

May 24, Christchurch to Nelson

Peeping through narrow slits in our eyelids, we, the choir from hell, dragged ourselves out of the cold cabin beds at Russley Park, looking like exhausted wombats after rutting season. Clutch problems on the bus left us hanging like possums on the side of the road, and gave Bryn a chance to comb his hair. Our tour of Christchurch turned into a whirlwind shopping spree in the downtown core. Sheepskin baby blankets were the buy of the day (a little anticipation, hey Maureen!) Anyway, crouched like cuddling koalas at the back of the bus, we began our journey to Nelson; Bryn combed his hair. While in a state of semi-consciousness we began to study the philosophy of the world's great thinkers, Freud, Marx, Barret, Girvan, and Laudadio. Many of life's great mysteries began to fall into place, such as: why a normal sailor would commit suicide, how big Mike's fish really was, and we determined that Wade must have a hidden air intake valve as he never stops to breathe. (hee,hee) Nearing the end of our journey, Jamie gave a dazzling display of his prowess at bus surfing; had he thought of it sooner he could have used John as a board. Ivan the driver (great great grandson of the illustrious Russian Czar and comedian, Ivan the Tasteless) gave us two toilet stops; the first long enough to eat lunch, explore the beach, and allow John to molest an octopus. The second was just long enough for Bryn to comb his hair. Following a lengthy wait upon arrival, Bill (our hero) found our billets huddling in the back of the church, instead of the street. Rumor has it that they hid there shortly after seeing us disembark "the vehicle from hell." So as not to put our hosts through any undue stress, many of us headed to "The Toby Jug" to make like emus and bury our heads (in beer). Wiltse's kookaburra strut amused (and excited) many a kiwi on the other side of the bar. Cruising like Tasmanian Devils on the rampage, we then found Maxines. An unnamed Scottish member talked the bouncer into letting us in the club for a mere \$3.00. It was a good deal as Whip Me Houston made a brief appearance on her South Pacific tour. The night ended in disarray as a few of us were witness to a prejudice-related gang fight. Don played Sir Galahad the Gallant, and ran to the rescue of two fair (well, one fair, one beautifully tanned) damsels in distress. In an on-the-spot interview Donald was quoted to have said, "With Mitchum I can even skip a day." On the serious side, I have noticed that unlike Europe, where we were impressed by the land and the history, on this tour I have been more impressed by the people who hosted us. Now, back to our story. Winding down for the night, ragged and worn, our heroes, the UVIC Chamber Sinners, carefully retraced their steps home to their warm and cozy beds. The lights went out; and Bryn combed his hair.

- BILL PLANT

May 25, Nelson

The day started off fairly quietly, an omen of what was to come...Rehearsal at 11:00 to try out the Christchurch Cathedral in Nelson. As always the place was freezing but luckily our billet warned us so we dressed warmly. Rehearsal went not too badly, so we ended and had the rest of the day to look around the city.

As always, James invited himself (only kidding) to lunch with Don, Allison, Ron and I. Bruce and Kevin tried to get invited but we said, "no way!" Actually, what a way to make one feel like _ _ _ , they sat on the bench on the corner singing "I was despised!" After lunch we went shopping for N.Z. woolwear. Don and Al left and went downtown while, as always, James, Ron and I ended up in parts unknown. After walking to and from the wind mill in Nelson (an hour and a half later) we got back to town to once again meet up with Don and Allison.

This was when the fun really started to happen...

We were on the street minding our own business when this woman comes running out after a man yelling "STOP THIEF!" Of course, Ron is off like a shot (civic minded conscience, or something) while James and Don stood there asking, "what did she say?" Anyway, the long and the short of it was - Ron tried to grab the guy, they both slipped and fell and Ron ended up with 7 stitches in his ear. My...heeeero! (Except the guy got away - oh well, can't have everything) So... needless to say Ron missed the concert, asleep (with a mild concussion, and in shock) while we sang our little hearts out for the - wild town of Nelson.

- ANNE UNGER

May 26, Nelson to Wellington

We woke early and arrived at the bus at 7:45 am with porridge and tea in my stomach. We had to go back on the road between Nelson to Picton. It was extremely windy and a few people felt ill. Allison was even a little more and lost her cookies in a green washroom on the side of the road. Personally, I bought mine there. We caught a ferry in Picton and had a chance to do some shopping here. It was a small town about the size of Sidney. The ferry was green, yes, the same colour we were all about to be. It started out beautiful and much like the BC ferries until we hit the open water. The waves were the size of a BC ferry - well, almost. I'm sure if you ask Maureen she would say so. Relief came at about 2:45 pm when the ferry finally came in the harbour at Wellington. We got a short tour of the city and went up Victoria Hill. We encountered another city bus on the way down (Ivan had just told us that we would have an hour and half in the city) when the bus got stuck. We waited about 10 minutes for a mechanic. He came and along with Ivan (The Terribly Unlucky) we got the bus out of gear. We then went for dinner at either Chinese or McDonalds restaurant. The concert was at the University, here again the bus almost got stuck but with Ivan the T.U. got the bus out of gear.

We had a good clean concert with a recording done on VCR. We were all a little tired and I don't feel it was our best performance. The weather turned sour that night when we went to our billets. It was a great shock to realize that most places did not have central heating.

- ELIZABETH PLANJE

MAY 27, Wellington

As my toe peeked out from under the warmth of my electric blanket, I could hear it scream, "EEK!, why the hell are the houses in New Zealand always 20 degrees colder than it is outside?" With great effort, I woke up the curly bag of bones (Allison) in the next bed, and we bounced off to meet a small group of fellow Chamber Weiners at the Maori Marae in Wainuiomata. After days of seeing little more than busy streets and stores, it was great to learn something about the culture of this country. A brief prayer was said when we went into the marae, and then we took off our shoes as we entered the meeting house, leaving the evil of the outside world behind us. I was awed by the amazing carvings and weavings that lined the walls inside, some of which had been done by tribe members with no more than 6 weeks carving experience. Definitely an acquired talent. We learned of the Maori rituals, and I began to appreciate the respect they have for their people and traditions. I was glad to hear guests could not enter the meeting house until they heard the voice of the queen to welcome them inside (sometimes they would wait outside for 3 days). If only this technique would work now we could keep those of the weaker sex outside where they belong. After a closing prayer, and a farewell bonk on the nose, we left feeling much more enlightened about the Maori culture, and knowing that we would always be welcome to return. In the afternoon, Christi, Chris C, Al and I set off on a granny trek (bush walk) in the hills of Day's Bay, then went to the Lower Hutt Art Gallery where we observed the fine art of making paper from flax. Tonight, we sang at St. James Cathedral, and, like usual, our concert was extraordinary. And, like usual, we left them wanting more! The after party at John Knox's was a smashing success. (Gin! Did someone say GIN!) We listened to the fine recording that had been made the previous night. Damn we're GOOD! Much swilling was done, which led to rude pool table conversation and dangerous liaisons in both bathroom and bedroom alike. The day came to a close with our gracious host kicking out the more tenacious of the party goers.

- KAREN WILTSE

May 28, Wellington to Napier

The morning started out with all of us meeting the bus either in Wellington or Lower Hutt for the trip to Napier. With the exception of one of the hosts running around with a video camera, things went smoothly. The trip itself was uneventful, with beautiful scenery as usual. We had one major stop in Norsewood, a center for wool manufacturing where we were able to pick up great sweaters and gloves at excellent prices. After ten sweaters had been purchased, including one by Leone at a \$20 reduction, we continued on our trip to Napier. The town of Napier turned out to be quite dreary and cold where we were greeted with the news that it had been beautiful only one week earlier. We disembarked at the cold Anglican Cathedral where we rehearsed for our cold evening concert. The cold cathedral was huge! (and cold) After meeting our billets and leaving with them to settle in our cold homes and have a cold dinner, we returned to the cold Cathedral for our cold concert. The cold audience was the size that we had come to expect but they made up for their size with their enthusiasm. (Someone has to teach them to clap!) After ending the concert with our repetitive favourite, "My God! Why have I been saved!?" we somehow managed to limit ourselves to one (yes that's right!) ONE encore, our second perennial tonsil tearing finale favourite, "I've got a porsche up in that kingdom!" After the concert, everyone was boring and went back to their cold billets for cold food, cold drinks, and cold sex! (Sex was the only way most of us could keep warm!) Goodnight John-Boy! Goodnight Grandpa!

- RON UNGER

May 29, Napier

It was hard to climb out from the warmth of the electric blankets although the promise of a great breakfast at the Great Wall Chinese Restaurant was probably an incentive for most. However, there was no breakfast only speeches that boosted our egos, a 52kg jade Buddha and chopstick holders that were given as mementos of a meal not had. We sang the Pastoral Song and then headed off to "Marineland" where we watched cavorting dolphins, a mammoth leopard seal and shivering penguins in the rain. At eleven we drove to Woodford House private girls' school via twisting lanes that, due to Ivan's remarkable driving, flashed by. We sang in a gorgeous chapel filled to capacity with uniforms. The girls showed us around the beautiful, antique grounds and then gave us a great lunch which we wolfed down. After leaving Woodford we went to Mission Vineyards for wine tasting (aaraarshaar, Cabernet Sauvignon or Shemillon anyone?) In high "spirits" we continued on our way to the Aquarium armed with bottles to savour later. Our billets picked us up for dinner. After dinner most people went to Cob and Co. where in the usual style, they took over the band (piano, sax and voice at least) while less industrious members stayed at home and learned such games as My Aunt Millie and Chinese Numbers.

- RASMA BERTZ

May 30, Napier to Rotorua

This is wonderful, the first delinquent journal (actually, the only delinquent journal) and it was a great day! I'm so happy I get to write!! After a long night of singing, spirits, broken down cars, and being stranded, we arose early to meet the bus in front of the cathedral. Rumor had it that the road to Rotorua was closed but under the guidance of our fearless leader, and our bus driver, we made our attempt (this, of course, was after we spent a few hours in downtown Napier awaiting the opening of the road). On our journey towards the snow covered peaks we made a few "comfort stops" and gave a few hand massages, all in effort to sooth our nerves before heading through those treacherous peaks! It was a battle but we made it safely through at least half an inch of snow. (Kiwis are a lot like Victorians when it snows!) Out next stop was "The Craters of the Moon" AKA "The Karapiti Thermal Area." The place was quite fascinating- huge craters with steaming soil in what seemed to be the middle of nowhere. After letting off a little steam (ha ha) we headed for our final destination... ROTORUA! We arrived at our luxurious motor hotel and had a few minutes to put the groceries away before hitting the mineral baths. The outdoor baths ranged from luke warm to quite hot (how's that for specific) Except for the smell (which lingered with us for the rest of the tour) we couldn't have asked for a more relaxing place to be. After our half hour bath a shower, and a "ockey" poll in the ladies change room, we once again boarded our beloved bus and set out to the fabulous Hungi dinner (paid for, in part, by the Torontonians in Brisbane). Maori bread, salads, seafood, vegetables, venison, lamb, pork, and pudding with custard for dessert (my favourite, right Ron!?) We were treated to a show of Maori dancing and singing. A few enthusiastic members of the choir even joined the rather intimidating Maori men for a traditional greeting of touching noses. Did they greet once, twice, or.... thrice?! Back to our hotel for the long awaited tour awards. Many thanks to Allison and Anne for their long hours of hard work, and not so much thanks to James for his imaginative ideas (just kidding!) After the awards ceremony ended it was bedtime for some after a succession of late nights. For some it was a friendly chat or a walk, and for others a rather...interesting game of cards that ended, shall we say, rather "abruptly"! The night ended with 7 of us in a cabin. Unfortunately 3 of us were being noisy and 4 were trying to get some well earned ZZZ's. The 3 were overruled and silence fell over the motel park. Personally, this day was one of the highlights of the tour because I said goodbye to "the Briefcase from HELL" Moira was very very sad to see her companion go, but Maureen was very, very happy.

- MAUREEN GARRY

P.S. Just for old times sake, "Have you mailed your postcards yet?!"



May 31, Rotorua to Auckland

Twas the night before "my day" and all through the cabin,
James, Christi, and Maur would not quit their gabbin'
In what seems like sheer minutes, I open my eyes,
And look at the clock, and to my great surprise

I find it is time for us all to arise-
(Though Chris looks quite comfy, and Don snoring lies...)

The cabin is freezing, we crank on the heat,
Then Heather and Chris give the eggs a good beat.

A few moments later, we climb on the bus,
And our trip to Hamilton is relatively quiet with
the exception of a few thousand sheep, and
some small, trained, attack marsupials
feasting on helpless herds of hairy hippopotami.

We get in to Hamilton with no more ado,
Then we all eat lunch at Waikato U.

Our concert goes well, we sing all the notes,
Despite all the sneezes, coughs, and sore throats.

The bus is out front, we all trundle on,
A quick buddy check, then we are gone.

Now Dasher! Now Dancer! Now Prancer and Vixen!
On Comet! On Cupid! On Donner and Blitzen!

In Auckland we eat, and then Bruce More
does "Feller from Farchin," then we sing Faure.

Our billets arrive - thus ends the day,
Reveyer venir le Juin, et bonsoir le Mai!!

- ALLISON GIRVAN

June 1, Auckland

Well, today was the second last day of our tour and we finally got the South Pacific weather that we were looking for all along. We pretty much had the day off - the only necessary event being our visit to the Australian Consulate in the morning to straighten out the visa muddle. After that we all scattered around town to enjoy the day. I ended up at the Victoria Park Market where, of course, it was very easy to spend too much money and eat too much food. There were Chamber Singers everywhere finishing up souvenir shopping. The afternoon found me in a pub down by the docks trying to keep up to John Oberhoffner (and doing quite well!!). We met our billets back at the music school (amazingly we found it) and went with them to sober (I mean straighten) up for the concert that night at St. Matthew's Cathedral. The concert went well with James playing the glock with two slippery 50 cent pieces. Bruce managed to get a laugh from us with some NEW jokes and James got another (stifled) one with some interesting comments written on his music-that silly boy. Saving our energy for tomorrow night, we all packed it in.

- GLYNIS HALBERT

June 2, Auckland

Everybody got off to a fairly slow start today since we had the chance to sleep in. Yawn. I think the lack of sleep over the past three weeks is starting to catch up with a few people. The noon concert today was our final one and was a great way to end off. A full and really enthusiastic audience came out to support us and the group adrenaline was as high as ever! Since we were at the university in Auckland for the concert the natural thing to do after was, of course, go and unwind in the student pub which a few of us were happy to do! Others went home to rest a little and get organized for tomorrow's great trek, and a few even went off up the island to see some of the gorgeous beaches and tropical forest to the north of Auckland. One of us even had a short visit to the hospital this afternoon to have his stitches out and finish off his earlier adventure with robbers and slippery brick sidewalks. Not to mention any names of course but his initials are Ron Unger! The plan for this evening was to all meet at a jazz club downtown for our last night of tour and it worked reasonably well although we weren't all there at the same time. After spending all afternoon in the pub, Maureen, Christi, James, and I decided to spend the evening in a movie theatre where they saw The Fly II and then dropped by the pub later on. Liz is still a little under the weather, so needless to say she didn't make it out and neither did a couple others including Allison, Don, Karen P, and I don't think Karen M and Glynis were there. Jamie and Karen W. went to hear the band Karen's billet was playing in and didn't make it around to join us either, but I think everyone had a pretty good evening. Not a huge wild party, but a combination of excitement that we're going home and sadness that the tour is over already. With everyone heading off in their own directions tomorrow it will be a while before we're all back together in the same place at the same time. It's been a great tour with all the ups and downs you might expect with 24 people together for three weeks, but I think we all agree without hesitation that the ups definitely take the show! I'd do it again anytime!

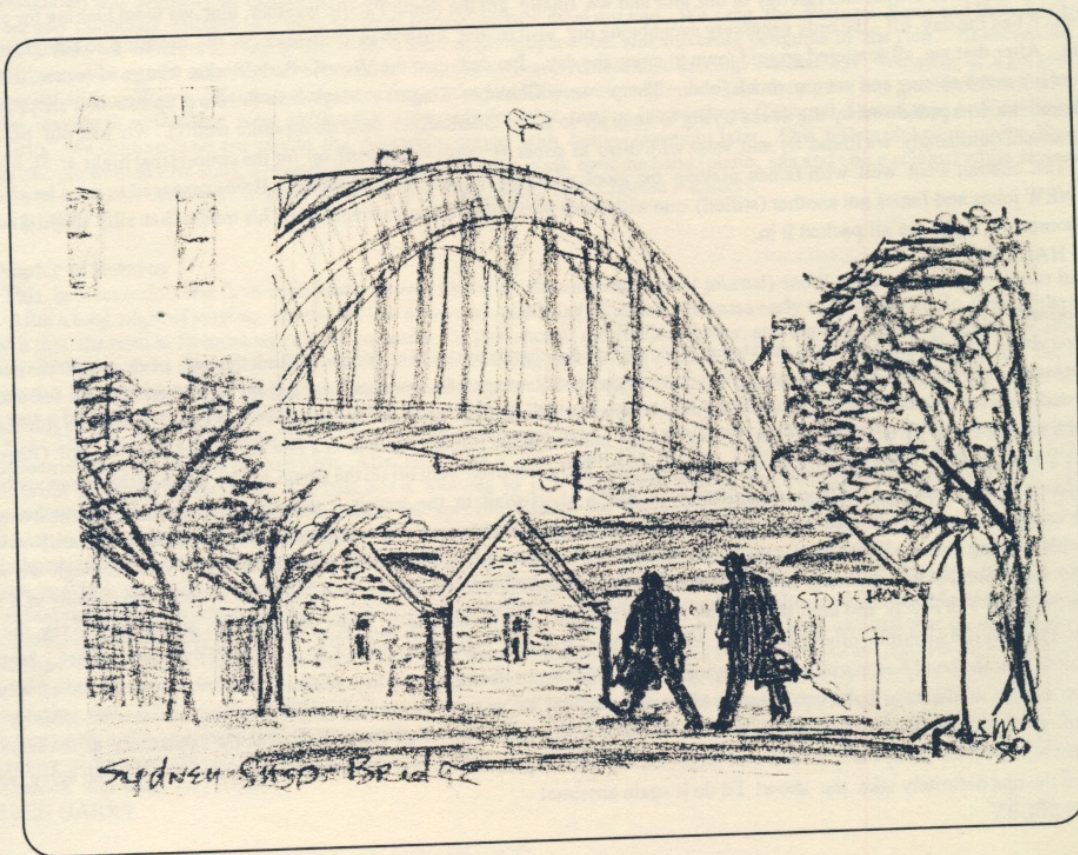
- HEATHER SELBY

June 3, Auckland to Vancouver

Our last day. I consider it a privilege to write about this day, as we had it twice, courtesy of the IDI. However, I am also at a slight disadvantage, as 20 hours and 29 minutes of it, or rather, them, were spent in various airplanes, approximately 3 hours was spent in airports, and for those of us who returned to quaint old Victoria, another 1 and a half hours were spent racing to the non-existent 8:00pm ferry, and an hour waiting for the nine o'clock ferry and "one hour and thirty-five minutes sailing time" to Swartz Bay. As well, 4 and a half hours (depending on where in Auckland our respective billets lived, and whether or not their alarm clocks worked) were spent sleeping, then an hour to wake up, have a shower if you were lucky, finish packing, and get to the University of Auckland School of Music by 5:30 am, at which point we spent another hour and fifteen minutes saying goodbye and driving to the airport. Finally, there were 2 and a half hours in Victoria, which don't count. And the second June 3rd was only 19 hours long. This leaves me with only 8 and a half hours to write about. However, as they were spent in Sydney, I guess that's all right.

After going through customs with 6 month visas for the 8 and a half hours we should be spending in Australia, we made our way downtown. There, we decided the Opera House was even more impressive when it wasn't on a postcard or laminated placemat. Bruce, Wade, Liz and I attempted to find out about viewing a dress rehearsal, but without success - the security guard kept asking "which dressing room?" We lost Liz, and wondered if she had been abducted by the above-mentioned guard. (Maybe a musical could be written about it: "The Abductor of the Opera.") Our next stop was the Toranga Park Zoo, where I finally saw koalas, kangaroos, emus (ugly, those), echidnas, kookaburras and platypus (or platypi for plural?) I wanted to make sure I knew what a marsupial was. After Bruce answered, he hit Wade, in anticipation of being asked if he was a marsupial (luckily, the Australian customs officer didn't ask "hey, what do you got in your pouch?") As far as what other people did in Sydney, other than get wet, I'm not really sure; except for John, who drank beer with some Maori football players. (He also met a girl on the plane who was transferring mid-nursing degree to UBC - I guess John felt he hadn't quite earned his award!) The only excuse I have for this unpardonable ignorance of others' venturings is a mysterious thing that happened to our little group. I suppose it started on the first of June, when Kevin disappeared. Then, on the morning of June 3rd, we left Chris C at the School of Music, probably because there wasn't room on the bus or something. Then, Glynis, Don, James, Rasma, Karen W, Jamie, Ron and Anne didn't show up for our flight, and it was so strange - Bruce didn't seem the least bit concerned. In fact, he didn't get back on the plane in Honolulu. I don't know what happened to Bill, Wade, Bryn, John, Mike and Maureen between the airport and the ferry. Hopefully most of them will turn up, otherwise we might not have a Chamber Singers next year... I suppose because this is the last entry I'm obliged to say something corny about what a great tour it was. Well, I won't! I refuse to say what a good time we had: I don't want to thank Bruce for all his hard work in putting it together (the tour, that is), and Rasma, for helping, and Kevin for being tour manager, and Maureen, for nagging, I mean, making sure we all sent our postcards, and Liz, for her effort with the raffle tickets, and anybody else I may have forgotten, and Chris, for being extra baggage, and gee, just everybody for being so swell, for being such a swell gang, I won't, I won't say that sort of sickly sweet dribble, Well... maybe I will - Thanks all!

- CHRIS MILLER



TOUR PROGRAM

GLORIA, from Mass for Four Voices

WILLIAM BYRD

AS VESTA WAS TO LATMOS HILL

THOMAS WEELKES

ZION SPRICHT

JOHANN H. SCHEIN

ARDO AVAMPO

CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI

LE CHANT DES OYSEAUX

CLEMENT JANEQUIN

DOLCISSIMA MIA VITA
INVAN DUNQUEO CRUDELE

GESUALDO DI VENOSA

SOIR SUR LA PLAINE

LILI BOULANGER

THE ROSE

JOHN PAYNTER

SOIR DE NEIGE

FRANCIS POULENC

- De grande cuillers de neige
- La bonne Neige
- Bois Meurtri...
- La nuit le Froid la solitude

"SUITE" DE LORCA

EINJOHANI RAUTAVARRA

- Cancion de Jinete
- El Grito
- La Luna Asoma
- Malaguena

EPITAPH FOR MOONLIGHT

R. MURRAY SCHAFER

DUE NORTH

STEPHEN CHATMAN

1. Mountains
2. Trees
3. Woodpecker
4. Varied Thrushes
5. Mosquitoes

PASTORAL SONG

TRAD. CHINESE MELODY

LORD, I KNOW I BEEN CHANGED

TRAD. GOSPEL TUNE

ENCORES: AINA THAT GOOD NEWS
MY BONNY LASS SHE SMELLETH

WILLIAM DAWSON
P.D.Q. BACH