

Trip to the Globe Theatre

by Brenda Lee

On Wednesday, 19th June, 21 members and friends set off to visit the Globe Theatre to see a production of Shakespeare's play, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'.

The previous day there had been thunderstorms and, bearing in mind the fact that the Globe was partly an open-air theatre, we were prepared for rain. However, the whole day was dry and warm (obviously Joan had waved her magic wand!) and could not have been better for our purpose.

We journeyed by coach to Southwark by a roundabout route, owing to motorway works, and arrived at about 11a.m. This left us three hours before the performance to fill as we wished. The Millennium Bridge was a popular choice - no hint of a sway (unfortunately!) Some people went to St. Paul's Cathedral and some to the Tate Modern. There was a pleasant riverside walk with a wide choice of eating places for lunch.

Some of us opted for a look at the Globe exhibition, housed beneath the theatre. We learned that the American, Sam Wanamaker, established the Trust which made the reconstruction possible and that traditional materials were used. The theatre seats 900 people in three tiers of covered galleries. The seats are hard (very hard after two and a half hours!), wooden, with mainly backless benches. There is room for another 600 standing places in the yard at the front of the stage - no umbrellas allowed should it rain. The thatched roof, the only one in London, has a sprinkler system, which, in case of fire, allows it to be flooded in two minutes.

The play was very well done. Puck (Robin Goodfellow) was excellent and very agile. The Pyramus and Thisbe scene brought much laughter. Personally, I would have preferred to see the actors in Shakespearean dress instead of modern attire, but the play was faithful to the original. It was rewarding to see Shakespeare's writing actually come to life and much more interesting than reading it.

We boarded the coach at 5 p.m. and had to endure the London rush-hour, but this gave us time to look at unfamiliar places. We arrived back in Dover at 8 p.m. having had a thoroughly enjoyable day.



The Globe Theatre