

Paris April 2007

At 6.30 on a bright April morning the bus carrying the Shepshed Singers Touring Group (47 of us including singers, supporters and our conductor) set off for Dover to catch the ferry to Calais. The weather was bright and sunny and the Channel was very calm. Following a very long journey we eventually arrived at our hotel in Paris at about 8 pm. Immediately after breakfast the next day, we assembled on the roof of the hotel for a short rehearsal. Our coach then threaded its way through heavy traffic to Notre Dame, where we were to perform our first concert.



Notre Dame Cathedral Singing from the chancel steps

The cathedral was hushed and the light was very dim, but we were able to make out hundreds of people, some seated, some wandering around. The acoustics were not very helpful, and we found it hard work making ourselves heard, but nevertheless it was a wonderful experience, which we shall always remember.

After a few hours free to indulge in a little sightseeing and some sampling of French cuisine we assembled for the evening's concert at the German Evangelical Church. This was more modern, with a wooden floor and gallery, and the acoustics were much more friendly. The audience was very appreciative and we were able to entertain them with a mixture of sacred and lighter music.



The Singers are in town! In the German Church



Chartres Cathedral

On Thursday morning we boarded the coach again for a 2 hour journey to Chartres, to sing in the magnificent cathedral, renowned for its stained glass windows. The acoustics here were different again, and the sound took 5 – 6 seconds to die away once we stopped singing. This was not such hard work as in Notre Dame, but our voices were already tired from two concerts on the previous day. After the concert we had a photo-call on the steps, where our supporters acted as Paparazzi to the choir. We all had dinner together and returned to Paris. Our driver, Jonathon, took us back via some of the famous landmarks in Paris which looked even more impressive at night when they were illuminated.

On Friday we were free to explore Paris, as we had fulfilled all our singing engagements. Most of us started the day by taking a trip down the Seine, then

dispersed to see the sights. The weather was unseasonably warm which made it possible to relax at the numerous street cafes and watch the world go by.

On Saturday we made a fairly early start, and following a smooth but tedious coach journey, we all arrived in Shepshed exhausted but happy at about 8.30 pm. All in all it was a memorable and most enjoyable holiday, and we are already trying to decide where to go next time and how to raise the money to do it. Perhaps next time we'll fly.

This is the [repertoire](#) that we took to Paris.