The "Your Welcome" Tour 2006

24/05/06 Some started the day before actual departure. Bus was ½ hour late leaving Coventry but we arrived safely at Heathrow, and then caught a shuttle bus to the Premier Travel Inn. Very pleasantly surprised at the quality and the facilities and settled down for a few beers.

25/05/06 Caught the Hopo 6 to the Terminal to meet up with the rest of this specifically chosen select band for a flight to Vancouver. Joined a long Air Canada queue but it moved quite quickly. Paul and Betty came to see us off after giving Gordon and Heather a lift.

Flight was good and the meal (lamb) was very tasty. As it was my birthday (which lasted 32 hours), I managed to have some free pink champagne and then some more, finally an extra glass from 1st class, courtesy of **Jon and Marilyn Beale.** It was also the birthday of a lady on the flight called Avril who apparently needed no medication at the age of 87.

Once off the plane at Vancouver it was onto the next plane to Victoria and then a short bus trip to the Fairmont Empress Hotel.





Unfortunately, the block booking arranged by **Julia** was not quite in place but we slowly but surely got rooms allocated and the wait was worth it. Walked across the road to Milestones for a few beers to wind down and try and sort out the "body-clock". Very friendly waiter and quaint atmosphere in a "Cheersstyle" bar.

26/05/06

Breakfast becomes a challenge par extraordinaire as Samuel the waiter suggests several items from the Menu. Even after making a choice, the food appears and is enough to feed an army. On making conversation, Samuel asked, "How is the world today?" "Worth staying on, after the Eggs Benedict," I replied.

As the day was free, went for a stroll through the city and on passing the Parliament Buildings saw a Californian Choir of teenagers perform – quite stunningly simple and beautiful. Then visited "Under the Sea" and saw a scuba diver playing with an octopus!! Why, I am not sure??

Back to the Hotel for a look round (just like Hampton Court Maze).

3.30 Time for "Tea at the Empress", dressing up which the English do well - at least some of us tried. Cucumber sandwiches, petit fours etcera. Can anybody remember what the green stuff in the choux pastry was? Pistachio or mushy peas?

5.00 Onto bus and off to the first game v Evergreens, changing rooms closed, a football type Astro, both in red shirts – all under control??

Started reasonably well but a slight error at the back and the AB's were 1 nil down. Who was to blame? Any nominations **Gordon**? A **Jon Beale** equaliser at waist height should have been enough for a draw but a shot which was going wide, was tapped home by an unmarked right-winger – SAD LOSS. **Nick** had a good solid game, and **Trevor** and **Alan Morris** played well. After shower in school all back on to bus to Royal Oak for a slightly disorganised meal, but beer OK. **Patrick** was Man of the Match and the **Colonel** received the "Yellow Shirt" for falling over!

The evening was best remembered for the ordering of three lasagnas, only to find out 20 minutes later to be told "not available" and then a "Marilyn'ism". Tim said even though he follows the recipe and it should take him 20 minutes preparation and 40 minutes cooking, it takes 3 hours. To which Marilyn replied, "Does that include driving to the shops?" After all this, it was back to the Fairmont and a quick visit to the Bengal Room for a jazz session, which lasted for about 15 minutes.

27/05/06

Departed Fairmont at approximately 8.30 for a day tour of Victoria, including Butchart Gardens, followed by an enjoyable Buffet Lunch in the Parrot Room. This was followed by a local Wine Tasting, which did not quite set the palate afire.

Later in the day, it was off to the same ground as yesterday for a game v Victoria Rebels. We took the lead through **Tony Perryman**, then fell behind to a bouncy goal and another when several defenders missed the bounce. A **Jon Beale** goal after a good call and pass from **Nick** gave AB's a deserved equaliser. Sustained pressure led to a late winner from **Jon Beale**.

An evening at **Eric's** including food and home-made dark beer saw **Phil** get Man of the Match and **Tim** the "Yellow Shirt" for missing an open goal, falling over and sitting down!!

28/05/06

Breakfast with Samuel the waiter and his gay repartee, prior to leaving the Fairmont and onto the bus for a 90-minute ferry ride to Tsawwassen.

Followed by a bus ride through Stanley Park,
Chinatown and Gastown to the Westin Bayshore
Hotel, Vancouver. Nice view from the room.
Walked out of the Hotel into the nearest Bar –
Cardero's for a snack of wok chicken and wok
vegetables.



Back to the Hotel before departure to the Superskyride, an aerial cable car 4,000 feet up to Grouse Mountain for dinner. Unfortunately, it was cloudy on the way up, but was clear for the journey down. We went to see the orphaned grizzlies prior to our meal. A splendid buffet followed of hot and cold food. Afterwards some of us went to Cardero's to watch the solo artist – Jim Foster, and were quite impressed. Found **Jon Beale** already there, hiding from the rest, but was persuaded to buy us all a drink.

29/05/06

Very good buffet breakfast, with lots of choice (meat, cheeses and hot food) and a free day prior to hockey later in the day. A few of us decided to go whale watching, but in Canadian waters. Saw harbour seals, stellar sea lions, then bald eagles en route to the Orcas.





Afterwards it was on the bus to the next hockey match, the one **Trevor and I** would like to forget, especially their number 53. After tackling him early in the game, the ball went out at right angles and he fell over me claiming he was fouled. On told "look where the ball is, it may give you a clue that I played it" he lost the plot. For the rest of the game he was only interested in trying to reverse hit the ball either into the net or via someone's head. In being told to quieten down by our calm **Trevor**, 53 told him to OFF – what a charming opponent. Later in the second half one of their other players "collided" with **Gordon**. During the game, we had 4 "umpires" (shame after travelling 3,000 miles or so and having a month or two notice). Afterwards back on the bus and a quick tour of the car park (just missing several parked cars), quick 15 minute change at the Hotel, then off to join our opponents at the Enigma Restaurant. Man of the Match was **Tim**, whilst Jon **Beale** became the next recipient of the "Yellow Shirt". Very enjoyable meal for some (my rack of lamb was delicious but others not so sure), generous portions of beer. After a sociable evening, back to the Hotel, then round the corner to Cardero's to listen to Jim Foster again, then back to the Hotel's Seawall Grill for a drink with **Gordon and Heather.**

30/05/06

Buffet breakfast, then onto bus for trip to Whistler, via Stanley Park, Lions Bay, Squamish and then a stop at Shannon Falls.

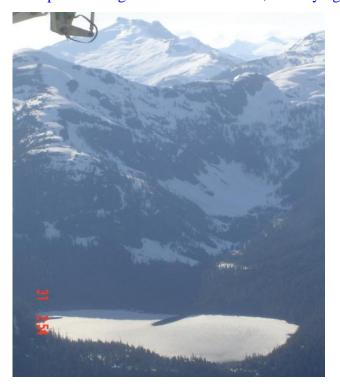




Then we arrived at Whistler – a tourist attraction and the venue of the 2010 Winter Olympics.

A gondola to the top of the mountain for lunch,

followed by Irish cream ice-cream. After a walk around the town centre, it was back to the Westin on a float-plane taking off from Green Lake, then flying over Garibaldi Park.



Getting **Freda** on and off was tricky but once back on terra firma **Jon Beale and I** offered to push her up the ramp. Sounds easy but it took both of us. Even on level ground, **Jon Beale** struggled and had to pass on to **Russ.** It was at this time that he realised that the brake was on; and that he was the person who had put it on!! Called into Cardero's for a drink and a bite, but busy for 2½ hours so booked with the **Beale's** for 9 pm. Nice meal — halibut for the ladies, followed by an evening with Jim Foster. It was also noticeable that certain people had been drinking earlier and had even brought the TV remote, but **Tim and Nick** appeared to enjoy themselves.

31/05/06

Buffet breakfast served by Lubica prior to a free day. Mooched up Robson Street into Hudson Bay Company, when need overcame desire. A coincidental meeting with **Nick and Sue** led to a free couple of tickets for a lift up to a tower called "The Lookout". This was followed by an awful coffee in the Gastown, a walk through the drug area, when I was asked "are you looking for something", prior to going up the tower in a glass fronted lift. A panoramic view of the area and all round the city, then afterwards had a quick bite in a small café, prior to walking back to the Hotel.

Later in the day left to play Jokers, eventually, as the driver of the bus had gone to the University to fetch us, rather than take us there. Therefore, ¾ hour later the team, without **Greenhough** and **Brewster** (Jack Nicklaus and Tom Watson) arrive to find them all ready and waiting.

A 3-2 defeat after being two nil down was no disgrace. Yet again another goal from **Jon Beale**, after missing the ball initially (dummied he said), was followed by an equaliser from **Tony Perryman**. Later in the game **Phil** was hit on the Achilles – more pain, before we conceded an individual goal in the last minute. Then it was back quickly onto bus, no showers, so back to Hotel 15 minutes to change, back on bus to Vancouver Rowing Club for burgers (eventually apart from **Russ**) and beers (got some of that). Back to Hotel for last drinks with **Sue**, **Heather and Gordon**.

01/06/06

Up at 6.00 to take luggage down as now catching train and luggage being sent on ahead. Left for Station at 7.00 and met our steward for the duration – Cameron (you're welcome). Journey was OK, as long as you enjoy being fed every 1½ hours and you like to hear about the different types of bridges etcera, or what we will be seeing shortly or what we should have seen if the trees had not been so tall. We then

arrived in Kamloops and travelled to the Ramada Inn – not the best. At 7.20 back on the bus for the evening's entertainment – the "Two River Junction Dinner & Musical Revue" or was it the "Rockies Horror Show". As we entered the hostelry, **Sandie** said she was "wobbling" all over and others burst into laughter. Our waitress arrived – Danielle or Brittany according to her name tag!! She asked if we wanted "buns" and, as for drinks, would "jugs" be a better idea. How could we disagree? When it was said that the plates were too small we were told that they were for the "buns". When **Wendy** spoke, she was told that she sounded like she was from Coronation Street, which then set off a debate about TV programmes. We then had the musical show re Bill Miner, the gentleman train robber. Back to Hotel at approximately 10.20 – Bar closed at 10.00. **Tim** and I went for a walk to the Fox and Hounds.

02/06/06

Off at 8.00 and back on the train at 8.15 for breakfast.



Cameron waiting to give us a Logic Quiz – won by **Jon and Marilyn Beale** eventually. **Audrey** was told off for trying to cheat. She was not trying to cheat; she was succeeding, but still did not win.

Julia's joke was told at this point re the man who books into the Hotel and is given key to Room 104. On entering, he finds a man and a woman making love. He goes back to Reception

complains, and is then given the key to Room 204. On entering, he finds a man and a woman making love. He goes back to Reception, complains, and is then given the key to Room 304. On entering, he finds a man and a woman making love. He goes back to Reception throws the keys on the desk, asks for a taxi and storms out of the Hotel. Whilst waiting for the taxi he sees two dogs at it. He picks them up, walks back into the Hotel, slams the dogs down on to the Counter and says to the receptionist "Your sign has fallen down".

The next began when the Bear was chasing the Atheist, when the Bear caught up with him and the Atheist said "Oh my God".

There was a crash and the Lord appeared and said to him "You have been an Atheist for a long time; surely you are being a hypocrite". The Atheist said, "I just wish the Bear to be a Christian". God said he is. At that point the Bear clasped his hands together and says "For what I am about to receive, may the Lord make me truly thankful".



It was now that **Mike Heywood** had his own personal entertainment as two flies decided to indulge in carnal knowledge on the outside of his train window. He kept us all up to date with the antics. It was asked why it was taking so long and **Jon Beale** said, "Perhaps the male can't think of anyone!" **Sandie** then spotted a black bear and we saw four elk, prior to arriving in Jasper. It was then off the train to the Lobstick Mountain. Afterwards it was out on the town and we met up with **Patrick and Tim** at the Whistler Inn for a few beers. On trying to order food was told that the Chef had finished but they had two take-away Menus and we could order with and the food would be delivered – how quaint. Our waitress was a charming girl with the name plaque "Kim" strategically placed. When asked what the other was called she looked over her shoulder, pointed to the Barman and said "GEOFF". Later took a slow walk back to the Hotel to prepare for another full day tomorrow.

03/06/06

Breakfast at 8.00 but the quality was not quite like the Westins and the Fairmount. Onto coach and our first stop was to see water gushing through a canyon; then on to Maligne Lake for lunch. A walk round the forest area was followed by a 90-minute boat trip round the lake.

In the afternoon back on the bus and be fascinated by the wildlife, beers and cubs, elks, deer and chipmunks, whilst the scenery has become quite spectacular.

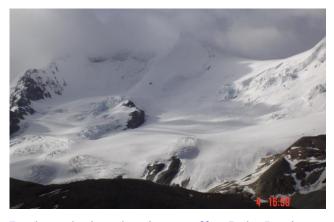
At Patricia Lake the reflection in the water is as follows.

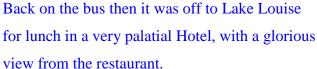


Got of the bus in Jasper, needed some money, needed a beer, then returned to the Whistler Inn where there was an afternoon's entertainment of 8 guitarists, a banjo player, a drummer and a violinist. Pity none of them could play but the practice was OK. One drink was enough and it was back to the Hotel for a couple of beers thanks to **Trevor and Angela**, who were with in the Bar with **Chris and Jane** who were then joined by **Sonia and Ailsa**. Out for a meal, eventually with **Chris and Mike** at the Caledonian Grill for bison meatballs!, then into the Whistler for a couple of beers prior to walking back to the Hotel.

04/06/06

7.30 leave for Athabasca Falls followed by the Colombian Icefields, which are one of the largest accumulations of ice south of the Arctic Circle, where we boarded a snowcoach, down the steep hill.







In the end, the meal for some was slightly disappointing with overcooked vegetables (which could have been anything), average sweets and sour milk for coffee. Such a shame. Then we all had a walk round the grounds, found a birthday card for **Ailsa** before we rejoined the bus. It was on this part of the trip that **Sandie** spotted a grizzly walking slowly along the tree line without a care in the world –obviously a "No Care Bear".

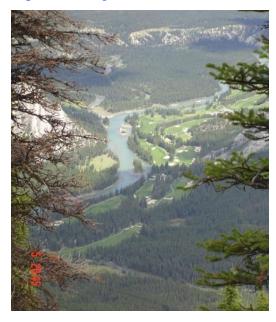
We then stopped a couple of times for the typical Japanese photo shoot then back on the coach to the Buffalo Lodge at Banff Springs. What a very good welcome on the bus, prior to rooms being allocated. An impromptu gathering at Room 816 to celebrate **Mike Heywood's** birthday. Whilst most of the women were indoors, the men were standing on the balcony when a certain **Jon Beale** decided to check out his fitness and streaked round the car park. It immediately became apparent to everybody that it was getting cold. After all the excitement, it was decided to have a quiet evening of a few beers in the lounge.

05/06/06

Up for breakfast on a free day, so went into town to go up the Gondola, had a bite of lunch whilst admiring the view.

On coming down had a walk round the town of Banff for a bit of a shop, bought wooden moose from the Christmas Shop, before having a couple of beers and hot crisps at the Irish Bar.

In evening had a meal in the Lodge Restaurant with Ailsa, later joined by the Beales, Tim and Patrick.



06/06/06

Up for breakfast and then off to the Irish Bar for lunch and a couple of beers prior to transfer to Calgary. Joined by **Sue, Nick, Patrick and Tim** before returning promptly for the bus. Eventually got to the Westin at Calgary. In the evening went to the Spaghetti Factory with **Sonia and Ailsa.** Good value, as

you pay for the Main Course and then get starter, dessert and coffee free. Afterwards back to the Hotel for a nightcap.

07/06/06

Up for breakfast at 9.00 and a welcome from the Manageress, which bordered on the unfriendly with no smiles on entry or exit. No croissants or strawberries but the orange juice was good. Today was a part free day prior to Hockey leaving at 6 pm. Decided to go to Calgary Zoo and witnessed several newly born animals along with mums and dads shedding winter coats and not looking their best.



In the afternoon met **Trevor and Angela** at the Spaghetti Factory for a snack. Later it was on the bus to the University for a game against Warriors, which we won 2-1. **Tony Perryman** scored the first after a mis-hit short corner from **Mike Greenhough.** Skipper **Sean Sutton** scored the second, diving full length. Afterwards it was wings and beer at Kilkenny's or for some a wing and beer.

Unfortunately not enough food so a visit to Spicey Tomatoes for a table of 13 and the Davies 4. After ordering three different beers, light, dark and a foggy we eventually had something to eat but **Sue** wanted more foggy!

08/06/06

Up for breakfast, still the same miserable Manageress, **Sandie** not well so stayed in bed. After, decided on a quick swim followed by a dip in the Jacuzzi. Later went to the Spaghetti Factory for a beer and dips. Later in the day, it was back to the University to play the Saracens in a competitive 0-0 draw. **Jon Beale** chosen as Opposition's Man of the Match and received the "Hat". **Tim** won the overall Man of the Match. Had a good meal afterwards and we had a few beers including some honey beer. Back to the Hotel, and then out to the Barley Mill for some lemon beers with **Tim**, followed by a couple of free Brazilian beers.

09/06/06

Early start for departure to Calgary Airport as we left for Toronto and yet another Westin. Filled in the questionnaire for the Calgary Westin, especially noting the smiling welcome of the Restaurant Manageress. Tasteless strawberries unfortunately at breakfast. Whilst at airport watched 1st half of first game in the World Cup between Germany and Costa Rica. We eventually arrived at Hotel, scaffolding outside the entrance so we ended up arriving via the Tradesman's Entrance lift – very impressive! A waiter then joined us in the same lift and ended up spilling his tray and not being very happy – apparently our fault. Allocated room on 34th Floor, ideal for me with my "head for heights".

Went out for a walk and found another Spaghetti Factory with **Heather, Gordon, Tim and Patrick. Mike and Chris** were already there before us, recommending certain dishes. Afterwards Tim and I went to the Reservoir Lounge where they held a Jazz Club. Good improvised partner dancing.

10/06/06

Up in time for breakfast, as England v Paraguay was on a large screen in the Lounge area. An early goal would surely calm the nerves, but it remained the only goal. Not a great performance, but will surely get better.

Afterwards went for a walk along the harbour, then around the city and had lunch in an Alexander Keith pub, Shepherds pie, whilst watching yet another World Cup game Trinidad v Sweden. It was then back to the Hotel, watch a bit of Argentina 2 Ivory Coast 1, before catching the bus to our game with Masters International at Appleby College. A delightful setting by the lake, but hit the ball too hard and it may never be seen again. This was a game played over three 20 minute sessions, which we ending up losing 2-0. The first goal conceded was down to poor marking and the second was just unlucky. The side played well but were up against a slightly younger and definitely more skilful side. Mike Greenhough was skipper's Man of the Match; Phil was Opposition's Man of the Match and Arthur was the Supporter's Man of the Match and the overall Man of the Match.

It was then back on the bus to the Oar House for food. It was time for **Trevor** to give his speech re the passing of the "Yellow Shirt". To all it was obvious – it had to be **Patrick** for "forgetting his boots", but not according to **Trevor**. For his "mischievous quips", it was awarded to **Phil**?

Afterwards it was back to the Hotel where **Tim** and **Phil** adjourned to a nearby Bar.



11/06/06

Today was a free day prior to a hockey game later. Some people went up the tower; others visited Toronto Blue Jays Stadium, the Rogers Centre. Went for a walk along the Harbour, and then called for a spot of lunch on a seafront café.

It was an afternoon game at the Lamport Stadium in Toronto. The weather was glorious and the supporters were in their element. The pitch probably needed watering but slopes on both sides meant that passing needed to be accurate and at the right speed. We began quite well but unfortunately did what we do quite well and give away a goal at the wrong time. In the second period an accidental elbow pole-axed **Phil**, but he recovered enough to continue. At the beginning of the third period whilst attempting to hit the ball, **Phil** collapsed and left the pitch for ice treatment. A further goal by the Toronto Galaxy Masters

saw them run out 2-0 winners. Afters was at Liberty's, a short walk from the Stadium, where a superb buffet awaited the AB's.

Opposition's Man of the Match was **Phil** and skipper's was **Russell**, and supporter's and overall Man of the Match was **Tony Perryman.** After a lovely session of glorious food and several beers, it was back to the Westin and a couple at the "Cheers Bar".

12/06/06

Today was a full day tour, which included Niagara. A trip on the infamous "Maid of the Mist" with the blue plastic Macs, was followed by a visit to the whirlpool further North. At this point, certain people went up in a helicopter – **Trevor & Angela**, **Alan & Carol**, **Ailsa**, **Tim and Patrick**.

Then it was back on the coach to a place called Niagara on the Lake, where people made their own decisions re lunch. A very expensive shopping area saw the males running for cover with their credit cards, forcing the women to use their own!!

Then it was back on the bus to the Westin and a quick change for the "End of Tour Dinner". A quick résumé from **Trevor** before handing over to skipper **Sean Sutton.** He had several small "gifts" to hand out to people for their nuances, like **Russell** and his pies, **Sandie** and her Grizzly, **Sonia** for her ??

And finally **Mike Greenhough** for "Player of the Tour".

As this was the last night, the group as a whole was splitting into two groups. One was leaving at 4 pm the following day to return to England, but the other was leaving at 4 am for Kiawah Island.

Some of both groups, Wendy & Sean, Chris & Mike, Sandie & Phil and Tim adjourned to the bar for a few last beers. An impromptu piano session then took place with Beatles songs being the most popular before a quick nap prior to departure. For 1 person this was not going to be long enough.

13/06/06

Eventually all got up and onto the bus to airport. Fly to Charlotte first and how a certain person was allowed in to the USA, we will never know.





She had difficulty when they could not really take fingerprints because of the length of her nails. There was also a problem with the **Beale's** as they had someone with a similar name but after a while they were all through to wait for the plane to Charleston. After a bite to eat and a drink from "Mr Happy of the Bar", we arrived in the rain, approximately 76°F. We all then get onto a Minibus to Kiawah, where we are sharing with **Chris and Mike, and Patrick** but with a supermarket shop en route. **Mike Heywood** went for a walk and was told that there had been a tornado warning up to about 10 pm. A few of us went to Shrimpers just around the corner. The plastic "Niagara" macs came in quite useful as we came back in the rain and it was off to bed early after such an early start.

14/06/06

Eventually got up, others already fed and watered. Breakfasted on the balcony watching the heron and the squirrels. Decided to have a "chill-out" day by the pool, **Patrick** went to the beach. After a spot of lunch "salty dog", **Mike and Phil** also went to the beach where they surprisingly found a Samoyed. Guess who went to say hello – **Christine** of course. **Patrick** arrived back later and checked out the "well-stacked" at the Bar, which turned out to be "pool-side".

On the way back to the villa, we spotted an alligator in one of the nearby pools, so returned to watch it surface for a while as it then cruised slowly across the lake. On returning to the villa decided to book a meal at Turtle Point Restaurant. Very pleasant surroundings and a very good filet mignon with a Soonama Valley wine. Outside the restaurant, one could relax in a rocking chair.

15/06/06

Today was a tour day. First off was a 1 hour tour of Charleston on a mule driven carriage. Then time for a walking tour of the area prior to lunch at the Barbados Room at the Mills House Hotel. Large portions of Sere Crab Soup and followed by Shrimp Salad. **Chris Heywood** took ³/₄ of the meal away with her, it was so much.

In the afternoon, it was time for the visit to the Boone Plantation and the "impromptu Play from the Deep Old South". Afterward sit was back to the Villas. Went across to see **Jon Beale**, the injured soldier, when a few tennis balls were found under the cabin. It was then that the alligator was spotted. **Jon** decided to see if it played tennis as it hid under the bank. It seemed to entice it out and several of us went onto the bridge to get a closer look. It was at this time that spotted under the bridge were 2 baby alligators. At this point the "mother" cruised slowly towards us and floated under the bridge

She stayed there whilst adults bent down and looked through the gaps in the bridge with "bums in the air"





16/06/06

Eventually got up and today decided to check out the selective swimming pool near the Tennis area. It was a very quiet and very hot day, with the beauty of a few beers at the same time. Later in the day we were joined by the **Beale's**.

In the evening had booked for a meal at the Jasmine Porch up at the Sanctuary, whilst the "select" were in the Ocean.

A pre meal drink in the palatial lounge area was followed by a very nice meal in a very pleasant setting.

Afterwards a walk down to the beach in the moonlight showed everything in its true light.

Afterwards all back on the courtesy bus, a few glasses of wine prior to tomorrow's journey back to the United Kingdom.

17/06/06

Up at 7.30 for an 8.30 departure. Leave for the airport for a 3-hour wait prior to the 12.30 departure. Time for a couple of beers prior to plane to Charlotte.



Arrived at Charlotte 1 hour later, then onto next plane to Toronto. We then arrived at 4.10 - what a palaver. Whilst going through, there was an unfortunate incident with a lady frightened by sniffer dog. Once through this section after handing over declaration card, collected baggage. Then out of Terminal, onto shuttle bus to Terminal 1. Didn't know where to go? Go to Ground Floor as a group, then Floor 2 (some even went to Floor 3), then eventually downstairs in a separate area with our own Check-In. Then through Customs, another shuttle to Terminal International. Now time for a beer and a chilli prior to flight to Heathrow. Another good flight, it was also **Ailsa's** birthday, who managed to get some champagne. Off the plane and down to Baggage Reclaim 1, where is **Patrick?** Subsequently found at a different conveyor Reclaim 2 and with very similar luggage (it was green and Carlton, but the wrong name tag)!! His own luggage was being looked after by **Mike Greenhough.**

Final goodbyes to one and all, prior to individual journeys home.

See below for Tables at "The End of Tour Dinner". Please note that there are no pictures of Trevor giving a speech (for a change).



















