

VISIT TO BOCHUM JUNE 2010

Dear Chorus Member

As most of you know Bochum is Sheffield's twin city in Germany and very successful exchange visits have already taken place between ourselves and the Bochum Philharmonic Chorus.

Bochum is situated in the Ruhrgebiet and the whole area has been designated European Capital of Culture 2010.

In celebration, on **Saturday 5th June 2010** there is to be a grand musical extravaganza and we have accepted the Bochum choir's invitation to join with them in this. Choirs from within Germany and from many twin cities have already accepted the invitation to sing.

The aim is to have 65,000 singers taking part in the grand finale at the football stadium in Gelsenkirchen on the Saturday evening.

The programme consists partly of well-known classical items:

!Sing – Day of Song (a special song for the
day to the music of Handel)

Hallelujah Chorus

Jerusalem

Land of Hope and Glory

Nabucco – Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves

Verdi - Anvil Chorus

Mozart - Laudate Dominum

A chorus from Carmen

Beethovens 9th Symphony (just choral
movement?)

Additionally there will be items of more popular music. A special songbook has been produced for every singer. The programme will also feature Bobby McFerrin and The Wise Guys.

Earlier on Saturday 5th June (from noon onwards) Philharmonic Chorus members from Sheffield and Bochum will join together to perform in other musical events in unusual places including at a former coalmine and on a canal boat which will take us to Gelsenkirchen. The whole idea is that all the different choirs "swamp" the whole area, including the most unlikely places, in music that day.

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Based on the level of interest expressed for the visit last season 30 places for singers have been registered for Sheffield Phil. Members. (**see below**)

ACCOMMODATION

As last time we are invited to stay with members of the Bochum Philharmonic Chorus, though choir members may make their own arrangements for accommodation if they so wish – hotel (book early), caravan

PROGRAMME

- **The suggested arrival date is Wednesday 2nd June**, but some people may wish to arrive earlier or later, which is possible. The dates fall within the school half-term holiday .
- We would anticipate some form of group activity/excursion on Thursday 3rd June.
- There will definitely be a rehearsal at some point on Friday June 4th.
- Saturday activities – see above
- Sunday 6th June – return home

TRAVEL

Bochum is easily accessible. You are asked to make your own travel arrangements, which should work out cheaper than with group travel, assuming you book well enough in advance. Although most of the

information below relates to air travel, I realise that some people may wish to travel by train or car (and that booking deadlines for these people may have to be amended).

Air travel

Some suggestions based on current flights:

- There are 3 daily flights on weekdays and 2 Sunday flights now operated by Flybe (formerly operated by British Airways) from Manchester to Düsseldorf International (Rhein-Ruhr) airport, similarly from Birmingham
- There are 4 daily flights on weekdays and 2 Sunday flights operated by Lufthansa from Manchester to Düsseldorf International.
- There are 3 daily flights on weekdays and 1 Sunday flight operated by Lufthansa from Birmingham to Düsseldorf International.
- British Midland operate one flight a day from East Midlands to Cologne (Köln-Bonn) airport.

The summer schedule for Flybe will be published at some point in November and booking commences then. In the past I have found them reliable. I'll try to get a definite date and will let you know. Booking with Lufthansa is open already .

Birmingham airport is easy to use; there are regular train services from Sheffield to the airport and parking there seems good.

There is a second Düsseldorf airport called Düsseldorf Niederrhein, but it is well out of the city and there is no direct train link from there. I think Air Berlin use it. My advice would be to avoid it if possible.

From the airport to Bochum

From Düsseldorf International to Bochum there is a direct train service, the journey takes about 40 minutes.

From Cologne airport there is a frequent suburban railway service to Cologne Hauptbahnhof (main station) – journey time 15 minutes, and from there there are through trains to Bochum (journey time approx. 1hr.)

I am happy to give as much support as possible for people making travel arrangements and nearer the time will be able to provide more details of travel from the airport you have chosen to Bochum.

Rail travel from Sheffield to Bochum using Eurostar is possible within a day, the journey takes about 12 hours.

Main Costs

- Your flight
- Travel to the airport / parking
- Travel from the airport to Bochum (minimum 8 Euros each way – depends on how many people travelling – some group tickets available on local trains)
- Excursions in Germany (but **NOT** for the various activities on the Saturday) (35 Euros??)
- Travel Insurance
- A small gift for your host family and a contribution towards any gifts
- Contribution towards rehearsal costs in England – this will depend on the number of people going, how much rehearsal is needed, the rehearsal venue etc.
- A small contribution towards any “official” present we take from the Phil to our German hosts

There will be **no** charge for music

Language was not a barrier last time. Most members of the Bochum Chorus speak excellent English – and some Phil. members speak German!

THE NEXT STEP

As indicated above we have definitely got 30 places booked for singers, we do not yet know whether any more will be available and certainly don't want to request more places only to find that some people then drop out. **The following procedure will therefore be adopted.**

Stage 1

If you **DEFINITELY intend to go**, email me (janet.hoyle1@btinternet.com) or phone me (0114 2451640) with your name, chorus no. and email address/contact phone no. **as soon as possible**
I shall keep a numbered list, the first person who responds being no. 1 etc.

Stage 2

I will let you know whether you are in the first 30.

Stage 3

If you are in the first 30, **book your flight by Sunday 13th December** – this allows for people to book Flybe flights when booking opens in November. Let me know as soon as it is booked and I will ask you for further details. (If you are using a different means of transport, let me know)

Stage 4

After Dec. 13th if the first 30 haven't booked and following discussion, I will be able to open it up to others on the list and/or negotiate for further places.

REMEMBER :

- ***Don't be put off because you have to make individual travel arrangements. I'm there to help and it will probably work out that several people are travelling on the same plane anyway.***
- ***We had a great time last time. Everyone was very friendly. They are really looking forward to our visit. It is good to build friendships in this way. We shall hope to find a suitable opportunity in the not too distant future for them to visit us.***

Janet Hoyle