

Somerset International Children's Choral Festival

in England's Historic Wells Cathedral and Sherborne Abbey

Followed by the *American Celebration of Music in Britain*

Festival Extension Tour #4 (8 nights / 10 days)

Sunday, July 10th, 2011

Departure from the USA via scheduled airline service to London, England. Enjoy full meal, beverage service and in-flight entertainment during this trans-Atlantic flight.

Monday, July 11th, 2011 Sherborne

Arrive in one of London's airports. After passport and customs clearance, meet your MCI Tour Manager who will assist you to awaiting motorcoach. Transfer to the southwestern English town of Sherborne. En route (if time permits), stop to see the prehistoric site of Stonehenge. Groups arrive in Sherborne and check into accommodations at the historic Sherborne School. Chorus members and non-singing participants gather for the Welcome Dinner with introduction and a brief orientation.

Sherborne is, without doubt, one of the most beautiful towns in England. With its abundance of medieval buildings, superb Abbey, world famous schools, picturesque almshouse and two castles, Sherborne has much to offer visitors.

Tuesday, July 12th, 2011 Sherborne/Bath

Morning rehearsals. Non-singing participants may enjoy additional sight-seeing opportunities. Lunch at Sherborne School. Afternoon guided tour of Bath, including the Roman baths and beautiful Bath Abbey. Dinner is followed by *evening rehearsals*.

Wednesday, July 13th, 2011 Sherborne

Morning rehearsals. Non-singing participants may enjoy additional sight-seeing opportunities. Lunch at Sherborne School. Afternoon individual choir rehearsals in Sherborne Abbey. Early dinner. *Evening community concert featuring each individual choir singing optional performances in Sherborne Abbey.*

Thursday, July 14th, 2011 Sherborne/Wells

Breakfast, followed by coach transfer to Wells.

9:30am - Morning Dress Rehearsal in the Wells Cathedral. Afternoon guided tour of Wells. Early dinner.

7:30pm - Festival Finale Concert in Wells Cathedral.

Post-concert reception at the Cathedral for all tour participants.

Wells is a popular tourist destination, due in large part to having several historical sites and its proximity to Bath, Stonehenge and other popular sites. Parts of Wells Cathedral (widely considered one of the most beautiful in England) date back to the 10th century. The city derives its name from three wells in the grounds of the Bishop's Palace. William Penn is said to have passed through Wells shortly before leaving for America, spending a night at The Crown Inn.



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Friday, July 15th, 2011 Sherborne / Oxford / Stratford

Transfer to Stratford via Oxford. We will visit Christ Church College, founded in 1525 by Cardinal Wolsey. It is Oxford's biggest and grandest Renaissance college. The famous Christ Church College Chapel doubles as a cathedral, the smallest cathedral in England. Continue to Stratford. See the Cotswolds en route. The Cotswolds is an area of England about the size of greater Tokyo. Popular with both the English themselves and visitors from all over the world, the Cotswolds are well-known for gentle hillsides ('wolds'), sleepy villages and for being so 'typically English'.



Stratford-upon-Avon, one of the most famous towns in England, is situated on the west bank of the River Avon, in the heart of the Midlands. It dates back to at least Roman times, but its appearance today is that of a small Tudor market town, with mellow, half-timbered architecture and tranquil walks beside the tree-fringed Avon. This image belies its popularity as the most visited tourist attraction outside London, with eager hordes flocking to see buildings connected to William Shakespeare or his descendants.



Saturday, July 16th, 2011 Stratford / London

Morning guided tour of the Shakespeare properties, including Ann Hathaway's Cottage, the Shakespeare's birthplace and Holy Trinity Church, where the bard was baptized and is buried. **Noon recital in Holy Trinity Church.** Afternoon transfer to London for dinner and overnight.



London is a cozy city, encompassing some 620 square miles and 7,000,000 hospitable people. Established 1,250 years ago by King Aethelbald, London became an important Roman city. It was resettled by the Saxons in the fifth century, after the end of the Roman occupation. London has been scourged by the plague (1665) and was almost entirely destroyed by the Great Fire (1666). World War II's "Blitzkrieg" tore up the city considerably. She stands today as a monument to perseverance, culture, excitement, history, and greatness.

Sunday, July 17th, 2011 London

Sing a morning service in London. A guided tour of London includes the residential and shopping districts of Kensington and Knightsbridge. A visit is made to Whitehall and Trafalgar Square with Nelson's Column, past Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament to Buckingham Palace, where we see the Changing of the Guard. Continue along Fleet Street to St. Paul's Cathedral, and then to the 900-year-old Tower of London, whose construction was initiated by William the Conqueror. Here we also view the Crown Jewels. Evening dinner and overnight.



Monday, July 18th, 2011 London

A pleasant drive out of London passing Eton College takes us to royal Windsor. Built in 1078 for William the Conqueror, Windsor Castle is the official summer residence of the Queen. Tour includes a visit to the State Apartment or St. George's Chapel as well as the opportunity to admire the castle itself and the surrounding parkland. Afternoon at leisure in London. Motorcoach and Tour Manager are at the group's disposal for additional sightseeing, shopping or other excursions. You may like to visit a museum, perhaps do some shopping, or simply take in the atmosphere of this cosmopolitan city. Ask your guide how to get to the shops of Oxford and Bond Street, or perhaps Harrods! Alternatively, spend time in bustling Leicester Square, Trafalgar Square or Piccadilly Circus, or in the relatively quiet confines of the Natural History Museum. The city is yours! Evening Farewell Dinner and overnight.



Tuesday, July 19th, 2011 Depart for home

Transfer to one of London's International Airports for return flight to USA. Arrive home in the evening of the same day.