

The Swan Valley was “visited” on August 13th last by a large green bus of mature years, a bit like its occupants, many of whom had done more Morris “miles” than most on Australia. This was a very special occasion for the Perth Morris men (ably accompanied by the fair Maids of Perth). Whilst we occasionally venture East, it’s rare for visitors to cross the country from the east. The Adelaide men, six dancers and one muso were in fine fettle as we started our tour at the city end of the valley at the Ironbark Brewery. Our bus driver George began to realise he was in for a very different Saturday afternoon as massed Morris ensued in the car park. The PMM and AMM repertoire were nicely matched and although there was no thronging crowd at the Ironbark (too early in the afternoon) we acquitted ourselves well. The owner and brewer of the pub provided proper ales (of course) and the “Warrior” went down a treat.

By the time to move on, we were joined by one or two more bus loads, and as we progressed up the valley so too did they. Oakover winery next, again very quiet, then Elmar’s (German style food and ales) with a much bigger audience on the verandah out the back. Even the security guard was quite affected by two groups of men leaving the ground in style (AMM at least). Or was that mesmerised?

But, as they say, if you ever visit the Swan valley, do not miss the “Feral”. We fought our way in as George parked the three – million – miler (pre-decimal vintage). Outside in a large marquee there was enough space for six or so men to dance and we were wondering at one point who was more entertaining, the audience or the Morris dancers.

Now if you are reading this and can muster a side, you will be looked after in style when you decide to take the plunge. George is standing by with the bus.