

# Stouffville's Men's Chorus Raise Glorious Voices in Europe



Doug and Liz Crocker, Dave Smith, Gord and Margo Bibby and Jim and Winona Eles at a concert at St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna



The Men of Note with guest soloist Jennifer Caines and accompanist Linda Marcinkus at the Church of St. Katherine of Alexandria in Prague

By Hannelore Volpe  
Stouffville Free Press

Stouffville's Men of Note chorus packed up and took their act to Europe this summer, performing in historic cathedrals, magnificent caves and the Vienna Opera House.

In the water taxi gliding along to St. Mark's Basilica in Venice, Italy, the home grown choir engaged in an impromptu 'sing off' with a choir from Poland. On their 12-day concert tour to Italy, Slovenia, Austria and the Czech Republic, the Men of Note were accompanied by enough family and friends to fill their tour bus, including choir director Oksana Vignan and accompanist Linda Marcinkus.

The group was awed by their chance to sing during the evening mass at St. Mark's Basilica, which dates from the 11th century.

When the congregation broke out into applause, it was a moment the group will never forget. The occasion was "very, very special," said Men of Note concert director, Vince Parry.

Slovenia's Postojna Caves, with 24 kilometres of magnificent spaces filled with

chandelier-like stalactites, were another highlight.

"You take a little train that drives you two kilometres into the bowels of the earth," explained Mr. Parry. "It is bigger than the biggest cathedral you have ever been in."

When the choir reached a gigantic part of the cave called The Concert Hall, they were so moved they started singing *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*.

They also performed in the neo-Gothic St. Martin's Parish Church in the town of Bled, at Bad Tatzmannsdorf in Austria and "the choir sang a rousing final concert at the Church of St. Katherine of Alexandria in Prague," recalled Gord Bibby, the group's president, in an e-mail.

The tour wrapped up with a private Dvorak chamber concert.

Everyone came home with a million memories and possibly more photos. They barely had time to unpack before they headed off to their annual performance at the Strawberry Festival Music Awards Night late in June.

To find out more about the Men of Note, which started in 1999, log on to [menofnote.com](http://menofnote.com).

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