

AROUND THE WORLD IN 44 DAYS

By Tony Sitters

PART 1 – THE PLANNING

Resulting from the City of London having been awarded the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the London Welsh Male Choir, 5 years ago had a “vision” of holding a ‘once in a life-time’ event – a massed male voice concert, with Choirs drawn from all five Continents to perform a new work to be commissioned from the internationally known Welsh composer, Karl Jenkins, with lyrics by Grahame Davies, to be known as “The Hero’s Journey”. The composition together with representative music from each continent and other massed Choir items was to reflect the coming together of the athletes of all nations for the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games. A total of 6 Choirs including the Metropolitan Male Choir of South Australia (MMCSA) and The National Male Choir of NZ represented the Australasian contingent.

The MMCSA began their planning of a tour to Canada, USA and the UK in the second half of 2010 with the itinerary having been finalised by early 2011. Participating Members including wives, partners etc. were required to pay a deposit in April, 2011. The RAA of SA, as in past overseas tours, was the Choir’s booking agent. A round the world ticket was secured for the Members etc. The tour was set down to commence on Sunday, 17 June, 2012 with the massed male voice concert being held on Saturday, 7 July, 2012 and departure for Adelaide via Singapore being the following night with arrival at the Adelaide International Airport set down for Tuesday, 10 July.

Marie and I decided that we would leave home earlier than the Choir and through the RAA booked a 11 day Canadian Rockies Circle tour which included 2 days on the famous Rocky Mountaineer train and on return to Vancouver participate in a 7 night Inside Passage cruise from Vancouver to Seward, Alaska with a coach trip from Seward to Anchorage for the flight back to Vancouver via Seattle to meet up with the Choir on Sunday, 17 June, 2012.

WE SET OFF AND ARRIVE IN CANADA

We departed Adelaide on Tuesday, 29 May for Sydney – due to Air Canada having limited flights to Vancouver it was necessary for us to stay overnight in Sydney – our accommodation being with CFA Inc. Members Carol and John Badcock. Departure from the Sydney International Airport was at 10.25am on Wednesday, 30 May, 2012 with arrival at the Vancouver Airport being at 7.30am the same day (International Dateline) after a non-stop flight of 14 hours 5 minutes.

We were met at the Airport by our Travelmarvel Tour Director Su Lowery – our Group consisted of 38 Australians, 2 English and 2 Scottish. With everyone ‘checked in’ we boarded our coach at 9.00am for the drive to the port of Tsawwassen. On arrival at Tsawwassen, the coach was driven onto the ferry for a 1 ½ hour journey to Swartz Bay, Vancouver Island and subsequent arrival at Victoria, the capital of British Columbia. We were booked for a 2 night stay at the Queen Victoria Hotel and Suites. That evening we had our meet and greet with drinks and nibbles supplied.

SIGHTSEEING IN CANADA

Day 2 (Thursday, 31/5) – In the morning the group visited the Butterfly Gardens and the historic Butchart Gardens. The afternoon was at our leisure, so Marie and I visited the IMAX Victoria with it’s giant screen to view the film ‘Rocky Mountain Express’ which propels the audience on a steam train journey through the breathtaking vistas of the Canadian Rockies and highlights the adventure of building a nearly impossible transcontinental railway. For our evening meal, we walked the short distance to a building called “The Old Spaghetti Factory” – wow, what a meal - plus a bottle of red wine to drink a toast to our overseas holiday.

Day 3 (Friday, 1 June) saw us return to Swartz Bay, Vancouver Island for the ferry ride back to Tsawwassen and the continuation of our 11 day Canadian Rockies Circle tour. Overnight stops on days 3 and 4 were at Sun Peaks and Jasper. Day 5 was a day of highlights for us – we travelled

along the Icefields Parkway with a stop at Athabasca Glacier for an Ice Explorer ride – an experience that we will never forget with another highlight being our accommodation at The Fairmont Chateau, overlooking the beautiful Lake Louise.

The following morning we continued our coach trip to Banff where we would spend 2 nights at the Banff Park Lodge. On our full day at Banff we were scheduled to ride the Banff Gondola to enjoy views of the Canadian Rockies, however, the previous day, on our way from Lake Louise, the Tour Director and Coach Captain (J T Taylor) agreed that we would ride the Gondola that day – it was a good move, because the following day cloud cover had moved in and the Gondola ride would have been a waste of time.

A TRICKY JOURNEY BY COACH IN BAD WEATHER

Day 8 The beginning of our Rocky Mountaineer journey – or so we thought. At 8.30am on that Wednesday, our Tour Director called us into a room at the Banff Park Lodge and told us the sad news that due to torrential rain etc. the previous night, we would not be boarding the train, but instead transported to Kamloops by our coach. We drove down to the Banff Railway Station where two Rocky Mountaineer employees boarded our coach for the journey to Kamloops. Our luggage had been loaded onto a truck and was to be available at Kamloops when we arrived, but, due to landslides etc. the truck was held up and we did not receive our luggage until we arrived in Vancouver. The distance by road from Banff to Kamloops via Jasper was in excess of 800km – full credit must go to J T for his excellent driving through rain, fog and the volume of road traffic to deliver us safely to our hotel accommodation at Kamloops.

ON THE TRAIN AT LAST

Day 9 Kamloops to Vancouver. Following our disappointment at not having travelled on the Rocky Mountaineer between Banff and Kamloops the previous day, we boarded the train around 8.00am and settled into our Gold Leaf seats. At 8.15am we departed Kamloops – not long after which we were summoned down stairs to the dining room for breakfast. Dinner was also partaken in the dining room. During our journey to Vancouver we passed Hells Gate (a narrow passage in the Fraser Canyon), the Coast Mountains and the Fraser Valley. We also witnessed a number of lengthy freight trains operated by Canadian Pacific travelling on the opposite side of the river. On arrival at the Vancouver Rail Terminal we boarded our coach and conveyed to the Blue Horizon Hotel, our accommodation for the last two nights of our Canadian Rockies Circle.

VANCOUVER

Day 10 During the morning the 42 persons in our group were taken on a tour of the City which included the Waterfront, Gastown and the magnificent Stanley Park. The afternoon was at our leisure, Marie and I with another couple took the opportunity to visit and walk across the Capilano Suspension Bridge. That night we had our farewell dinner – the venue was the 31st level of the Blue Horizon Hotel where we had magnificent views of the Vancouver Harbour as well as the city proper.

Sadly, Day 11 (Saturday 9 June) arrived and it was time to say farewell to our travelling companions of the past 10 days. Some of the group were transported to the wharf at Canada Place to join their cruise liner for a trip along the 'Inside Passage'. We would be at the same location the following day for our journey of the 'Inside Passage'. Our thanks to the team of Su Lowery (Tour Director) and J T Taylor (Coach Captain) for a very entertaining and enjoyable tour on the 11 Day Canadian Rockies Circle.

'INSIDE PASSAGE' CRUISE

On Sunday, 10 June we boarded the MS Zaandam for our 7 night 'Inside Passage' cruise. Departure from Canada Place was at 4.00pm and with the usual safety talk completed we were ready to relax and enjoy the cruise. There were three ports of call – Ketchikan - billed as the salmon capital of the world: Juneau where we toured the Glacier Gardens, Mendenhall Glacier and

traversed the Mount Roberts Tramway (Gondola) and Skagway – bus ride to Fraser, train ride from Fraser back to Skagway on the White Pass & Yukon Route, lunch at a place called Liarsville and a tour of the Red Onion Saloon.

Day 6 (Friday, 15 June) we cruised Glacier Bay with its rivers of ice and towering peaks – MS Zaandam spent some considerable time in this area to allow the passengers to witness this spectacular scene. The following day we cruised the Gulf of Alaska before arriving at Seward, Sunday, 17 June.

[ARRIVAL BACK IN VANCOUVER AND MEETING WITH THE REST OF THE CHOIR](#)

Due to an early disembarkation, we had the alarm set for 4.30am (you have to be joking) - had our breakfast and then went back to our cabin to await the call for us to join our coach for the journey to Anchorage. We departed Seward at 6.50am and after a very scenic drive arrived at the Anchorage Airport at 9.15am with our luggage arriving by truck at 9.30am. We booked our luggage through to Vancouver, passed through Security and then waited for our call to board our flight.. Departure from Anchorage was at 11.23am – lovely views of the snow capped mountains as we headed towards Seattle where we touched down at 3.15pm (having put our watches forward 1 hour). Another wait – in excess of 2 hours. Due to Marie having wheelchair access on this tour, we were called to board the plane at 5.40pm with take off at 6.20pm for the short flight to Vancouver arriving at 6.50pm. As there were another three persons travelling with us, we organized a stretch limo to convey us to our hotel to meet up with the rest of the touring Choir Members of the MMCSA. Throughout the three week tour, the MMCSA would perform 6 concerts in Canada (4), USA – Boston (1), UK – Wales (1) before joining Choirs from around the world for the ‘BIG’ concert in London on Saturday, 7 July, 2012.

Monday, 18 June (Day 2 of the MMCSA Tour) - following breakfast we were taken on a tour of the City of Vancouver, similar to the tour Marie and I had done with the Canadian Rockies Circle Group. Due to the number in our party (72), two buses (red and blue) were organised for the tour of Canada and the USA (we were in the red bus). The afternoon was free with the Choir Members having a rehearsal, after dinner, in the Christ Church Cathedral Hall which was located a short walk from our hotel.

Tuesday was also a free day until the evening concert. Marie and I walked down to the Cathedral and were able to photograph the inside of same, in particular the stained glass windows – 32 in all. Throughout Canada there are eating houses called Tim Hortons – we visited them a couple of times. The MMCSA Choir Members were required to be at the Cathedral at 6.15pm for a sound check and to meet the Members of the Vancouver Welsh Male Choir. Our Choir commenced the concert at 8.00pm by singing 11 pieces which included 2 solo's, then we were joined by the Vancouver Welsh Male Choir to sing a further two pieces before Intermission. The Vancouver Welsh Male Choir took to the stage following the break and performed 8 numbers before being joined by our Choir to sing the final 2 pieces which concluded with a rousing rendition of “When the Saints Go Marching In”. The Vancouver Welsh Male Choir would be joining us in London on Saturday, 7 July.

[OFF TO BOSTON, USA](#)

Wednesday – another early rise – 5.00am, breakfast, then on our coach which departed at 6.10am arriving at the Vancouver International Airport at 6.30am for the flight to Boston via Toronto. Because of the large group (72) we were eventually taken to the ‘Group Bookings’ counter to book our luggage through to Boston. Due to the fact that we were travelling Domestic, each Member of the party were required to pay \$CAD25.00 – same had to be paid by credit card – unable to take cash. Then the credit card machine would not print out the receipts – so a further delay was had. Finally, with all the luggage booked through, we were directed to Security and then to Gate 51 to board our plane which departed at 9.45am (45 minutes late due to arriving late from Sydney). During the flight to Toronto, we were asked to advance our watches 3 hours with arrival at that airport at 4.45pm (30 minutes late). We had a lengthy walk to our departure gate for Boston – no

wheelchair access for Marie. The final leg to our destination commenced at 6.15pm (30 minutes late) with touch down at the Boston Airport at 7.25pm (7 minutes late – must have had a tail wind). Prior to landing in Boston, the MMCSA, to the delight of the Flight Attendants and passengers (and I believe the Pilot and Co-Pilot) gave an impromptu concert by singing ‘I am Australian’ and ‘I still call Australia Home’. Our plane had touched down at Terminal B, but our 2 coaches were parked at Terminal A – a lengthy walk with our luggage. Finally departed the Airport at 8.40pm for the drive to our hotel – the Crowne Plaza – our accommodation for 3 nights.

Thursday, the first of our 2 full days in Boston – our sightseeing, with the aid of our Trafalgar Guide included walking part of the Freedom Trail, checking out the battle site of Bunker Hill and visiting the USS Constitution. That night the choir had yet another rehearsal.

Friday – more sightseeing – this time we visited a village called Plimouth (correct spelling) plantation, the Mayflower ship replica and Plymouth rock. That evening we performed with the Boston Saengerfest Men’s Chorus at the First Baptist Church, Newton.

[BACK TO CANADA](#)

Saturday 23/6 – another early rise (6.00am) – suitcases out at 6.45am, breakfast and on the coaches ready to depart at 8.00am – destination Fredericton, New Brunswick (back into Canada). Our comfort stop at 10.00am was at a liquor mart in New Hampshire (USA). We purchased a 750ml bottle of Bailey’s Irish Cream for USD\$19.99 (could not resist the temptation at that price). Our lunch stop was at a town called Waterville – we lunched at a place called ‘The Silver Tavern’ – very interesting photo’s around the wall of a Circus back in the early days of the 20th Century. After our afternoon comfort stop we reached the Canadian Border at 4.30pm. Two Canadian Custom Officers came on board to check our passports – with this done we crossed the boarder into Canada at 4.45pm and headed for our evening meal destination – ‘The Kings Head’ at Kings Landing which was reached at 6.30pm. With the evening meal finished we departed ‘The Kings Head’ at 9.15pm for the 25 minute ride to the Delta Fredericton Hotel which was to be our accommodation for the next 2 nights. Due to Marie having a medical problem, we caught a taxi to the Emergency Room at the local hospital arriving there at 10.30pm and after being attended to we were back in our hotel room at 2.30am Sunday, 24/6 – a very very long day. We managed to get a couple of hours sleep before rising for breakfast.

Sunday 24/6 – following breakfast we boarded our respective coaches for a very interesting city tour of Fredericton – our guide being a local resident. The afternoon saw the Choir Members assemble at the St Dunstan’s Roman Catholic Parish Church at 2.00pm for a concert with the Fredericton Ladies Choir which commenced at 3.00pm – something different – since joining the MMCSA, I have never sung with a choir of the opposite sex. – according to the programme, there were 90 ladies in the choir compared to our travelling choir of 37. Following the concert we were conveyed by our coaches to the St Thomas University Conference Centre where we joined the Fredericton Ladies Choir for dinner. At 8.00pm we were informed that our coaches had arrived to take us back to the hotel – after having a sing song and saying our goodbyes we departed for the hotel at 8.15pm to pack our cases for the next day of travelling.

Monday 25/6 – on the road at 8.20am heading for our next overnight stop – the Delta Moncton Hotel. Our day’s sightseeing included a visit to the township of St John and the St John River with its reversing falls – the cruise ship ‘Carnival Glory’ was in port – and then onto a place called Hopewell Rocks. Dinner at the hotel was at 6.00pm – a rather quick meal for the choir as we were required to commence rehearsal at 7.30pm.

Tuesday 26/6 – Today we leave New Brunswick and head for Prince Edward Island and the town of Summerside. Our sightseeing today included a visit to Fort Beausejour, New Brunswick – which overlooks the Bay of Fundy, built by the French in 1751 to defend their interests in the isthmus of Chignecto. The fort fell to the British in 1755, was renamed Fort Cumberland and repelled American and local rebel attacks in 1776. Reinforced for the War of 1812, it was abandoned in 1835 and declared a national historic site in 1926. The Northumberland Strait separates New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. In 1997 a bridge of 13km in length was constructed over the

Strait and was named Confederation Bridge. Having crossed the bridge we stopped for lunch before continuing our journey to Summerside and the Quality Hotel & Suites – our accommodation for the next 2 nights – were we arrived at 1.55pm. Dinner was at The Shipyard – a short drive from the hotel - the meal consisted of a full lobster each (still in its shell).

Wednesday 27/6 – another day of sightseeing – our first stop was at the township of Kensington and the Railway Station which was built in 1905 and was used in the remake of the film ‘Anne of Green Gables’. We continued on to Charlottetown where a local guide joined the coach to give us a tour of the township. The guide informed us that this summer, they were expecting 52 cruise ships to dock. After our lunch break we travelled to the Prince Edward Island National Park before visiting ‘Green Gables’ the homestead where Lucy Maud Montgomery spent half her life and wrote ‘Anne of Green Gables’. The Choir was booked to assemble at the Trinity United Church, Summerside at 6.30pm in readiness for a concert with the Coro Dolce Choir which was scheduled to commence at 7.30pm. The concert concluded at 9.30pm – we were driven back to our hotel and then walked across the road to the Brothers Restaurant for an after concert get-together of drinks and finger food.

Thursday 28/6 – Departed from our hotel at 8.05am to travel to Baddeck, Nova Scotia for a 3 night stay. Our first stop after leaving the hotel was Charlottetown for a comfort stop before continuing on to Wood Islands Ferry Terminal to board the car ferry at 11.00am to Nova Scotia. The ferry was booked to travel the distance of 22 km in 75 minutes. Back on land, our first stop was at Pictou for lunch. A further stop was made at Port Hastings (Cape Breton Island) before arriving at Baddeck just after 5.00pm and our accommodation, the Silver Dart Lodge.

Friday 29/6 - A relaxed morning – following breakfast we were taken in to the township for a tour through Alexander Graham Bell’s Museum – a very interesting and informative visit. The weather in Baddeck was a beautiful 24 degrees and sunny – we heard at breakfast that Adelaide was 11 degrees and raining, again. Following lunch, we were taken back to the Silver Dart Lodge, although some of the party including Marie had gone back after the Museum tour. Our final concert in Canada was to be at Glace Bay, a 1 ½ hour journey from Baddeck via Sydney, Nova Scotia. We departed our accommodation at 3.30pm (the ladies would depart 1 hour later) with arrival at the Savoy Theatre at 5.00pm. We then had a run through of some of the numbers that we were going to perform. Following our brief rehearsal, we were taken to a room to partake in our evening meal – sandwiches – we were to have been joined by the ladies for the meal but with only ¼ sandwich per choir member, the ladies walked the short distance to Subway – a more substantial meal than we had. The concert billed as ‘THUNDER from DOWN UNDER’ Cape Breton’s Men of the Deeps meets Australia’s Metropolitan Male Choir commenced at 7.00pm with proceeds to support the Cancer Patient Care Fund and the Savoy Theatre. The Men of the Deeps commenced the concert – a very impressive start – the stage was in darkness and then all of a sudden there were these lights – followed by singing – the lights were from miner’s hats worn by the choir – this being part of their costume. The criteria to join this choir – you had to have 2 years working in the coal mine and be able to sing – I do not know what happens now as the government closed the mine. Our choir took to the stage after the intermission and at the conclusion of our numbers we were joined by the Men of the Deeps to sing Working Man, a composition by Canadian writer Rita MacNeil, a very moving end to a wonderful concert. Following the concert, we moved to the foyer for supper with drinks, if you wanted same, at your own expense. We arrived back at the Silver Dart Lodge at 11.40pm.

Saturday, 30/6 – A full day of travelling what is known as ‘The Cabot Trail’. Departing Baddeck, we travelled west to the Gulf of St Lawrence, then travelled north along the coast – some very spectacular views. Our first stop for the day, of 20 minutes duration, was at Cheticamp. We then entered the Cape Breton Highlands National Park known for its spectacular highlands and ocean scenery. Steep cliffs and deep river canyons carved into a forested plateau bordering the Atlantic Ocean. One third of ‘The Cabot Trail’ runs through the National Park. We made a couple of stops along the Trail at Jerome Mountain and a boardwalk – what is known as ‘The Bog Trail’ before arriving at Pleasant Bay for our lunch stop at The Rusty Anchor. A very enjoyable meal – it was here that Marie and I tasted Root Beer – very similar in taste to sarsaparilla. A group photo was

taken before we headed through the National Park to the Atlantic Ocean and continued our drive south. Once again some very spectacular scenery. Three more stops were made during the afternoon before we arrived back at our accommodation at 6.35pm.

Sunday, 1/7 - Canada Day – travel to Halifax. The order of the day – luggage ready at 7.00am, breakfast at 7.30 with departure at 8.30am another fine day for travelling. We left Baddeck at 8.35am with our first stop at Port Hastings. After leaving Port Hastings we watched a DVD on the ‘true’ story of the Titanic – many of the victims of the Titanic are buried in Halifax. Our lunch stop was at ‘Sherbrooke Village’. The Village contains 35 buildings – unfortunately, time did not permit for us to look at all the exhibits. According to the brochure that we were given ...”The French were the first European visitors to Sherbrooke, as early as 1655. The settlement was known as Fort Sainte Marie. By 1815 the settlement which developed at the head of the navigable waters became known as Sherbrooke, in honour of Sir John Coape Sherbrooke, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia”. Our lunch was partaken in the Sherbrooke Hotel and What Cheer Tea Rooms. An additional stop was made at the Fisherman’s Life Museum before we arrived at our accommodation – Lord Nelson Hotel & Suites, Halifax.

Monday, 2/7 – our final day in Nova Scotia and Canada. We were taken to a very interesting place called Peggy’s Cove – very similar to Granite Island, Victor Harbor, South Australia, but on a much larger scale. Lunch was had at the Swiss Chalet before we were driven to ‘The Citadel’ – a National Historic Site. Across the road from ‘The Citadel’ was the Halifax Metro Centre where at 2.30pm the Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo, 2012 would take place. Members of the MMCSA were fortunate enough to obtain tickets to witness the spectacular. With the exception of a 20 minute intermission, the show was non stop finishing at 5.40pm. Our final meal in Canada was at a place called ‘The Boon Docks’. Following the meal, we had a group photo taken and then boarded our respective coaches for the last time for the ½ hour journey to the Halifax International Airport in readiness for our overnight flight to London Heathrow Airport. Due to Marie having wheelchair access, we boarded the plane first with other passengers in a similar situation, at 11.05pm. The scheduled time of departure was 11.45pm, but we eventually took off at 12.07am.

[PART 2 - AND ON TO ENGLAND](#)

Tuesday, 3/7 – After collecting our luggage, clear Customs and Immigration we were met by our two Trafalgar Travel Directors – Rachel being in charge of our coach (red) and Amy in charge of the blue coach. We travelled through the west of England, later crossing the Severn River arriving in Cardiff, Wales at 2.40pm. We had a short tour of the city before arriving at our hotel – Mercure Holland House for a 2 night stay. At 4.15pm the MMCSA were invited to the 1st level to have drinks and at 5.45pm we had a buffet tea. The Choir Members departed the hotel at 6.30pm for a rehearsal with the world famous Treorchy Male Choir which was held between 7 and 9.00pm. Afterwards we were invited to walk a short distance to the local Rugby Clubrooms for drinks then retrace our steps back to our accommodation.

Wednesday, 4/7 – We were given a ‘free’ day – to visit various parts of Cardiff. At 5.45pm we boarded the two coaches for the 45 minute trip to the Holy Cross Church, Cowbridge for our 6th concert of the tour. The concert was of 2 hours duration (7.30-9.30pm) followed by an “Afterglow” social gathering at the Cowbridge Rugby Club from 9.30 – 10.30pm. Of interest, on 27th February, 1484, King Richard III visited the Holy Cross Church, Cowbridge – there was a write up about his visit and also a painting of the King.

Thursday, 5/7 – Travel back to London. On arrival, we picked up a local guide for an orientation tour which included Buckingham Palace, Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament before travelling through Knightsbridge, the home of Harrods department store (the coaches did not stop to allow the ladies in our group to alight) en route to Kensington for our three night stay at the Copthorne Tara arriving there at 3.30pm. In the evening, the MMCSA travelled via the Underground, to the venue where the rehearsal was to take place - we were joined by the other Choirs representing Australasia. Whilst we were at rehearsal, Marie and two other ladies from our group travelled by train (underground) to Leicester Square Station then walked to St Martin’s Theatre to see Agatha

Christie's murder mystery 'The Mousetrap', now in its 60th year.

Friday, 6/7 – A 'free' day. Some of our group travelled by the Underground to Victoria Station then walked to Buckingham Palace for a tour. Visitors were allowed into certain parts of the Palace for the tour which took 2 hours concluding at the gardens where from time to time the Queen and invited guests attend garden parties. The Choir Members left the hotel at 2.40pm for yet another rehearsal – interspersed with our evening meal – if we could find a suitable eating place – which we did in the end – but this did not leave us much time to eat as we had to be back at the rehearsal venue by a certain time.

Saturday, 7/7 – The Big Day–

Our alarm woke us at 5.15am – an early breakfast - the MMCSA Choir met at the Underground Station (which was a short walk from the hotel) at 7.00am for the train ride to the Embankment Station then a walk across the footbridge spanning the River Thames and into The Royal Festival Hall for 8.00am (we were required to be in our full uniform from 7.00am). The Australasian Choir were the first group to practice followed by Choirs from the other 4 Continents. With this completed it was time to assemble the 524 choristers on stage for the Massed Choir rehearsal. The concert in The Royal Festival Hall commenced at 2.00pm with the Australasian Choir performing their three numbers first followed by the other Choirs. Following the intermission, the 524 choristers forming the Massed Choir took to the stage and entertained the audience by singing 6 numbers. Other featured artists were The Cory Band from Wales and the Welsh Bass Baritone Bryn Terfel. With the concert finishing at 5.30pm the Massed Choir were invited to join Bryn Terfel on the banks of the River Thames for a Song Fest which lasted for approximately ½ hour. Our Choir returned to the Copthorne Tara at 7.00pm in readiness for our farewell dinner.

GOODBYE TO ENGLAND

Sunday, 8/7 – Following breakfast, it was time to say goodbye to some of our party as they were either travelling to Paris by rail or touring other parts of the globe. Marie and I spent part of the day at The British Museum before joining the remaining 23 members of the MMCSA Group back at the hotel. We joined our coach at 4.45pm for the journey to London's Heathrow Airport and our flight to Singapore which departed at 11.00pm – 55 minutes late. We had a 2 night stopover in Singapore, whilst the rest of the Group continued on to Adelaide arriving Tuesday morning. We finally arrived at the Adelaide Airport at 7.45am, Thursday, 12 July – tired but glad with what we had achieved since departing Sydney on Wednesday, 30 May, 2012.

No rest for the wicked

The MMCSA are back into rehearsal mode for their annual Proms performances at the Adelaide Town Hall to be held on Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd September, 2012 at 7.30pm and 2.00pm respectively.