

MMTour REPORT 2023 by BEVERLY MILLER

Monday 8/21/2023

Most of us flew in or traveled to JFK Airport in New York from all across the U.S. We gathered at the airport and were able to recognize our fellow travelers by our Beatle shirts. For many of us this was the first time meeting our tour organizer, Charles Rosenay!!! We got acquainted while we waited for everyone to arrive, telling stories about our lives and our love for the Beatles. Before we knew it, some of us were already new friends as we settled into our seats for the flight to London. Let the fun begin!

Tuesday 8/22/2023



Photo of Charles!!! and Rene by Beverly Miller

We arrived at Heathrow Airport and went through customs then gathered outside the terminal to wait for our tour bus. We met our London tour guide, Rene van Haarlam, from the Netherlands, one of the most knowledgeable Beatles historians in the world. He has worked side by side with Charles for many years, and was full of enthusiasm when telling us stories and little tidbits about Beatles history. Here is a never-before photo of Paul McCartney with someone who resembles Linda over one shoulder and a smiling Rene over the other.



On our way into London we crossed the Westminster Bridge over the Thames River and spotted the London Eye Ferris Wheel on the south bank. We drove by Parliament, Big Ben, Westminster Abbey and the rear gate of Buckingham Palace, where we saw the Queen's Horse Guard.

Our first Beatles stop was Chiswick Park, full of trees, flower gardens and ponds, and large stone statues, as well as the 18th century Roman style Palladian Villa, The Chiswick house. It was here in the park that The Beatles had their photos taken among the statues and trees in 1966, for the promotional films for their songs "Paperback Writer" and "Rain. We traveled to the City Barge near the 1 Thames River where some of the scenes for the Beatles movies "Help!" and "A Hard Day's Night" were filmed.



Charles!!! Inside the City Barge Alleyway from the film HELP!
Photo by Nancy Davis

We continued on to Twickenham Studios where those films were made, with more location shots from around London. We saw the mailbox Ringo stuck his hand in while filming "Help!" and the four homes and doors that each Beatle ran into in the movie.

Rene escorted us down a street to an area near the Thames River where they took photos for "Mad Day Out," when photographers followed the Beatles around London in 1968. Our final stop was at St. Pancras Roman Catholic Church, another "Mad Day Out" photo op stop. We took photos in the garden, on a bench, and in front of the church. We also went inside. We tried to recreate as many of the poses as possible. Charles!!! told us it was not only the first time one of his groups was brought here, but it was his first time at these places. Rene took a lot of pride finding Beatles-related locales to bring groups to.







After a full first day we checked into our hotel, and then retired to our rooms.

Wednesday 8/23/2023

After a buffet breakfast in the hotel, we gathered for a walking tour of London. It was a beautiful warm and sunny day. We saw The Blue Gardenia, a nightclub where the Beatles made a late night impromptu performance on December 10th, 1961, after a disastrous show at the Palais Ballroom in Aldershot, a city 31 miles south of London. We saw Trident Studios, where The Beatles recorded "Hey Jude," as well as several other songs in July 1968 including "Dear Prudence," "Honey Pie," and "Martha My Dear." Other Beatle-related artists such as Billy Preston, James Taylor, Badfinger, Mary Hopkins, and Harry Nilsson also recorded there. We saw MPL Productions, Paul McCartney's music publishing company. A short distance away is the New Burlington Police station. It was from here the Bobbies were called because of multiple noise complaints when the Beatles staged a rooftop concert on top of 3 Savile Road, the Apple Corps Headquarters, on January 30th, 1969. The building is still there, and we loved visiting it, but of course it is no longer Apple. It wasn't hard to imagine the excitement of the noontime crowds when they could hear the music, but quite couldn't tell where it was coming from. They never realized this would be The Beatles' last live performance!



3 Saville Row Photo by Mark Bernier

Charles recreated a pose from the first time he stood in front of the door 40 years prior!



We walked through Piccadilly Circus and China Town with its beautiful decorations and many restaurants. We visited Marylebone train station where The Beatles were chased by fans in that unforgettable scene of "A Hard Day's Night. On the street adjacent is where George falls, gets up and they continue running, laughing. Members of our group even reenacted this scene, and luckily no one was hurt. What a morning and early afternoon! But it was far from over...



Waiting to get inside...

At 3:00 PM we had a very important appointment at Abbey Road Studios! We signed our names on the stone wall in front of the building, then we gathered on the steps in front of the door for some group photos, before ENTERING INSIDE the building.



Abbey Road Studios Entrance Before We Entered and then our Group Photo

It wasn't lost on us that not many people ever get this incredible opportunity to go inside! We passed dozens of pictures of many recording artists on our way to studio #2 - yes, the one where The Beatles recorded so many great songs! Three rows of chairs awaited us with each having our own headset. For the next 3 (!) hours we practiced then recorded vocals. A great tribute band, The Beagles, had recorded the backing tracks for us. We then sang on "In Spite Of All The Danger" and the "Na Na Nas" on "Hey Jude," plus a full song on our own, "In My Life." This was truly a pinch me moment! How lucky were we to be there and have this experience? Our group also met Bob Jackson of Badfinger, who joined us in the recording session, with Charles!!! conducting. During a break, Bob jumped on the Abbey Road piano and played some impromptu Beatles and Badfinger songs while we sang along. Epic! We took lots of pictures. After the tracks were in place, Charles!!! arranged for all of us to visit the control room. Mind blowing!

We finally left the studio and visited the souvenir shop, then took turns taking photos on the famous road crossing in front of the building. It was a challenge to avoid the cars in the heavy traffic.



Leaving Abbey Road, we walked to Cavendish Street to see the home Paul stays in when in London. We went back to our hotel to freshen up, and then walked a few blocks to the College Arms Pub and Restaurant where we had dinner, followed by an author talk by David Stark. His book, "It's All Too Much," features

recollections of his incredible experiences meeting The Beatles multiple times under crazy circumstances.



Someone mentioned we walked about seven miles, so we were glad to rest. We were all “sleeping like a log” that night.

Thursday 8/24/2023

After another full English breakfast, we checked out of our hotel. Rene stayed back in London; he did not accompany us to Liverpool. It would be his last time seeing fans/travelers. Finally out of London, we drove into the beautiful suburban countryside. Our first stop was the Village of Henley-On-Thames, a quaint little town where George's home, Friar Park, is located. The video for “Crackerbox Palace” was filmed here at George's home. We took photos at the gate, including a group shot.



We also visited The Angel, a pub George liked to frequent. Across the street was a Catholic Church, St. Mary the Virgin, Henley on Thames. It was here we found the simple gravestone of Dusty Springfield, who died March 2nd, 1999. We walked around the town, visiting shops, art galleries, a farmers market, and small restaurants. We could see why George loved this town.

Back on the bus we continued on to Liverpool. Charles took this opportunity to tell us stories of his career and what led him to organizing these tours and his experiences with the Beatles, and he invited those on the bus to tell their own stories. It made the coach ride that much more fun.

Arriving in Liverpool, we were dropped off at our hotels. We picked up our tickets and wristbands for the upcoming events of International Beatleweek. It was somewhat cooler and a little windier in Liverpool. We took a walk around the city to acquaint ourselves with the surroundings. There were lots of pubs playing live music, fast food restaurants, and places to shop. We saw Brian Epstein's statue, unveiled in August 2022, located near the former site of his family's NEMS record shop, then visited Mathew Street where the Cavern Club is, plus more pubs and souvenir shops.

Friday 8/25/2023

After another large buffet breakfast we were back on the tour bus for the grand and very complete Magical Mystery Tour of Liverpool. David Bedford, author of "Liddypool," was the tour guide on the bus with us and told us great stories. We stopped to take photos at The larger than life Beatles statues at the Liverpool waterfront, unveiled by John Lennon's sister, Julia in December 2015 (50 years since the Beatles final performance in Liverpool at the Empire in December 1965). It is located right next to the Mersey Ferries Building and near the Beatles Story Museum. We boarded a ferry for our own "Ferry Across the Mersey" 13

experience. We saw the White Star Line Building, headquarters for the ship Titanic. We were told a little history about how WW2 bombings destroyed a lot of the dock area. We took photos of the first place Ringo played live with The Beatles, The Horticultural Society dance in Birkenhead. We went to the town of Haswell, where Paul bought his parents a home in 1965, which he still owns. It's now shaded by a lot of trees hidden from the road. We saw a place out in the country where The Beatles performed for the first time in their tailored matching suits. We walked on Hope Street, the site of two Cathedrals and famous for the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall, as well as The Liverpool College of Art, where John studied. Leaving there we went to Penny Lane but couldn't find the street sign because someone is always damaging or stealing it! We found the roundabout and stopped to take a photo with John Lennon's Imagine peace statue, saw the barber shop, and tried to find the firehouse. We saw St. Silas, Ringo's grade school, and the beautiful red gate of Strawberry Field. We even went inside, where we stood on the outdoor band shell and sang "Strawberry Field Forever." There's some great video footage of our tour group performing there. We visited the Philharmonic pub, where Paul played a gig, before joining James Corden in an episode of "Carpool" Karaoke.



Then we went to St. Peter's Woolton Church, where John and Paul met for the first time, and across the street to the church cemetery where we viewed the headstone for Eleanor Rigby and her family.

We arrived at the Casbah Coffee Club, located in the home of Roag Best. We had a private audience with Roag, Pete's brother. He gave a fascinating 20-minute talk about the history of the club, started by his mom, Mona, so

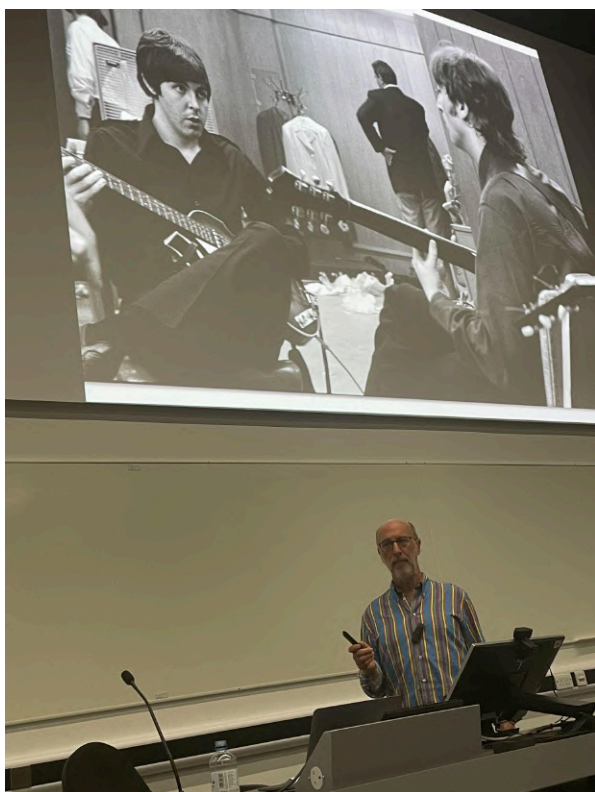
her son Pete would have a place to play the drums in the band with John, Paul and George. We toured the basement rooms painted by The Beatles with rainbows, dragons, stars, and a spider web. What a day!



Back at our hotels, we freshened up before meeting up later as a group to walk to the Philharmonic Hall. There, a gala concert was opened by Hal Bruce, singing and playing guitar. He was followed by the Dutch group, The Analogues, and then guitarist Lawrence Juber, formerly of Paul McCartney & Wings, performed. After the concert, some of the members went to one of the Beatleweek after-parties, while others crashed for the night.

Saturday 8/26/2023

Another full breakfast and a sunny day. We walked to the John and Yoko Center for the Performing Arts. The events started with a concert by Hips, a girl-group from Japan who did a great job singing Beatles songs in English even though they don't speak the language at all! They were followed by McDonalds Farm from Scotland and She's Leaving Home from Finland. Mark Lewisohn, Beatle historian and author of multiple books on The Beatles, presented his one man powerpoint show.



In the evening we settled into our up-front seats for a concert by the incredible American tribute band, The Fab Four. They were great, as always. Again, some continued their night with the Beatleweek after-party. Most of our group went to our rooms for some sleep.



Sunday 8/27/2023



Laurence Juber and Charles F. Rosenay!!! at the Convention

Sunday was the International Beatles Convention at the Adelphi Hotel Ballroom. It was an all-day extravaganza with multiple vendors from around the world selling collectibles, clothing, records, posters, art, jewelry, and lots of unique memorabilia as well as books, including one by our tour-host Charles!!! It's titled "The Book of Top 10 Beatles Lists," and it's Beatle-ful! Charles and Wings guitarist Lawrence Juber were speakers on the interview stage, videos were shown on large screens, and bands played. Laurence Juber has a chapter in Charles!!!'s book.

Some of us left the convention for a while, and we explored the city.



On the main convention stage, before a live set from the Mexican Beatles Band, The Beagles, Charles!!! came onstage to help induct his colleague, Ricardo Calderon, into the Beatleweek Hall of Fame.



The 2023 Liverpool Beatles Convention
Marketplace/Vendor Ballroom.
Photo by Ken Ambrose

We stopped into the Grapes Pub on Mathew Street, often frequented by The Beatles, The Museum of Liverpool at the Pier Head, The Beatles Story at Albert Docks, and the Liverpool Beatles Museum, on Mathew Street, owned and operated by Roag Best. Some had dinner in the restaurant at the Hard Days Night Hotel.

Monday 8/28/2023

Today we took a tour of John's (Mendips) and Paul's (Forthlin) childhood homes. We met at Speke Hall to board a shuttle bus that would bring us to the homes where the tour guides knew everything about the home and the boys who lived there. John's home with his Aunt Mimi was well manicured with bushes and flowers, and was considered posh by Paul. It had beautiful stained-glass windows, but simple furniture of the time. We saw the front enclosed entrance where John and Paul would play guitar, practice, and sing because they loved the acoustics of the small space. No one lives there now. Yoko donated the house to the National Trust which maintains the home and gives tours. Paul's home was smaller, nothing in the house is original furnishings, having been redecorated by a previous owner, but years later recreated to reflect the 1950s using photos taken by Paul's brother Michael. The woman giving the tour was an old classmate of Paul's, but admitted to having a crush on George. This house is now also maintained by the National Trust.

Tuesday 8/29/2023

Today some others took the childhood home tours, but most spent the day visiting the museums. Some opted to enjoy a relaxing day to walk around Liverpool, shop, eat, and see more of the city.

In the evening, we all walked together to the Cavern Club, where we heard the Shakers sing 50s and 60s rock and roll songs, followed by The Batles who sang Beatle songs. In the other room, The Beagles were rocking the Cavern Stage.



We can only imagine how much fun it must have been to see The Beatles at the Cavern Club before they became world famous. What a great way to end our tour! So many artists have played there including The Rolling Stones, The Who, The Kinks, Rod Stewart, Chuck Berry, Herman's Hermits, Queen, and, more recently, Adele. How lucky are the people of Liverpool?



Inside the Cavern Club.
Photo Courtesy Rhonda Kellam.

Outside of the Cavern on Mathew Street were statues of Cilla Black and John Lennon, and we stopped to take more photos.

Wednesday 8/30/2023

One more buffet breakfast and we are once again back on the coach, heading back to the airport.

It had been an awesome week, but impossible to pick just one favorite experience, but I'm sure high on the list was our time at Abbey Road Studios, The Casbah, The Cavern, and the Convention. We made new friends this week

and had an incredible time, in what was definitely a bucket list vacation. We all shared some wonderful memories of our time in London and Liverpool thanks to Charles Rosenay!!! And Rene, thanks for the memories, we were honored to be with you on your last tour and we learned so much from you.

NOTE: After many years of leading tours, Rene Van Haarlem joined his heroes John Lennon and George Harrison. He was the force behind the Dutch Beatles Conventions and edited the Beatles fan magazine “Beatles Unlimited” for decades. He was excited as any of us to return back inside Abbey Road Studios. This tour report is dedicated to his memory.



Photo (center) by Nancy Davis

OVERVIEW by JIM McDADE FROM ABBEY ROAD TO PENNY LANE: AN UNFORGETTABLE “Magical History Tour 2023”

The Beatles are still the primary cultural and artistic touchstone for generations of fans and professional performers who at some point in their lives have variously found joy, solace, beauty, personal relevance, epiphanies, or some other sort of fulfilling feeling, or cherished meaning in the lyrics, melodies, and stories in the artistic expressions and true-life experiences of the members of the greatest and most creative musical group in history. For many others the satisfaction and fulfillment that they found in their personal **Beatles** experience had nothing to do with higher philosophical meanings or powerful messages. For the, it's just about the rip-roaring fun, the high energy, and the happy groove of what we can still justifiably refer to as *Beatlemania*.

There are also the special places that we remember from The **Beatles**' own songs and movies, as well as the many **Beatles**-centric television programs, news accounts, and the literally thousands of biographical books, and manuscripts when we look back at our years of following the story of the greatest band in history. Those memories are precious, but there's nothing like actually going to those places and walking in the very footsteps of John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, Ringo Starr, Brian Epstein, and all of the other people who were part of the truly miraculous and magical story of the Beatles. This brief summary of when host and guide Charles Rosenay!!! and his crew of *Beatles* history experts like the incomparable Rene van Haarlem and Roag Best guided and entertained a happy troop of enthusiastic Beatles fans on a comprehensive “*Magical History Tour 2023*” through all of those special places that most **Beatles** fans have been to in their dreams on many a night.

The instantly recognizable names of those places that we visited in Liverpool, London, and environs have become a part of world lore and cultural history. Places like Penny Lane, Strawberry Fields, the Cavern Club, the Casbah, Menlove Avenue, the Merseyside Ferry Dock, Mendips, Forthlin Road, St. Peter's Church where John and Paul met, the iconic Abbey Road street crossing, EMI Abbey Road Studios, the

former Apple headquarters building where the rooftop Beatles concert was performed, Twickenham Studios, the train station from **the A Hard Day's Night** motion picture, and other places where scenes from that first black & white movie and also **Help!** were filmed.

It is no exaggeration to say that the climactic moment for our 2023 *Magical History Tour* entourage was the opportunity to not only go inside of the EMI Abbey Road Studio #2 where The **Beatles**, **Pink Floyd**, **The Zombies**, and many of the world's great artists of today recorded, but we also performed together as the backing chorus for new recordings by the fabulous Mexican **Beatles** cover band, **The Beagles!** It's very, very hard to top the special privilege of just having that Abbey Road Studios session opportunity, but the excitement meter went off the scale when Bob Jackson of **Badfinger** fame was not only kind enough to join us and sing along in the big studio at Abbey Road, he sat down at one of the grand pianos after the recording of our Beatles classics was completed there and led us all in an impromptu singalong of **Badfinger** and **Beatles** hits!

No **Beatles** celebration event is complete without going to some performance venues to hear great tribute performances. *Magical History Tour 2023* provided the ultimate opportunity to take in almost around the clock live Beatles and Merseyside music performances by more than 70 premium tribute bands from all around the planet. From the very danceable early and simplest Merseybeat pop songs to the mind-blowing sophistication of studio production masterpieces during the *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* and *Abbey Road Beatles* sessions, the visiting and local tribute bands performed accurate and faithful performances of the music in venues that were very familiar to the Beatles themselves. The musical menu of offerings included live Liverpool Philharmonic Hall performances by the world's two preeminent **Beatles** tribute bands, The **Fab Four** from America, as well as the astonishing Dutch group, **The Analogues**, and the former Paul McCartney and Wings virtuoso guitarist, **Lawrence Juber**. The special night at the Liverpool Cavern Club on August 29th began at 8:00 PM was a fitting close to an incredible Beatles experience like non other. A highlight of the evening was **The Shakers** high energy recreation of the full gamut of Mersey Sound music that was all the rage inside the Cavern as well as in the hottest Hamburg, Germany clubs during the first half of the 1960s.

We only missed a single event that was included in our *Magical History Tour 2023* packet. We'll catch that "UNI Have Memories" afternoon of live music, interviews, and films next time.

There is so much to tell about that "magical" week. One could easily write a couple of hundred pages detailing the total *Magical History Tour 2023* experience and still leave out a lot of wonderful experiences. The experience is somewhat customizable and there are so many options. My wife and I even carved out an afternoon to enjoy visiting with some dear Liverpoolian friends during the week. I estimate that there was at least 72-hours or more worth of incredible optional opportunities to experience all of the live music, history, places, and stuff within several miles of our hotel room in London and apartment in Liverpool.



