

I CANTORI DI CARMEL's

CLEF Notes

CLEF NOTES: SPECIAL CONCERT TOUR 2009 EDITION

We are starting a sign-up list now for those interested in I Cantori's 2009 concert tour. Since we have space for only 49 participants and so many of you have expressed interest, we need to find out as soon as possible how many I Cantori singers (and family members) plan to come. Please respond to this email letting us know if you are (1)definitely coming, (2)hope to come and will know for sure by a certain date, (3)are undecided, or (4)definitely do not plan to come.

As most of you know, I Cantori is planning another summer concert tour for 2009. We will be traveling to Ireland and Wales from Tuesday, June to Friday, July 3, 2009. We will be performing at least 8 concerts in various wonderful venues. Cost for the tour is \$4485.00 per person for a double room. (For those wanting a single room there will be an additional fee.) This price includes flights, hotels, bus transport, daily breakfasts, and nine dinners (lunches on your own). See the tour information and day by day tour description below for details.

A payment schedule is included at the end of this email.

As in our past tours, I Cantori will assist needy singers with some of the financial burden of the trip—we would like to make it possible for everyone who wants to go on tour to have the opportunity to do so. We offer to pay up to ½ of the tour cost (\$2242). We can do this for only a limited number of singers. If you need assistance, we ask that you seriously consider what you can afford and try to pay as much of the full price as possible. There are also some restrictions. Scholarships only go to I Cantori singers. If you are traveling with a spouse or a member of your immediate family, then neither of you is eligible for a scholarship. You cannot join I Cantori the semester before the tour and qualify for a scholarship. All scholarship recipients will be in double occupancy rooms. If you would like to request a scholarship, please include that information in your email response.

Read on for the details of the tour. If you have any questions, send them in your response.

I CANTORI DI CARMEL PERFORMANCE TOUR 2009

IRELAND & WALES

Travel Dates: June 16 - July 3, 2009

18 Days/ 16 Nights

Number of tour participants: maximum 49

Estimated Tour price per person: \$4,485.00* per person, double/twin occupancy (*Based on exchange rates of 1.32 US dollars to 1.00 Euro and 1.98 US dollars to 1.00 UK pound.)

Inclusions:

* Round-trip air transportation on based on an estimated cost of \$1125.00 per person including airline taxes, security charges and fuel charges on a regularly scheduled flight from San Francisco International airport to Dublin, Ireland, returning from London, England, based on "high" season air fares.

* Land transportation in Ireland and the United Kingdom by private, deluxe motor coaches with panoramic windows, air-conditioning, reclining seats, public address system and lavatory. (One coach with a maximum capacity of 49 passengers.)

* Sixteen nights accommodations in superior tourist for first class hotels with en suite bathrooms and double or twin occupancy throughout. Single supplements will apply.

* Porterage of one suitcase per person in and out at each hotel.

* Full Irish or English breakfasts daily in the hotels. Nine three course dinners in the hotels or nearby restaurants as outlined in the itinerary.

* Professionally guided city tours in Dublin, Londonderry and Cardiff.

* Admission to: Powerscourt House and Gardens, Trinity College's "Book of Kells", Monasterboice, St. Patrick's Trian, the Giant's Causeway, Carrick-a-rede Bridge, Old Bushmills Distillery Tour, Kylemore Abbey and Gardens, the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Center, Muckross House, Derrynane House, Waterford Crystal Factory Tour, The Rock of Cashel, Kilkenny Castle, Conwy Castle, Bodnant Gardens, Ffestiniog Railway Ride, Cardiff Castle, Tintern Abbey and Windsor Castle.

* One - way ferry transportation from Dublin, Ireland. To Holyhead, Wales.

* Two complimentary tour packages based on a minimum of 43 full-paying participants.

* Services of a profession tour manager from arrival in Dublin, Ireland until departure from London, England.

* Planning and promotion of concert performances as suggested in the itinerary, subject to confirmation.

* Pre-tour planning assistance.

* Printed final itineraries and baggage tags for each tour member.

* Price is based on estimated airfares and costs for 2009 and a minimum of 43 full-paying participants. Land and air costs are subject to confirmation in July of 2008, when group airfare is available to book with the airline.

*

Not Included: Expenses of passports or visas, lunches, any food or beverage not on the menu of the included meals, tips to drivers, guides, or tour manager, any personal expenses. Airline or airport taxes, security or fuel surcharges imposed by the airlines, coach company or government

after the date of this proposal are not included.

Day 1: Tuesday, June 16

San Francisco/ En route to Dublin, Ireland

Assemble at San Francisco International Airport (SFO) to check in for your flight to Dublin. Three hours later, depart San Francisco. Dinner and overnight on board plane.

Day 2: Wednesday, June 17

Arrive Dublin

Breakfast on the plane. After clearing customs at the airport, you will be greeted by your Ambassador Tours escort, and board your private motor coach. As it will be too early to check into your hotel, travel the short distance around Dublin to Powerscourt to visit Powerscourt House and Gardens (admission included). The gardens at Powerscourt are probably the finest in Ireland, both for their design and their dramatic setting at the foot of Great Sugar Loaf Mountain. The house and grounds were commissioned in the 1730s by Richard Wingfield, the 1st Viscount Powerscourt. Time for a stroll in the fresh air and your independent lunch. Mid-afternoon, travel into central Dublin to check into your hotel. Dinner and overnight in the hotel.

Day 3: Thursday, June 18

Dublin

After breakfast at the hotel, meet your professional guide for a panoramic tour of the city of Dublin. Included will be Trinity College and the "Book of Kells" (admission included), O'Connell and Grafton Streets, Georgian Dublin, and Phoenix Park. Remainder of the afternoon free for independent lunch, shopping, and sightseeing. Assemble in the hotel lobby to transfer to your concert site for an evening recital, perhaps at St. Mary's Pro Cathedral before and/or after the 5:45pm Mass. Independent dinner scheduled depending on concert venue and time. Return to the hotel for overnight.

Day 4: Friday, June 19

Dublin/ Monasterboice/ Armagh/ Londonderry

Breakfast in the hotel and check out. This morning, board your coach and travel north through the Boyne Valley, making a stop Monasterboice (admission included) to see this fascinating monastic settlement, which is one of the most famous religious sites in the country. The site includes a roofless round tower and two churches, but Monasterboice's greatest treasures are its 10th century High Crosses. Continue traveling into Northern Ireland to Armagh. Here you will visit St. Patrick's Triun (admission included) to learn the history of the Patron Saint of Ireland. Independent lunch in Armagh. Continue traveling to Londonderry, check into your hotel and have dinner. Evening at leisure.

Day 5: Saturday, June 20

Londonderry/ Excursion to the Causeway Coast

Breakfast at the hotel. Board your coach to take a magnificent drive along the scenic North Antrim Coastline. Along the way, a stop will be made to see the Giants Causeway, (admission included) Ireland's only World Heritage Site. The sheer strangeness of this place and the bizarre regularity of its 37,000 basalt columns has made the Giant's Causeway the subject of numerous legends. The most popular tells how the giant, Finn MacCool laid the causeway to provide a path across the sea to his lady love, who lived on the island of Staffa in Scotland - where similar columns are found. Continue traveling along the coastline to the Carrick-a-rede Rope Bridge (admission included. One of the most unusual (and scary) tourist attractions in Ireland, the rope bridge hangs 80 ft. above the sea. Made of planks strung between wires, it provides access to the salmon fishery on the tiny island across the 65 ft. chasm. Next stop is Old Bushmills Distillery (admission included), which prides itself on being the oldest distillery in the world. Its grant to distill was given in 1608, though spirit was probably made here at least 200 years before that. Your tour of the distillery ends with a sampling session in the Potstill Bar in the former malt kilns. Independent lunch. Mid-afternoon, return to Londonderry. Independent dinner and overnight at the hotel.

Day 6: Sunday, June 21

Londonderry/ Galway

After breakfast at the hotel, attend and participate in church services, perhaps at St. Columb's Cathedral. After church, meet your city guide for a walking tour of Londonderry. St. Columba founded a monastery here beside the River Foyle in 546. He called the place Doire or "oak grove," later anglicized as Derry. In 1613, this mostly Catholic city was selected as a major Plantation project, organized by London livery companies. As a result, it acquired the prefix London, though most people still call it Derry. Your tour will include the Walls of Derry (among the best preserved city fortifications in Europe), and the Guildhall, with its stained-glass window of St. Columba. Independent lunch. Board bus for Knock Shrine. We may perform an afternoon concert there. Then we continue on to Galway. Check into your hotel and have dinner. Evening at leisure. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 7: Monday, June 22

Galway/ Excursion to the Connemara

Breakfast at the hotel. Today you will enjoy a scenic drive through the Connemara. This wild region in the west of Galway encompasses bogs, mountains, and rugged coastline. A stop will be made at Kylemore Abbey and Garden (admission included.) Set in the heart of the Connemara Mountains, this estate is currently an international girls' boarding school run by Benedictine Nuns. Here you may tour the house and lovely small Gothic church in its pretty setting next to a small lake. You may also stroll through the recently restored walled Victorian garden. Enjoy your independent lunch in the restaurant and shop for pottery and crafts in their shop. Return to Galway for your independent dinner. This evening, perform a formal concert in Galway, perhaps at the Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas. The concert could be a fundraiser for the charity "Aids

West". Return to the hotel for overnight.

Day 8: Tuesday, June 23

Galway/ Cliffs of Moher/ Killarney

After breakfast at the hotel, depart Galway for a drive through the Burren. Derived from the Gaelic word *boireann* which means "rocky land," Burren is an apt name for this vast limestone plateau in northwest County Clare. Few trees manage to grow in this desolate place, yet other plants thrive. From May to August, an astonishing array of flowers adds splashes of color to the austere landscape. In the southern part of the Burren, limestone gives way to the black shale and sandstone that form the dramatic Cliffs of Moher. A stop will be made at the cliffs where you may follow the path to a view-point rising 650 feet out of the sea. Independent lunch stop en route. Continue traveling south to Killarney to check into your hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 9: Wednesday, June 24

Killarney/ Ring of Kerry Excursion

After breakfast in the hotel, embark on the scenic Ring of Kerry excursion. The captivating mountain and coastal scenery of the Ring is dotted with slate-roofed fishing villages. A stop will be made at Caherdaniel to see Derrynane House (admission included), the ancestral home of Irish lawyer, politician, and statesman, Daniel O'Connell. Independent lunch at Derrynane House or in Caherdaniel. Return to Killarney. [An option for walkers and hikers on this day is to visit the Gap of Dunloe in the Killarney National Park. We are told it is "the ideal wilderness for committed hikers or those who want short, stimulating and exceedingly beautiful walks." For those interested "it would be easy to make independent arrangements from Killarney."] Prepare for your evening concert, which may be held at St. Mary's Cathedral. Independent dinner before or after your concert, depending on the start time. Return to your hotel for overnight.

Day 10: Thursday, June 25

Killarney/ Muckross House/ Waterford/ Kilkenny

After breakfast, board your coach and travel the short distance to Muckross House (admission included.) The house, built between 1839 and 1843 for Henry Arthur Herbert and his wife is situated close to the shores of Muckross Lake. Independent lunch stop. Continue traveling east to Waterford, where you will visit and tour the Waterford Crystal Visitor's Centre. On the factory tour (admission included) you will see master-craftsmen mouth-blow and hand-cut this famous crystal. Visitors can talk to the master engravers and see the crystal being sculptured. In the gallery there is a fine display of Waterford crystal and an audio-visual presentation and you may shop for crystal souvenirs in the gift shop. Continue traveling north the short distance to Kilkenny. Kilkenny is without doubt Ireland's prettiest inland city. In the 13th century it rose to prominence when the Irish Parliament met at Kilkenny Castle. Check into your Kilkenny hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 11: Friday, June 26

Kilkenny

Breakfast at the hotel. This morning, travel to nearby Cashel to tour the "Rock of Cashel" (admission included.) This spectacular group of Medieval buildings is set on an outcrop of limestone in the Golden Vale. Buildings include a 12th century round tower, High Cross and Romanesque Chapel, 13th century Gothic cathedral, 15th century Castle and the restored Hall of the Vicars Choral. Independent lunch. Return to Kilkenny this afternoon to visit Kilkenny Castle (admission included). Here you may also visit the Kilkenny Design Centre. Housed in the castle's stable block, you can see craftspeople in action and buy their work. Independent lunch. Remainder of the afternoon free for independent sightseeing and shopping. Independent dinner. This evening, perform a formal evening concert, perhaps in St. Canice's Cathedral. St. Canice's was built in the 13th century in Early English Gothic style. Beside the cathedral stands a 9th century round tower. Return to the hotel for overnight.

Day 12: Saturday, June 27

Kilkenny/ Dublin/ Ferry to Holyhead, Wales/ Llandudno

Check out of the hotel after breakfast and depart for travel northeast to Dublin. Enjoy a bit of free time in central Dublin for your last minute shopping in Ireland and your independent lunch. Meet your coach and transfer to the Dublin ferry docks to board the high speed ferry "The Jonathan Swift". Travel time to Holyhead, Wales, is approximately two hours. Board your English coach and travel to the seaside resort of Llandudno, Wales. Check into your hotel. Dinner and overnight at the hotel. Possible evening concert with Welsh Male Choir, pending Llandudno arrival time and choir availability.

Day 13: Sunday, June 28

Llandudno/ Afternoon in Conwy

Breakfast at the hotel. This morning, attend and participate in a local church service. After church, take a bit of time to explore Llandudno. Llandudno retains much of the holiday spirit of the 19th century, when the new railways brought crowds to the coast. Its pier, more than 2,295 feet long and its canopied walkways recall the heyday of seaside holidays. The town is proud of its association with the author Lewis Carroll. The Rabbit Hole is a grotto decorated with life-sized scenes from his children's books. Enjoy a leisurely stroll along the beachside promenade. Independent lunch. Meet your coach early afternoon to transfer to nearby Conwy. This small Welsh town is dominated by Conwy Castle (admission included). Conwy is set apart from other medieval towns by its amazingly well preserved town walls; fortified with 21 towers and three gateways, the walls form an almost unbroken shield around the old town. Take the time for a cup of tea in one of the many small teashops. Have a look at Britain's smallest house (only 10 feet high), located on the outside of the town wall along the quayside. Here you may also visit Plas Mawr, the "Great Mansion" built by the nobleman, Robert Wynne, in 1576, or Aberconwy House, a restored 14th century house built by a wealthy merchant. Return to Llandudno for independent dinner. If your schedule did not allow for a Saturday evening concert, the concert with the Welsh Male Choir may be arranged for tonight. Overnight in the hotel.

Day 14: Monday, June 29

Llandudno/ Snowdonia Mountains/ Aberystwyth

After breakfast at the hotel, board your coach and travel south past Conwy to Bodnant Gardens (admission included), the residence of Lord and Lady Aberconway. The garden at Bodnant is situated above the River Conwy on ground sloping towards the west, and looks across the valley towards the Snowdon Mountain range. The garden is in two parts. The upper part round the house consists of the Terrace Gardens and informal lawns shaded by large native trees, many planted about 1792. The lower portion, known as "the Dell" is formed by the valley of the River Hiraethlyn, a tributary of the Conwy, and contains the Pinetum and Wild Garden. After a walk through the beautiful gardens of Bodnant (whose many early summer flowers and roses are likely to be in full bloom), you might choose to enjoy a cup of tea and a scone or lunch in the garden's café. Board your coach and drive up into the spectacular Snowdonia Mountains, through the pretty little town of Betws-y-Coed to the former mining town of Blaenau Ffestiniog. Here you will board the Ffestiniog Railway (ticket included), the oldest independent railway company in the world - founded by an Act of Parliament in 1832. The railway was built as a gravity and horse drawn line to transport slate from the quarries in the mountains around Blaenau Ffestiniog to the port of Porthmadog. Your train ride will take you through the outstanding natural beauty of Snowdonia and you'll pass through areas that are inaccessible by road undisturbed by the sights and sounds of modern life. The hour and 10 minute ride will end in Porthmadog where you'll meet your coach and continue your drive south to the city of Aberystwyth, located on the west coast of Wales. Upon arrival in Aberystwyth, check into your hotel. Dinner and overnight in the hotel.

Day 15: Tuesday, June 30

Aberystwyth/ Cardiff

Breakfast at the hotel. Free time this morning to stroll along the seaside in Aberystwyth. Aberystwyth, a seaside resort called by Victorian travelers the "Briarritz of Wales," claims to be the capital of mid-Wales. Since the 19th century, there have been no great changes along the promenade, with its gabled hotels. Constitution Hill, a steep outcrop at the northern end, can be scaled in summer on the electric Cliff Railway, built in 1896. At the top, in a camera obscura, a lens projects a panoramic view of the town. The ruined Aberystwyth Castle (1277) is south of the promenade. Late morning, depart for travel to Cardiff through the mountains of the Brecon Beacons National Park. A stop will be made for your independent lunch. Arrive Cardiff and check into your hotel. Dinner and overnight in the hotel.

Day 16: Wednesday, July 1

Cardiff

Breakfast at the hotel. This morning, meet your professional Blue Badge city guide for a sightseeing tour of Cardiff. Cardiff, the capital city of Wales, was the world's principal coal port at the start of the 20th century and much of its appearance today can be directly attributed to this era. Your tour will end at Cardiff Castle (admission included). First built by the Romans as a fort,

a keep was built within the Roman ruins in the 12th century. Over the following 700 years, the castle was passed from to several powerful families and ultimately to the Earl of Bute, John Stuart. His great-grandson, the 3rd Marquess of Bute and the eccentric architect William Burges turned the castle into an ornate mansion between 1867 - 1881. Remainder of the day free for independent sightseeing. Independent lunch and dinner. This evening, a concert could be arranged, perhaps in the performance area of the Wales Millennium Center, the home of the Welsh National Opera. Return to the hotel for overnight.

Day 17: Thursday, July 2

Cardiff/ Windsor/ London Area

Depart Cardiff after breakfast and travel to nearby Tintern to visit Tintern Abbey (admission included). The beautiful setting in the steep and wooded Wye Valley has inspired poets, including Wordsworth, who wrote the sonnet Lines composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey. Founded by Cistercian monks in 1131, the abbey was destroyed by Henry VIII in 1536. Continue traveling east towards London, stopping in Windsor. After your independent lunch, visit Windsor Castle (admission included.) Windsor Castle is one of the Queens Official Residences and the one she considers "home". Here you will see the State Apartments, extensive suites of rooms at the heart of the working palace. You will also see Queen Mary's Dolls' House and the fourteenth-century St. George's Chapel, the burial place of ten sovereigns and setting for many Royal weddings. Late afternoon, travel to your nearby hotel. Tonight enjoy your last dinner together as a group. Pack for travel home tomorrow! Overnight at the hotel.

Day 18: Friday, July 3

London/ En route to the U.S.

Breakfast at the hotel. Board your coach and transfer to your nearby London airport to check-in for your flight back to the United States. Three hours later, depart London. Lunch and a snack will be served prior to arrival. Change planes and continue your journey to San Francisco, arriving in the evening.

WELCOME HOME!

PLEASE NOTE: The concert locations and activities listed in the proposed itinerary are only tentative and pending confirmation.

I Cantori 2009 Ireland/Wales tour concert schedule

Concerts:

1. Dublin-Thursday-June 18- evening recital, perhaps at St. Mary's Pro Cathedral before and/or after the 5:45pm Mass.

2. Derry-Sunday-June 21- attend and participate in church services, perhaps at St. Columb's Cathedral.

[Possible additional concert at Knock Shrine that afternoon.]

3. Galway-Monday-June 22-This evening, perform a formal concert in Galway, perhaps at the Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas. The concert could be a fundraiser for the charity "Aids West".

4. Killarney-Wednesday-June 24- evening concert at St. Mary's Cathedral.

5. Kilkenny-Friday-June 26-evening concert in St. Canice's Cathedral.

6. Llandudno,Wales-Saturday-June 27-Possible evening concert with Welsh Male Choir, pending Llandudno arrival time and choir availability. If your schedule did not allow for a Saturday evening concert, the concert with the Welsh Male Choir may be arranged for Sunday night.

7. Llandudno-Sunday-June 28-This morning, attend and participate in a local church service.

8. Cardiff-Wednesday-July 1-concert, perhaps in the performance area of the Wales Millennium Center, the home of the Welsh National Opera.

Payment schedule:

April 1, 2008: \$300

Sept. 1, 2008 \$1500

Feb. 1, 2009 \$1500

April 1, 2009 \$1185

Additional costs: We will collect approximately \$100 from each of you to cover the tipping for our bus driver, guides etc. Also, we will arrange for bus transportation to and from the San Francisco airport at a round trip cost of approximately \$65.