

Day Ten – Thursday, May 21, 2015

Woke up in Arles to a bright, clear, very windy day. Unless you know, you think of the Mistral as wafting breezes. Today, it wasn't – closer to a howling gale – and not warm, definitely windbreaker weather!

But that didn't stop the choir splitting into two groups for a guided tour of Arles – home of Van Gogh for the very productive year of 1888. Pity that Arles cannot afford to own any of his paintings.

This is his famous *Café Terrace at Night* – then and now.



Concert tonight was in L'Eglise Saint Julien. This was declared an historic monument in 1941 with a bit of an up and down history. It was first built in 1119, rebuilt in the late 1600s. It was left in virtual ruins by Allied bombing in 1944. Now restored, it is now closed to worship but is room for shows, concerts and exhibitions frequently held there. We stood on a wooden stage which meant that for the only

time on the tour we were able to stamp our feet and create thunder as well as rain in the Famine Song! In a slight change of format, Gerry gave the soloists a chance to sing solos and duets in their two sets (as distinct from a solo part within the small group) and also to conduct the full choir. So we had five performing solos/duets and three conductors in addition to Gerry. It is difficult to describe the emotion and passion that goes into their performances. It is enough to make grown men weep!



Back to the hotel for a late dinner. Few were in bed before midnight and there is a bus to catch in the morning!