

Report on the Accordion Visit to Castelfidardo 20-26 May 2018

Our 2018 visit to 'The Home of the Accordion' took place in May consisting of accordionists from England, Ireland, Scotland, USA and Canada along with a number of partners. Our trip did not get off to the best of starts thanks to a French Air Traffic Controllers strike and we were told we may have to sit on the plane for 2 hours! After 45 minute delay British Airways managed to re-route us so we were able to make the vineyard lunch which was pre-booked for the group the other end. We met up at the airport with those we had arranged an overnight stay in Bologna the day before, mostly from USA.



Vineyard lunch on the journey down to Castelfidardo

The vineyard lunch was well received and as we continued our journey to Castelfidardo the heavens opened and we had torrential rain. Once we safely arrived at the hotel and checked in there were some on and off showers

but we still managed the visit to Victoria showroom in the town. Back at the hotel we had some very good accordions loaned to us by a number of co-operative manufacturers who we are always grateful to. These included Alessandrini, Giustozzi, Beltuna, and a Petosa (courtesy of Zero Sette/Bugari factory). Also a used Piermaria was loaned by the Castelfidardo music shop. One of our guests liked it so much he bought it!

The bar at the hotel was busy each evening with some great accordion playing. On the first evening a few members of the



Alex Govier pleased with the Piermaria he bought from the Castelfidardo music shop

group remained in the bar after 11pm and met up with a couple of European players and a jam session ensued which was apparently very good according to those present. The following day the hotel said someone in the room above the

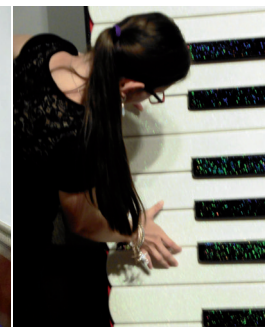
bar said the volume of the music was keeping them awake so the hotel asked if after 11pm we could play quietly which was a challenge for some of the players!



A visit to the interesting Accordion Museum was included



Barbie Wong and Colette Ogata from USA try a tune on the Grand Accordion



Rebecca Huck tackles the Grand Accordion keyboard

Next day we visited the Accordion Museum and the giant accordions which was a great photo opportunity. A number managed to play the accordions and produce a recognisable tune!

Later in the afternoon we had visits to Pigini and Beltuna factories to see the accordion production process. The evening was spent dining at a seaside restaurant in the resort of Sirolo. The restaurant always offers plenty of food for us and the opportunity to play accordion after dinner. There was some playing back at the hotel mindful of the 11pm curfew!



Francesco from Beltuna explains the bass construction



Renzo Galassi from Galassi Bellows shows one of the many designs available



Roberto Ottavianelli from Bugari fields questions about the construction process

On Thursday it was a free day with optional visits to see how bellows are made at Galassi and how reeds are produced at Antonnelli. Both visits proved fascinating particularly the bellows factory which also produce other products including special beach towels! The evening saw us visit the resort of Numana and a private dinner at a hotel by the sea. After dinner members of the group played some of the fine instruments loaned to us. There was more accordion playing and also some Scottish dancing orchestrated by Tony Simpson from Arbroath.

Friday morning we visited the Zero Sette / Bugari factory which produces 5 top quality accordion brands. These include Zero Sette, Bugari, Giuliotti, Petosa and the Bugari Evo digital accordion. Bugari owner Roberto Ottavianelli provided an interesting tour and afterwards in the showroom we were all treated to a virtuoso performance by Sergio Scappini a truly great player. He firstly played acoustic and then demonstrated the Bugari Evo. *Wonderful.* After the visit we travelled to the famous religious pilgrimage town of Loreto and the impressive basilica. On the way back to the hotel we paid a visit to the Carini accessory shop selling a myriad of bits and pieces for accordions and various accessories.



Leigh Dechaine with our accordions ready to play after dinner



A demonstration of Scottish country dancing accompanied by Tony Simpson



A Bugari Evo Digital Accordion has a final check in the Zero Sette/Bugari factory



Key assembly taking place in the Zero/Sette/Bugari factory



Sergio Scappini treated the group to a wonderful demonstration of the Bugari Evo during the visit to the factory showroom



Colette Ogata looking pleased with a lovely Sonora

The weather had improved for us and we were now enjoying sunny weather. Back at the hotel a few people were in the lounge playing and others were relaxing in the sunshine with a welcome drink.

Our last evening was held at a villa near the town of Osimo. We enjoyed aperitifs outside with lovely views of the countryside and Castelfidardo in the distance. After dinner in the restaurant we were entertained by another wonderful player Antonino De Luca who has just completed his second CD. I have booked Antonino who was a student of the late great Frank Maroco on previous visits and the audience showed their appreciation.



Antonio de Luca from Castelfidardo gave an impressive performance on the final night



Armando the founder of Beltuna attends to the reed plates on a near completed instrument



Anne-Marie Devine and Sean O'Neill duet on the Betuna and Petosa at the villa

Saturday was the homeward day and we departed for the independent state of San Marino for a 4 hour visit over the lunchtime period. The weather was good and we could enjoy the 360 degree view of the surrounding area of Emilia Romagna. There was time for shopping and a visit to the huge music shop which had a few accordions for sale and a bandoneon which proved an interesting experience trying to play!

A few people took up the challenge to walk up to the highest point and managed it. It was easier coming down!

We continued our journey to Bologna airport where some from USA were travelling onward to see some other places in Italy and beyond before their flights home. The rest of us checked in for our flight to Heathrow and once again we

were told there may be a short delay to due the French again however we departed more or less on time and actually arrived 5 minutes early.

It is always rewarding to see people who mostly do not know each other coming together and enjoying themselves due to the common interest they all have.

Each visit is different due to the people who attend and each time they have always been a great bunch of people... and some good accordion players!

We now start looking to 2019 as we have a number who could not make this trip and some who want to return!

Peter Le Geyt - Member of Guildford Accordion Club



A visit was arranged to nearby Recanati for lunch



The Group en route for a factory visit



The group on the last evening at the countryside villa just before dinner

CASTELFIDARDO 2019

For anyone interested in joining a visit to the Castelfidardo in May/June 2019 please email plg@plgmarketing.com for details