



St Bartholomew's News

<http://www.stbartholomews.ie>

May 2006

Choir visit to London

The choir tour to London this year was unique. For the first time the choirs of St Bartholomew's and St Patrick's combined to produce wonderful music in some of London's most beautiful surroundings.

In two previous years I have been privileged to accompany the St Bartholomew's choir as a deputy singer on tour. I was delighted that my colleagues in St Patrick's Cathedral choir would now have the same opportunity to sample the ample hospitality of the St Bartholomew's choir-men.

We set off from Dun Laoghaire on Tuesday 18 April at the ungodly hour of 11:00am (estimated). I was greeted by Mr Wisener with the words, "So you made it to the right port this time, Paul?". (See the April 2005 Newsletter - RB). We boarded the train from Holyhead to Euston Station for a long train journey. However, this train journey was made interesting by the fact we were sharing a train with Pete Doherty, the current "bad boy" of pop music.

Our first singing en-

gagement was a lunchtime concert in St Lawrence Jewry Church next to the Guildhall. The concert was in aid of the Armagh Cathedral Choir Appeal. The concert was very well-attended. The total raised at the concert currently stands

ew's was in the audience. Rumours that Bryn Terfyl (yes, seriously) was in the front row of the audience have yet to be confirmed.

In the interests of ecumenicism, some of the St Bartholomew's choir-men joined



The combined choirs performing in St Lawrence Jewry at lunch time on Wednesday. [Photo: Eamonn Keenan]

at £600. Before the concert, Fr. Michael spoke to the audience about his days as a cathedral chorister in Armagh. We encountered yet another pop star at St Lawrence Jewry. We were delighted to see that the Reverend Richard Coles, former Communard and friend of St Bartholom-

some St Patrick's choir-men in Brick Lane for curry. We enjoyed the "hard sell" techniques employed by the curry waiters to entice our group in to their restaurant. We must have looked like a group who could eat and drink enough to keep them in business.

The choir ventured

Choir visit to London (continued)

south of the river to Southwark Cathedral on Thursday.



Niamh and Eamonn rediscovering their youth at Chessington. [Photo: Barbara Conroy]

We sang the Clucas responses, Byrd's Second Service and Faure's Cantique de Jean Racine. The only snag to proceedings was the forty-six verses of psalmody which were dutifully sung.

The choristers of both choirs and the young-at-heart

else spent their day doing a variety of activities. Taking in the sights, lunch in Regent's Park and attending Evensong at Westminster Abbey with the Vasari Singers were some of the activities which were undertaken.

Saturday was the most eagerly anticipated day of the trip. In the morning, the boys were treated to a trip to the Houses of Parliament. Such sights as Ian Paisley's pigeon hole were marvelled at. In the afternoon we sang evensong at the Abbey. We were well looked after by

are wondering how to repair the structural damage to the building after Dyson in D.

Later that evening a substantial proportion of the choir flew home to Dublin. Those of us travelling on the Sunday made the most of their last night on the town. Need I say more?

Overall, the trip was an outstanding success. The music performed was to a very high standard in some



Rupert, Peter, Oisin, Adam, Hugh, William, and Johnny. [Photo: Richard Bannister]



The gentlemen of the choir unwind after a long day. [Photo: Richard Bannister]

adults went to Chessington World of Adventures, on Friday, their day off. Everyone

the verger at the Abbey who led us around whilst skipping and waving an Irish tricolour. Bizarre, I know, but true. Maybe he felt that he needed to create his own 1916 Easter parade through the Abbey? The music was Dyson in D and

S.S. Wesley's Blessed be the God and Father. I believe the Abbey's Fabric Committee

of London's most beautiful buildings. I'm sure both the boys and the men will treasure the memories of this trip. Speaking from a St Patrick's viewpoint, we hope that St Bartholomew's choir will join us for many more joint evensongs, tours and social events.

*Paul Arbuthnot,
St Patrick's Cathedral*

Through the eyes of the younger ones

Barbara Conroy found out what our various trebles had to say about the trip. Reports are, as always, unedited!



The week went very fast. The Tower of London was good but not the best, Chessington was the best; my favourite ride was Dragon's Fury. The rooms were really good.

Declan Doyle



It was a great trip, the weather was nice. The Chelsea FC stadium was really cool - very futuristic. The cathedrals were nice, especially Westminster Abbey. The rides were great except the Rattle Snake. The Science and Imperial War Museum were pretty good. It was great to hang out with my friends.

Calvin O'Broin



This was my first trip and I liked the theme park. Singing was boring; I liked playing in the park.

Johnny Kehoe-Roche



The trip was great; Chelsea FC was the second best day apart from Chessington. The Imperial War Museum was good, but I would have liked more time. Chessington was cool but Dragon Fury's the best.

Brian Clancy



I really enjoyed the trip because I was with my friends. I especially enjoyed Chessington and the Imperial War Museum.

Oisín Keenan



I really enjoyed it, it was exciting and fun because it was my first, and I can't wait to go on other trips. My favourite day was definitely Chessington because we had great fun. It was good. My favourite was Dragon's Fury. Next best was Chelsea FC, we saw everything. The singing was great, the best was Westminster Abbey. I didn't like the train journey.

John Crowley



The trip was fun, I liked Chessington the best. I didn't like the rehearsals but I liked the services. The hotel was nice, I liked the dinner and the breakfasts; the hotel was really big.

Luke Kehoe-Roche



It was my first trip, I liked it all. The best was Chessington and Westminster Abbey. The hotel was good. There was nothing I didn't like. I had too much fun!

Hugh Lowry



The trip was good, I liked the theme park especially Dragon's Fury. I didn't like the Imperial War Museum, absolutely no fake guns, it was interesting but boring.

Rupert Adams

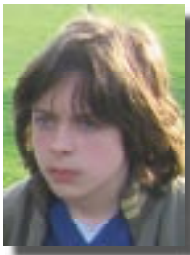


I liked the trip. Chessington was the best, Vampire the best ride. The hotel was cool, on the last night I got to sleep

Through the eyes of the younger ones (continued)

in Calvin's room, which was also cool. The music was stuff I did before. I got to hang out with my friend from St. Patrick's, which was fun, it was a cool trip.

Carl Adams



I really liked the trip mostly for Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament. Not being allowed chilli flakes one night was not good. Overall, however it was a really good trip.

Daniel Tatlow-Devally



It was my first trip, it was fun, Chessington was my favourite and I liked the Science Museum. Imperial War Museum was not so good. I liked singing in Westminster Abbey. I liked sharing a room.

Fergal Cooke



I thought it was really great, I bought loads of stuff and had lots of fun. Singing was exceptionally good and I really enjoyed it. I thought the food was really good and I had loads of fun in the museums and Chessington.

Adam Dargan



It was my first trip, it was really good, Westminster Abbey was brilliant and I got over my fear of singing in front of people. Chessington was great, but I would prefer something more extreme.

Peter Carvill



The trip was good, my favourite was Chessington. The hotel was OK but the food

was disgusting. I didn't like the Imperial War Museum. I liked the Science Museum, I liked singing in the Abbey; it was huge and I liked the Houses of Parliament.

Brian Horan



The trip was really good; I liked the Tower of London and the theme park. I liked the hotel, but the food wasn't great. I liked singing in a big church; it is a once in a lifetime experience.

William Doyle



I enjoyed myself. I liked Chessington and the best ride was Dragon's Fury and Ramesses Revenge. I also enjoyed the Imperial War Museum. I liked singing in Westminster Abbey.

Ethan Conroy

Some photographs from the trip can be viewed now on the parish web site:

<http://stbartholomews.ie/community/gallery/London-Tour-2006>

STOP PRESS: The long awaited second choir CD, "Laudate Dominum", is now available from the Parish Office or from any member of the choir, priced at €12.

Chessington Worlds of Adventure

Writing about a day in an amusement park is nothing new to me, though my usual audience is Roller Coaster Enthusiasts. However, the language required for publication in a parochial newsletter is, to say the least, somewhat different. It goes without saying that, were I not to adapt my writing style, there would probably be no readers left by the start of paragraph two.

I regularly travel to amusement parks with groups of enthusiasts who can only be described as “children of all ages”. Therefore, I felt right at home looking after Adam, Brian, Hugh, Oisin, Peter, and Rupert as they explored all that Chessington has to offer.

The funniest moment of the day for me was loading



Johnny, Luke, William, and Michael. [Photo: Eamonn Keenan]

all six choristers into the Berry Bouncers, a Ribena-sponsored drop ride that reaches all of ten feet into the air, the

target audience being four year olds. Everyone nearby got a real kick out of seeing the inevitable acting. One poor mother had to explain to her nervous-looking child that it wasn't really *that* scary. The ride operator did his level best to remain serious, but soon enough was laughing with the rest of us!

Probably the most rewarding aspect for me in taking young people to amusement parks is to help those that need it to face and beat their fears. One of the newest rides at Chessington is a roller coaster called Dragon's Fury. Though aimed at a younger audience, the visible section of the ride does present an intimidating appearance. Two of my group elected to keep their feet firmly on terra firma. Both, however, voluntarily returned by mid-afternoon, and indeed enjoyed things so much that they insisted on a third go before the end of the day.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the spin ride Rameses Revenge. My aging

stomach cannot handle more than one or two cycles in a day, and these, on the rare occasions they actually happen, need to be well spaced out. It



Possibly the most frightening ride in Chessington. [Photo: Richard Bannister]

was more than a little impressive, in a somewhat unsettling way, to see the number of our choristers who survived three (and in some cases more) consecutive rides without revisiting earlier meals.

All too soon it was time to leave the park and return to London. The excited chatter on the train journey said more about the day than my trite writings ever could. A day in a park like Chessington is far from cheap, but one should not forget that the boys raised the money themselves by bag-packing in Tesco. The writer has not asked, but would be very surprised if they did not consider it well worth the effort!

Richard Bannister

The Birthday Boy (well, not entirely...)

Robert Hilliard was previously thought to celebrate his birthday in mid-September. However, the staff in TGI



The Birthday Boy, resplendent with ketchup on his face. [Photo: Richard Bannister]

Fridays in Leicester Square may not have been entirely aware of that. The biggest child in the restaurant had already spent much of the meal tying helium-filled balloons to napkins and floating them through the restaurant at head height, much to the

amusement of our table. The staff had even joined in the fun, pushing the airborne "blimps" in different directions. In due course, several of them came out to lead the crowd through the refrains of Happy Birthday, as our protagonist stood up on his chair to conduct. A complimentary extra dessert must have seemed the icing on the cake (pun not intended).

Richard Bannister

Managing the Choir

Whilst we all relax after another successful choir trip, let us not forget that each and every choir event requires rigid and precise organisation to ensure that the Boy Choristers, Girl Choristers and indeed the Gentlemen are at the required place at the required time. This is not the easiest of tasks given the fact that, as was the case on this trip, some chose to make their own travel arrangements.

However, we are indebted to Niamh Harty yet again for her skills in organising the group, and ensuring that everybody had a Hotel room, and that all who travelled in the main party made it to London and

back to Dublin safely and in one piece. As one who has organised the transport arrangements on previous trips, I know the difficulties encountered when last minute changes are made. We all must applaud Niamh and her team (Barbara Conroy, Michael Doyle, Eamonn Keenan, Triona Sweeney, John Roche, and Bernadette Kehoe) for their attention to detail, and even the boy choristers who might have been put out by the rigid night watch would have to agree that they arrived at each rehearsal well rested and prepared to give their all to ensure a successful concert in St. Laurence, Jewry and at the services

of Choral Evensong in both Southwark Cathedral and Westminster Abbey.

Whilst on the subject of thanks, we must also convey our thanks to Malcolm Wisener and Peter Barley for putting us all through our paces and ensuring that both Choirs upheld their respective traditions and were indeed ambassadors for the Church of Ireland in the three prestigious London venues. We are also indebted to our own travelling Organist, Andrew Mackriell for his work in the preparation of the Organ Music, and his behind the scenes preparation with the vergers at each venue.

Robin Heather

A seat in the House of Lords

On Saturday morning, after their rehearsal in the Abbey, the boys were shown around the Palace of Westminster. For a thousand years there has been a royal palace here, and everywhere there are reminders of that history.

The palace is now home to the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The archway around the door into the Commons is chipped and scarred – a reminder of the German bomb which destroyed the Chamber during the Second World War. Beside that door stands a statue of Winston Churchill, his chin jutting out, looking every inch the wartime leader. One shoe of the statue, which stands on a pedestal, is shiny – MPs going into the House touch the great man's foot, hoping that some of his eloquence will

rub off on them. Visitors are discouraged from following their example, but one or two of the boys may just have brushed against it.

The MPs and Ministers were nowhere to be seen, as Parliament closes down at the weekend. We saw the Commons benches, where government and opposition face one another across the floor of the House. Red lines run along both sides of the Chamber, in front of the benches, and the distance between them is two sword lengths and one foot. Those lines may not be crossed.

It seems that many years ago the Members wore swords in the House, and it

was necessary to make sure that the members of the opposing parties never got close enough to one another to be able to strike!

On the way out of the Palace we stopped to look at Westminster Hall, which was



The author admiring a facsimile of the Magna Carta [Photo: Eamonn Keenan]

built by the Normans. In it Guy Fawkes was tried for trying to blow up the Houses of Parliament in 1605.

John King

Tower of London

Eight of us went to the Tower of London with four adults (*the boys were given a choice; the remainder of the group opted for Chelsea FC - RB*).

The White Tower is the biggest and oldest, and was originally called the

Tower of London. Then when the rest was built the whole area was called the Tower of London.

We saw the Crown Jewels of many English Kings and Queens as we walked through the Jewel House, and afterwards we

saw video footage of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953.

While passing through White Tower we saw the armour of King Henry VIII and many other earls, lords and princes armour.

William Doyle

Girls' Choir Kilkenny Trip

The Dean of Ossory, Very Reverend Norman Lynas has invited the Girls and Gentlemen to sing two services in the medieval setting of St. Canice's Cathedral, Kilkenny. The choir travel to Kilkenny on Saturday 20th May, and will sing Choral Evensong at 5:00 pm that evening,

and will return to the Cathedral on Sunday 21st May to lead the worship at the 11:00 am Sung Eucharist. We are indebted to Mark Bowyer, Cathedral Administrator of St. Canice's Cathedral for his assistance in the organisation of this trip.

Robin Heather

Easter Vestry

The annual Easter Vestry took place on Passion Sunday after the Eucharist. The main business focused on the annual election of Churchwardens, Glebewardens, and members of the Select Vestry, who will serve for the next twelve months. The following people were elected at the meeting:

Richard Bannister,
Robert Barden, Alan Bigley

(Vicar's Glebewarden), Don Cazzini, Tony Conroy (People's Churchwarden), Gillian Davidson, Traudi Ferguson, Alan Fletcher, Brian Gageby, Niamh Harty (Vicar's Churchwarden), Robin Heather, Martin Hilliard, David Jones, Charlie Smith, Ferdinand von Prondzinski (People's Glebewarden), and Malcolm Wisener.

Robin Heather

Blast from the Past

It was good to read Bobby's letter about the old days. I well remember "Mr" Belshaw. When I was a chorister his ancient mop of white hair figure arrived and left on his bicycle, which was the popular mode of transport in those days. What is now the Knights of Malta hall was packed with bicycles on a Sunday. Certain nameless wealthy people did travel by car, most notably an MG Sports convertible! Another great character was fellow chorister David Norris, who both mesmerised and amazed me by his regular preaching to me after rehearsals, by which I mean, of course, expounding robustly and vigorously, developing his incipient powers of oratory on every subject under the sun, from the platform of his... bicycle!

John Lundberg

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About

St Bartholomew's News is edited and typeset by Richard Bannister. Submissions for future issues and all enquiries about advertising should be sent to the address on the left. The newsletter is available by post for a nominal charge; for further details, contact the Parish Administrator.

A full schedule of services and events is available on the diary page of the parish web site, located at <http://www.stbartholomews.ie/services.htm>.