative for Germany, has a varied background in travel administration and has worked for the British Tourist Authority and the Welsh Tourist Board. Now living in Berlin, she sings with the Wilmersdorf Ensemble 'Kissi Choir'.

SVETLANA PETROVSKAYA, ACFEA's Moscow Representative, graduated in geography from the Moscow Pedagogical Institute. She studied piano as a child and is a keen music fan. Her interests include international relations, travel and meeting people.

RICHARD SAVAGE, Managing Director of ACFEA Europe, has been with the organization since 1970. He graduated from Oxford University, where he sang in Christ Church Cathedral Choir. He still maintains his professional singing career,

being a permanent member of the Monteverdi Choir since 1971 and of the Gabrieli and Taverner Consorts amongst many others.

JOHN TREGELLAS is ACFEA's Regional Representative in Central Europe. Based in Prague since 1990, he works regularly with major concert promoters in the Czech Republic. A modern languages graduate from the University of Oxford, he speaks fluent Czech, German, French and Hebrew. His concert credits as a baritone with the Kühn Mixed Choir include performances with Vladimir Ashkenazy, Sir George Solti and Sir Charles Mackerras.

OLGA YEMELYANOVA, ACFEA's Representative in Russia, is based in St Petersburg. She attended a specialist music school and has a diploma in English and German education. Olga received a PhD in linguistics from Herzen Pedagogical University of St Petersburg, where she teaches English. She is actively involved in music-making, and is a keen American square- and contradancer.



Robert Latimer (left) joins ACFEA on the retirement of Don Whitbread (right)

NEW FACES DOWN UNDER

After many years as ACFEA's manager for Australia and New Zealand, Don Whitbread retired on June 30, 2001. We send him and his daughter, Jenny Russell, who worked with him in recent years, our sincere thanks and very best wishes for the future.

We are delighted to welcome two new faces to ACFEA: Robert Latimer, who will be running our activities in Australia, and Leone Gruebner, who will be the ACFEA face in New Zealand. Both have been associated with our tours for some time, and we are happy now to have them as full members of the team. More information about them both can be found on this page.

**ACFEA
NORTH
AMERICAN
STAFF**

AMANDA BAUMAN is a Tour Manager in the New York office. An Ohio native, she performed with the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus

before receiving her degree in music education from Duquesne University. There she was a member of symphonic and jazz bands, as well as the Chamber Singers, with whom she toured Europe on an ACFEA concert tour. She currently performs with the Canticum Novum Singers in New York City. Amanda's travels have included several excursions to England and France plus visits to Ireland, Luxembourg and Spain.

HUGH DAVIES is Managing Director of ACFEA North America, based in the San Francisco office. Born in England, he has a master's degree from Cambridge, where he sang at King's College under Sir David Willcocks. Hugh sang professionally in Europe, including with the Monteverdi Choir, before teaching music in Australia. He now performs as a soloist and with several professional ensembles in the Bay Area.

ANDREA FULLINGTON is a Tour Manager in the San Francisco office. She studied music and business at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and received her masters in vocal performance from Indiana University in 1993. Since then she has toured and recorded in the US and Europe as a soloist and as a member of numerous chamber ensembles. Currently, Andrea performs in the Bay Area with the California Bach Society, Magnificat and American Bach Soloists.

ROBYN GOLDSTEIN is a Tour Manager in the New York office. After graduating with a degree in psychology from Boston University, she lived in London and traveled extensively in Europe and Asia. A woodwind and keyboard player, her first touring experience was as solo clarinetist with her high school orchestra in Spain; more recently, she has played in several musicals in Boston and at Chicago's Theater on the Lake.

CHARLES HAWK is Business Advisor to ACFEA North America. Charles has been a travel consultant since graduating from California State University in 1972 and has been specializing in music tours since 1980. He is a Certified Travel Counselor



ACFEA staff on retreat in Whistler, BC

and has traveled to all areas of the world both with groups and as an individual.

JANE MARANHAS is a Tour Manager in the New York office. A native of Maine, she graduated with a degree in music performance from the University of Maine. Jane lived in Salzburg for a year as a student at the Mozarteum and traveled extensively throughout Austria and Europe.

KENNETH NOREEN is Artistic Advisor to ACFEA North America. He recently retired after 30 years with the Shoreline School District in Seattle, serving most of which as Band Director at Shorecrest High School. Ken is a Past President of the Washington Music Educators Association and traveled with his band to Europe ten times since 1966. He holds a master's degree in music education and is currently Director of Bands at Shoreline Community College.

MARK POWELL has been a Tour Manager in the Seattle office since 1993. After earning his degree in vocal music from Seattle Pacific University, Mark moved to England where he managed

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the National Youth Choir of Great Britain. He then lived in francophone Belgium, touring and performing throughout Europe while working for the International Federation for Choral Music. Mark is currently finishing a master's degree in musicology and is active in church music as a chanter, conductor and arranger. He currently performs in two professional choirs: the Tudor Choir in Seattle and Cappella Romana in Portland.

DIANE PRICE is a Tour Manager based in the Seattle office. A life-long Oregonian until moving to Seattle, Diane has sung with the Eugene Concert Choir as well as Eugene's opera and symphony choruses. In addition to being an accomplished pianist, she has organized and performed in concert tours throughout Europe and has sung under the direction of Jonathan Griffith and Helmuth Rilling.

CHRISTINA TEPLY is a Tour Manager based in the California office. Born in San Francisco, she graduated from the University of California, San Diego, with a degree in French, and has worked with ACFEA since 1992. Her travels include study abroad programs in France and Central America, competitive tours throughout Europe with a track team, and trips to Russia, China, Australia and New Zealand.

**International
Church Music
Festival**

If the thought of Swiss vocal music evokes a solitary, mountainside yodeler clad in *Lederhosen*, think again. In late June, Switzerland hosted an international choir of over 500 voices in the Bern Konzerthaus directed by the illustrious Sir David Willcocks and the charismatic Paul Leddington Wright. This event was the culmination of the 18th annual International Church Music Festival.

Choirs from around the world converged on the Swiss city of Bern to

enjoy the blend of shared music, local excursions and Christian camaraderie which characterizes this established festival. The International Church Music Festival (ICMF) has been presented annually by FestCorps, Inc. since 1984 with the goal of bringing together musicians to rehearse and perform in beautiful settings with renowned conductors.

Sir David Willcocks has been involved with the festival since its inception. He and Paul Leddington Wright, Musical Advisor for Coventry Cathedral and Artistic Director for the ICMF, prepared the massed choir for a Grand Finale concert featuring Handel's four Coronation Anthems plus works by Bach, Copland, Haydn, Mendelssohn and Rachmaninoff, all selected by directors of the attending choirs. Accompanied by the OPUS Orchestra of Bern, the concert was recorded by BBC Radio in cooperation with Swiss Radio for later broadcast in the UK and other parts of Europe.

Other special events included a concert featuring the international talent of groups from Ukraine, Kenya, Holland, the Czech Republic, Poland and Switzerland.

The city of Bern welcomed nearly 1,000 festival members this past summer. The picturesque Swiss capital on the banks of the Aare River delighted participants with its medieval charm. Free time

to enjoy the city's lovely fountains, scenic cobbled streets and, of course, the famous Bern Bears was balanced with sightseeing excursions into the spectacular Swiss countryside.

Alternating with Bern as host city for the ICMF is Coventry, England. Details are in place for next year and plans are already under way for the 2003 return to Bern, June 18 to 21. In addition to Bern, the ICMF celebrates its 20th season by offering its festival program a week later in Chester, England, June 24 to 27, where participants will sing in the magnificent 900-year-old cathedral. As an officially appointed agent for the International Church Music Festival, ACFEA has the privilege of offering adult choirs the opportunity to attend this musically and spiritually rewarding festival. 📌



A "highlight" in Switzerland for the University of Alabama, Huntsville, Concert Choir during their springtime tour of Europe

"I can't thank ACFEA enough for taking care of the details so we could concentrate on the music. The Peninsula Girls Chorus is delighted to have worked with you and will do so in the future."

**Catherine Doyle Wesolek,
Director**

Peninsula Girls Chorus

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