

Choirs Ontario's Newsletter

January 2015 | Volume 43, Issue 2

# Dynamic

www.choirsonario.org



CANADIAN  
MILITARY  
 *Wives Choir*



# CHOIRS ONTARIO

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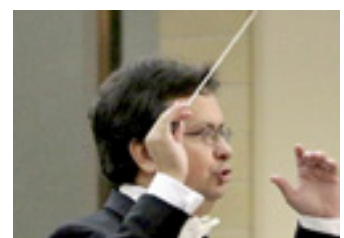
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Linda T. Cooke

# Editor's Letter

Happy 2015 to all our Dynamic readers! I hope you enjoyed a warm and wonderful Christmas holiday.

Over the past few weeks, I was moved by your overwhelming response to our request for submissions to the January issue. As I reflected on your stories and photos, I was reminded again of the unique and sweeping power of the human voice, in speech and in song. In its most positive tone, the human voice lets us express understanding, comfort, love, support, commitment, and many other deep human emotions. When our voices are joined in the fellowship of song, this positive power is multiplied many times. A choir gives us a place to blend in voice and in spirit.

For these reasons, I chose the theme of **harmony** for this issue, which captures the spirit of community, connection, and belonging expressed in the wonderful articles you submitted. This thread runs through all your stories – choirs whose members support and encourage one another, reach out to their communities, engage collaboratively with other musical groups, support charities and youth programs, promote young singers, and inspire audiences. Bravo to all of you!

We've introduced a new feature, **From The Maestro**, where conductors can discuss various choir issues from "behind the baton." In this issue, Charles Demuynck, artistic director of the Masterworks of Oakville choir, offers insights on presenting music that challenges performers and audiences.

You'll also find some important announcements from Choirs Ontario about submitting applications for this year's Ontario Youth Choir, the 2015 Presidents' Leadership Award, and Board vacancies.

The deadline for submitting material for our next issue is March 15. Hope to hear from you!  
[editor@choirsontario.org](mailto:editor@choirsontario.org)



Rachel Rensink-Hoff

# President's Message

I hope that all of you had some opportunity to experience the peace and joy of the holiday season and that you are feeling refreshed and energized for 2015.

In reading through the pages that follow, you will see that Ontario's choral community is indeed alive and well! Choirs across our province are creatively engaging with their communities in all kinds of interesting and exciting ways. We at Choirs Ontario are pleased to serve as a "hub" of that activity! It is our continued mission to engage the diversity of choral singing throughout Ontario and to foster a meaningful sense of community and belonging for all choral singers and conductors. As we learn and grow in our efforts, we welcome your feedback and ask that you reach out to us and tell us how we can better serve our membership.

Just before Christmas, Choirs Ontario hosted its second annual 'Sing Ontario,' and it was a tremendous success! Thanks to Diane Murray-Charret, board member and coordinator of 'Sing Ontario,' for writing the enclosed article about this exciting event. Thanks also to the adjudicators and clinicians for helping us launch this new and important program. Stay tuned for 2015 - 16 'Sing Ontario' plans.

Within the new few weeks, the Ontario Youth Choir recruitment process will be ramping up, and we are thrilled to welcome Bob Anderson to the podium this year! This year, OYC will be held at Western University in London, Ontario. Please help spread the word and let your young singers know about this fantastic program.

Enjoy browsing through this issue of Dynamic, and best wishes to all of you for 2015. May the months that lie ahead bring you much health and happiness.



# Ontario Youth Choir 2015 Auditions

## Choirs Ontario is now accepting applications for the 2015 OYC

The Ontario Youth Choir (OYC) provides a unique opportunity for young singers from across Ontario to work with some of Canada's outstanding choral leaders. Every summer, 40 talented singers are selected to participate in OYC's exceptional choral experience. The choristers are challenged with the finest choral repertoire while participating in an exciting program of rehearsals, masterclasses and voice lessons. OYC is an unforgettable experience -- fun, friendship, and exceptional training with extraordinary professionals!



This year the choir will spend ten memorable days together under the inspired leadership of acclaimed conductor, **Bob Anderson**. Mr. Anderson conducts the award winning Cawthra Park Chamber Choir and Cawthra Park's 300 voice concert choir, The Ritz. The Chamber Choir has twice been awarded first place in the mixed-voice Youth Choir category at national choral competitions sponsored by the CBC and by Choral Canada. They have been featured at both the Ontario Vocal Festival and at Musicfest Canada and have performed with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Cirque du Soleil, the Elmer Iseler Singers, The Mississauga Festival Choir, The MacMillan Singers, at Festival 500, and at the Toronto Vocal Arts Festival. In 2013 they performed at the Air Canada Centre in Toronto with The Rolling Stones!

OYC takes place from Friday, August 14 to Sunday, August 23, 2015. The choir will reside and train at the Don Wright Faculty of Music, Western University in London, before embarking on a three-concert tour which will conclude in Toronto for a final performance on August 23, 2015.

There are now over 1,400 OYC alumni who continue to enrich their communities as choristers, conductors, accompanists, composers, educators, and soloists. Notable alumni include Juno award-winning soprano Karina Gauvin; celebrated countertenors Daniel Taylor and Matthew White; tenor Colin Ainsworth; acclaimed soprano Adrienne Pieczonka; baritone Gerald Finley; conductors John Barron and Robert Cooper; and composers Nancy Telfer and Stephanie Martin.

**Eligibility:** singers must have been born between August 23, 1991 and August 14, 1999.

**Applications:** available at [www.choirsontario.org](http://www.choirsontario.org)

**Application deadline:** February 27, 2015.

**Auditions:** held during March, 2015.

# CHOIRS ONTARIO

## President's Leadership Award, 2015



Do you know a choral music supporter -- an executive director, administrator, volunteer, corporate sponsor, or philanthropist -- who has advanced the role of choral music in his/her community for five or more years?

If you would like to nominate such an individual for the Choirs Ontario 2015 President's Leadership Award, go to [www.choirsontario.org/presidentsleadershipaward.html](http://www.choirsontario.org/presidentsleadershipaward.html) for more information and an application form.

**The deadline for nominations is May 29, 2015.**

## Choirs Ontario 2015-16 Board Vacancies and President Elect Nominations

Choirs Ontario is seeking nominations for election to the Board of Directors at its Annual General Meeting, June 6, 2015.

The 2015-2016 Board has openings for three new Directors, one of which is the position of **President Elect**. The President Elect provides assistance to the President and becomes familiar with the responsibilities of the Presidency in preparation for assuming the role of President.

**Deadline for receipt of all nominations is 5:00 pm, on Friday, May 29, 2015.**

For more information on how to submit a nomination, the voting process, and the responsibilities/qualifications of the President Elect position: [www.choirsontario.org](http://www.choirsontario.org) or email the Executive Director, Elizabeth Shannon, at [eshannon@choirsontario.org](mailto:eshannon@choirsontario.org)



# R.A.M. Koor (Estonian National Male Choir) Concert Tour

**May 23** Dominion Chalmers United Church **Ottawa** **May 24** All Saints Anglican Church **Peterborough**

**May 27** Saint Joseph's Roman Catholic Church **Hamilton** **May 28** Christ Church Deer Park **Toronto**

**May 30** Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra and Toronto Estonian Mens' Choir P.C. Ho Theatre **Scarborough**

**May 31** Bach Festival of Canada Trivitt Memorial Church **Exeter\*** **May 31** Guelph Youth Music Centre **Guelph\***

*All performances at 8pm except for \*Exeter 2pm and \*Guelph 7:30pm*

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ESTONIAN FOUNDATION OF CANADA  
EESTI SIHTKAPITAL KANADAS

In cooperation with Choirs Ontario, R.A.M. Koor (Estonian National Male Choir), now celebrating its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary, will present concerts and workshops in several Ontario cities from May 20 - June 1, 2015. This will be the choir's first visit to Canada in 20 years. During its anniversary season the choir will also perform at several venues in Estonia and in Israel, France, and Germany.

Established in 1944 by Gustav Ernesaks, a founding father of choral music in Estonia, the group originally performed a cappella but is now a renowned professional choir noted for its renditions of large-scale choral works. In 2004, R.A.M. Koor won a prestigious Grammy Award for Choral Music, and has recorded regularly with Deutsche Grammophon, Sony, Finlandia, Alba Records, Virgin Classics, and GB Records.

Dates and locations for the choir's Ontario concerts are shown in the poster. R.A.M. Koor's current conductor, Mikk Üleoja, will be presenting a series of workshops in Ottawa and Toronto for boys and young male singers, and an all-ages session in Peterborough. A masterclass on conducting techniques for men's choruses will be held in Toronto. Although this session will be limited to four active conductors selected by competition, the public and auditing conductors will be welcome.

For more information about the Estonian National Male Choir (R.A.M. Koor), visit:  
[www.concert.ee/estonian-national-male-choir](http://www.concert.ee/estonian-national-male-choir)

Keep watching the Choirs Ontario website for upcoming details on this tour: [www.choirsontario.org](http://www.choirsontario.org)

CANADIAN  
MILITARY  
 *Wives Choir*

Debbie Reid



**T**he idea of forming the Canadian Military Wives Choir (CMWC) was first suggested in July 2013, when founding member and now president, Sue Palmer, moved from the UK to Stittsville after her husband joined the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Sue had been part of a British Military Wives Choir in the UK, a phenomenon that began in 2011 with the BBC documentary television series, 'The Choir: Military Wives,' with Gareth Malone. The show was a huge success that resulted in numerous high-profile performances and then an album. There are now about 80 Military Wives Choirs across the British Forces network.

Sue is quick to point out that, "Through all that glitz and glamour, I can genuinely say that the most important aspect of being a member of the choir was the friendship and the incredibly strong support network that built up among the members, not just within our own choir, but in

the Military Wives Choir movement as a whole." It was with this resounding success in mind that Sue wanted to start a choir here in Canada.

"We got started by putting out feelers on a military spouses Facebook page to gauge whether there was any interest in setting one up over here," Sue recalls.

Shortly after the strong response to the Facebook page, Sue was put in touch with Allison Houston, the choir's current musical director, who generously donated her time while the choir was getting established.

The Canadian Military Wives Choir was formed in the fall of 2013. It's a three-part women's choir, and all members are partners of active military personnel or serving Canadian Forces members. The choir meets weekly to sing, make new friends, and have fun. No musical experience is necessary, and there are no auditions.



The CMWC is a creative, fun-filled way for women to support one another through difficult periods and to celebrate one another's successes and good times – all while singing! One member, Sonia, describes the choir as “a big family... a sisterhood. The love of music is only the beginning, as we share in challenges and blessings that we face, all the while knowing we have our choir family behind us. We have seen each other through hard times, welcomed a new baby, laughed together, cried together, and held each other up. The choir is a family of amazing women with no limits.”

The choir performed at local Remembrance Day services in 2013, just a few weeks after their first rehearsal. During their successful inaugural year the membership grew from 14 military spouses at the first rehearsal to 30 members by the end of the season. The choir performed on the local CTV Breakfast Show, on CBC radio, and in the Senate Chamber on the National Day of Honour marking the end of Canada's mission in Afghanistan. They also sang at several local events, and ended their first season with a showcase concert for friends and family as a way to say “thank you” for their enduring support.



This fall, the choir welcomed 20 new women, bringing its membership to 51. Some of the CMWC's recent highlights include a TV appearance on CTV's Regional Contact, a 100th birthday celebration for a war bride, a school Remembrance Day service, and a host of Christmas events, including a performance in the Rotunda on Parliament Hill.

The Canadian Military Wives Choir wrapped up a very busy fall and Christmas season with five performances in October and November, and participation in six different events in

Ottawa within the first three weeks of December! The choir has seen tremendous growth in numbers and in its reputation in the Ottawa area and across the province.

The CMWC is now focusing on preparations for what will be its largest live performance yet -- the Canadian International Military Tattoo in Hamilton on May 30 - 31, 2015. The choir is looking forward to participating in this event and is actively fundraising to help finance the estimated \$7,000 transportation costs to Hamilton.

The CMWC's vision is that similar choirs will be formed across Canada until one exists on every military base. Then, as women move to new postings with their partners, there will be a choir family waiting to welcome them -- an instant group of friends who share not only a love of singing, but also an understanding of the unique lifestyle of military families. The CMWC has already been contacted by several women connected to different military bases around the country (including other parts of Ontario), who want to form Military Wives Choirs in their own communities.



A common challenge facing potential new choirs, however, is finding the support and assistance of a suitable musical director. If anyone can offer advice or assistance in this area, or wants to find out more about the choir, please visit the CMWC website at: [www.canadianmilitarywiveschoir.ca](http://www.canadianmilitarywiveschoir.ca)

**Debbie Reid** is one of the original members of the CMWC and mother to its first 'choir baby.' British born and bred, she made Canada her home five years ago. Married to a Naval Officer and mother to two wonderful children, she is thoroughly enjoying the adventure and challenge of promoting the CMWC movement across Canada.



# SingOntario! Festival: Fall, 2014

Diane Murray-Charrett

## CHOIRS ONTARIO

offering an exciting range of choir performances, open clinics, and workshops.

The Saturday event welcomed more than 250 choristers and conductors who participated in a non-

was pleased to present its second 'SingOntario!' festival in Toronto on the weekend of November 15 - 16,

one of the adjudicators provided feedback to the choir in an engaging workshop session. The participating singers also had an opportunity to work with Jennifer Swan in a 'Bodyworks' session. Jennifer presented her unique approach to body alignment, breathing, and connecting the body to the sound in rehearsals and performance. Her intriguing workshop provided singers with a new perspective on breathing and singing.



competitive atmosphere of music sharing and music making. A wide selection of

choirs joined us for the day, covering all ages and levels of experience -- Chorus Niagara Children's Choir, Gaudeamus Youth Choir, Windsor Essex Youth Choir, Hamilton District Christian High School, Cawthra Park Secondary School Chamber Choir, Cantala Women's Choir, Monday Morning Singers, Jubilate, County Town Singers, and the Toronto Cantata Chorus.

Each choir performed for guest adjudicators Brenda Uchamaru, Bob Cooper, and Mark Sirett, after which

The day culminated in an evening concert which was an excellent representation of Ontario's eclectic and thriving choral community. After each choir performed, the concert ended with Mark Sirett conducting a mass choir in the round singing two of his own arrangements. This was a highlight for many of the participating choristers, and a moving experience for the audience who were surrounded by singers performing *Go Lassie, Go* and *Where Have All the Flowers Gone?*

Day two of the festival was filled with workshops for conductors and singers. We offered topics as varied as IPA for choirs, the adolescent singer, finding common

ground between choral and solo singing, high school male singers, creative warm-ups, online marketing strategies, and a 'Bodyworks' session for conductors.

We wish to thank all our presenters and conductors for sharing their knowledge and expertise with the choral community during this enriching weekend: Jennifer Swan, Mark Sirett, Bob Cooper, Brenda Uchimar, Darryl Edwards, Elise Bradley, James Pinhorn, and Anne Longmore.

Plans are already underway for the 'SingOntario!' 2015 festival. We hope you will join us!

[www.choirsontario.org/SINGOntario.page](http://www.choirsontario.org/SINGOntario.page)



**Diane Murray-Charrett**, Coordinator of SingOntario and Secretary for Choirs Ontario Board of Directors, has spent a large part of the past 20 years working with award-winning choral groups of all ages. She is currently Founding Conductor of the Gaudeamus Choirs of Halton Hills and a music specialist in the Halton District School Board.



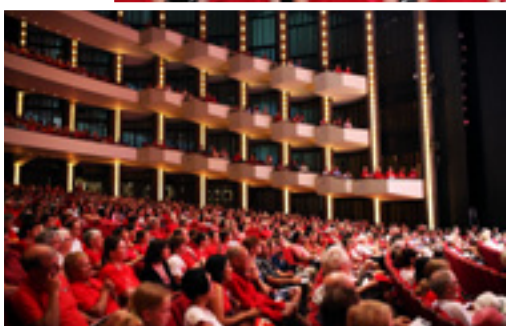


**A**fter reading about the Quebec referendum to separate from Canada in 1995, Ottawa residents Donald and Lois Harper felt that something must be done to confirm that Canadians shared many interests and concerns despite geographic, linguistic, and cultural differences, and should remain one nation. They decided that creating an annual national choral festival in Canada's capital city would focus strong attention on Canadian unity.

And thus Unisong (an acronym of 'united in song') was born, bringing together choirs from across the country to network, explore Ottawa, participate in a variety of small concerts under different conductors, and celebrate Canada Day with a massed choir concert.

Some aspects of Unisong have not changed. It is still an annual event held in Ottawa, aimed at creating unity and encouraging networking and friendships among choristers from across the country; it continues to focus on showcasing a cross-section of Canadian repertoire, both old and new; and its main goal is still to show Canadian choristers from many provinces and territories that all Canadians share common interests, concerns, and experiences. In terms of changes, the festival now involves adult and auditioned choirs in order to include male voices and en-

large the scope of repertoire; a long-term partnership has been formed with the National Arts Centre for the presentation of the mass choir concert on Canada Day; and the festival's planning team has been expanded to include a number of choral artists.



2016 marks 20 proud years of Unisong in Ottawa! We look forward to new and previous attendees participating in the 2016 festival, which will be conducted by former Unisong conductor, Robert Cooper, and the festival's Artistic Director Emeritus, Barbara Clark. Please share stories and photos of your Unisong experiences over the years ([info@unisong.ca](mailto:info@unisong.ca)), and we'll include many of them in the 2016 Unisong yearbook.

For more information, please visit [www.unisong.ca](http://www.unisong.ca)



**Carla Ala-Kantti** is an events manager who recruits for and coordinates the annual Unisong choir festival in Ottawa.



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# Choirs in the Trenches: 1914 Christmas Truce

Linda Crawford

Sometimes it can be really exciting to open your email! In early December I received an email from Linda Brand, Community Programmes Interpretation Officer at the Canada Aviation and Space Museum. Linda and her team came up with a fantastic idea that I want to share with the Choirs Ontario network. It's an example of how some museums devise fresh and creative ways to build connections with their communities. It also shows how choirs can connect with their local institutions and reach out to new audiences.

During Christmas week 2014, the Canada Aviation and Space Museum commemorated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the famous WWI Christmas Truce of 1914. During that brief but momentous truce in France, the 'no man's land' between the German and Allied Forces armies was briefly transformed into a meeting ground for soldiers from both sides.

On Christmas Eve 1914, homesick German troops spontaneously began to sing *Stille Nacht*. The allied troops heard the familiar carol, and replied with *Adeste Fideles*. Other carols were shared back and forth. The power of the music prompted a few courageous men to climb out of their trenches, and cross the 'no man's land' to meet soldiers on the other side. They shook hands, chatted, and shared food and drink. The next day, thousands of troops exchanged photographs, souvenirs, and small gifts; they shared bully beef, cigarettes, jam, sausage, chocolate, and drink, and engaged in other activities such as soccer. More than 100,000 soldiers participated in the 1914 Truce. It was a symbolic moment of peace and humanity in the midst of a violent period of human history.

To commemorate this event, the Museum invited choirs from all over the National Capital Region to participate in a series of re-enactments at the Museum by singing *Stille Nacht*, *Adeste Fideles*, and other traditional carols. Each day during the Christmas holidays, two different choirs led the singing: one representing the German troops, and the other, the Allied forces. The Museum prepared a makeshift 'no man's land' in the middle of the great hall. Museum visitors were invited to join the choirs from both sides of the trenches, then emerge to shake hands with the 'enemy,' exchange small gifts (supplied by the embassies of the countries involved in the 1914 event), and play an impromptu soccer game!

What a wonderful idea for a choir sing-out! It was a great opportunity for all three of my choirs (the junior, teen,

and adult ensembles of the Goulbourn Jubilee Singers) to experience this historic anniversary through music. I hope that other museums and institutions will hear about this creative bit of programming and be inspired to think outside the box. Partnerships like this are great for all parties involved!

To read more and see a video of the event, please visit: <http://is.gd/qRPZ71>



**Linda Crawford** directs the Goulbourn Jubilee Singers (GJS), Ottawa -- three non-auditioned choral ensembles (children, teens, and adults). In 2014, the GJS released their first recording, *Why We Sing*, featuring repertoire that highlights the many reasons why people participate in choirs.



# Music Director Leads Three Choirs

Rudy Hartman



Over the past 30 years, John Wervers has established and conducted numerous choral and instrumental ensembles in churches, communities, and schools. His philosophy is that “with passion and enthusiasm, great things can be accomplished in the performing arts. With average musical abilities, a common goal, and extraordinary perseverance, we can make beautiful music together. Sharing the joy of making live music is transformational. It does something good for the soul.”

In 2014, John became the music director of three community choirs: Sound Investment Community Choir (Collingwood), New Tecumseth Singers (Alliston), and Dufferin Concert Singers (Orangeville). In November and December, the three choirs combined to present concerts in each of their communities. They performed Pergolesi’s *Magnificat*, an assortment of Rutter’s Christmas music, and popular carols. All three concerts were sold out in advance, an impressive indication of how successfully these choirs have promoted choral music in these small communities.

John believes strongly in involving local singers and instrumentalists in his concerts, giving them the opportunity to perform for their families and friends. He also actively encourages audience participation, and always includes songs which the audience can sing with the choir.

The Collingwood concert featured soloists Melissa McInnes and Amanda Bryce, as well as clarinetist Sean Derragh, violinist Susan Connolly, flautist Kim Stevenson, the Dufferin Brass, and accompanist Keiko Yoden-Kuepfer. The highlight of the concert was the appearance of the children’s choir, The Little Sound Investors, conducted by Melissa McInnes.



The Alliston concert showcased local soloists Katie Thurman, Olivia Cacciola, and Mark Gagnon. The Banting Memorial High School Glee Club and Brass Ensemble gave fine performances. Guest musicians Susan Connolly, Kim Stevenson, and Sean Derragh joined the assembled choristers, and the Dufferin Trumpeters added to the joyous spirit. Accompanist Louise Gallagher, another Alliston local, supported the ensemble with her keyboard expertise.

In the final concert, held in Orangeville, local soloists Hannah Shelton Campbell, Ashley Duncan, Cara Cameron, and Heidi Allen, along with guest musicians Kim Stevenson and Sean Derragh, heightened the sense of community fellowship and Christmas spirit with their music-making. Violinist Eleanor Matter, The Dufferin Brass, pianist Tanya Fenton, and the Montgomery Village P.S. Children’s Choir led by their director, Kim Stevenson, joined in the celebratory performance

For more about John Wervers, please visit: <http://is.gd/hXtgj6>



**Rudy Hartmann** has a B.A. in Music (vocal performance) and was active in the Toronto choral scene during the 1970’s - 80’s. After moving to Grey County, he continued singing in various choral groups and as a soloist.

# From The “Maestro”

## Programming Challenging Music: “Open Your Mind”

Charles Demuyck



**W**e live in a consumer society, and the influence of consumerism on music has been profound. The desire to give customers exactly what they want drives the business world. To program music that some people will not immediately enjoy is viewed by many conductors as pure foolishness. In this mindset, why would I program a Masterworks of Oakville concert comprised of Poulenc’s *Gloria*, Stravinsky’s *Symphony of Psalms*, and my own orchestral composition, *Alerion*?

The short answer is that “I believe in Art.” I feel that sometimes it’s necessary to present music that challenges both performers and audience -- music that enriches and engages, as well as entertains. The difference between Art and Entertainment is a much-discussed question. Clearly the best Art is also entertaining, and the best forms of Entertainment have Artistic qualities. The line between the two can be fuzzy, and I prefer to view them on a continuum rather than as opposite extremes. Simply put, I feel that a work of Art is a cultural product that challenges its audience in some way. Handel’s *Messiah* is clearly entertaining, but it contains fugues that challenge the listener with four-part counterpoint.

For these reasons, I programmed Stravinsky’s *Symphony of Psalms* as part of Masterworks of Oakville’s May concert, fully aware that there would be many challenges involved -- for me, for the choristers and musicians, and for the audience. I use *Symphony of Psalms* as my example of how I meet such challenges, but these suggestions apply whenever you take your choir out of its comfort zone.

- Believe deeply in the music you’re doing or you’ll never persuade others to come on board.
- Convince your board of directors, especially those from business backgrounds. You need business people on your board to help your group run efficiently, but board members must understand the important difference between an artistic group that’s a registered charity and a for-profit business. The government gives us charitable status because our music is deemed to be “of educational value to the public.” As registered artistic charities we collect money in order to make music -- our priority is not just to make a profit from box-office sales.. This crucial distinction must be made perfectly clear to the board. This kind of project has a higher risk of losing money and should not be attempted if your group is in desperate financial straits.
- Next comes the choir. Here’s an anecdote from a choir member in the Masterworks of Oakville chorus: “I like to start working on next season’s music before the current season ends. When I listened to Stravinsky’s *Symphony of Psalms*, I thought it was awful. I felt like I was being screamed at. The prospect of listening to it repeatedly in order to learn it was very discouraging. I played it for my 21 year-old son, confident that he would agree with me. But after he heard the first movement, he said, ‘I don’t understand what your problem is - this is wonderful music. In fact, this is the type of music that’s played in video games.’ When I protested, he said one more thing that put me in my place: ‘Mom, you need to open your mind.’ Well, I have. After listening to it several times, I can now see how beautiful it really is. Since then, I’ve shared my story with others in the choir and the ‘open your mind’ statement has resonated with them too.”

I had her tell this story to the choir when rehearsals began in January. I also presented a PowerPoint show connecting Stravinsky’s various musical styles and Picasso’s art, in order to help the choir understand the artistic background of these two geniuses. I plan to give a PowerPoint show of Picasso’s works when we perform the Stravinsky, which, in my opinion, will help the audience appreciate a work of great art. (...continued p. 16)





- Our final challenge is the audience. You probably have many people in your regular Bach-and-Handel-loving audience who have never heard a piece like *Symphony of Psalms* and aren't naturally inclined to explore -- even the name "Stravinsky" may scare them off. You should make every effort to educate and entice them to appreciate a complex and sophisticated work in a style that may be unfamiliar to them.

Use every means at your disposal to communicate what a great work this is, what it means, why it is important, and the artistic connections that surround it. In most groups the choristers are the major engine of ticket sales. Encourage them to sell to the young people they know: "This is a great piece that sounds like video game music. You're going to love it!" Once younger people realize that there's merit in what you do and that you perform music that appeals to them, you may be able to convince them to come back for "the old stuff."

Remember that this genre of music does have an audience. Thousands attend the Toronto Symphony's 'New Creations Festival' concerts who would not be interested in *Messiah*, and vice versa. The trick is finding the people in your community interested in cutting-edge music that pushes the envelope. Use your choir's personal connections to spin it this way, and consider cross-marketing with groups who make the avant-garde their "meat and potatoes."

I believe that Art for Art's sake is one of life's richest and most rewarding realities. Programming challenging music may be an uphill battle, but the view from the top of the mountain is well worth the climb.



A native of Dawson Creek, B.C., **Charles Demuyck** holds a doctorate in conducting from the Hartt School, Hartford, Conn. He also has conducting degrees from the Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore, and the University of Toronto. Charles is best known to Oakville audiences as the music director of Masterworks of Oakville choir and the Oakville Chamber Orchestra. He is also an active composer, and his works have been performed in Canada and the USA. He recently received the Oakville Arts Council's 2014 Established Artist award.

## Amabile Youth Singers: 30 Years of Song!

Brenda Zadorsky

The Amabile Youth Singers (AYS) is one of four levels of auditioned choirs for girls and women within The Amabile Choirs of London, Canada. The AYS consists of experienced female choristers, ages 12 to 18.

This year represents a milestone for the AYS, as it celebrates 30 years of music-making in Canada and abroad. Although they have been recognized locally by earning the 2007, 2011, and 2014 Jack Richardson Award, as well as the London Music Award for best classical ensemble in 2005, the Amabile Youth Singers are no strangers to the national and international stage.

During the past 30 years, the choir has won four international competitions and 11 national competitions, including the CBC National Competition for Amateur Choirs, Youth Category and Best Performance of a Canadian Work.

The European Broadcasting Union's 'Let the People Sing' international choral competition, saw the AYS representing Canada by taking top prize. On their seventh European tour, to the 2013 International Choral Festival of Preveza in Greece, the Amabile Youth Singers added two gold medals

to their growing list of achievements, as well as a Special Award for Best Choir Overall.

Although the CD, *Ripple Effect*, celebrated the 25th anniversary of Amabile's founding, the Amabile Youth Singers are determined to recognize their 30th milestone with as much song as they can muster. In May, 2015 the choir welcomes all alumni to raise their voices in concert and rejoice in 30 years of collaboration, dedication, and song.

For more information about the Amabile Youth Singers, please visit: <http://www.amabile.ca/>



**Brenda Zadorsky** (B.Mus. Hons., B.Ed W.C.A.M.) is co-founder (1985) and artistic director of the Amabile Youth Singers. A recognized voice teacher, clinician, and adjudicator, Brenda is principal of the Zadorsky School of Music and has shepherded many students to music careers in Canada and abroad.





The Bach Music Festival of Canada was launched in Exeter, Ontario, in July, 2011 under my artistic direction. The inaugural Festival offered musicians and music lovers of every age a week of concerts, workshops, and master-classes celebrating the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, including a successful performance of the *B Minor Mass*.

It was apparent from the beginning that a resident professional chamber choir was necessary to solidify the presentation of Bach's masterpieces. The Gerald Fagan Singers were utilized for that purpose, and joined the 110-voice massed choir. After I retired from Fanshawe Chorus London and the Gerald Fagan Singers at the end of 2011-12, the Festival was without a resident chamber choir. So began the task of forming a new ensemble to perform independently and to be leaders at future Festival events.

Prerequisites for new chamber choir members included advanced sight-reading skills; experience in choral singing; ability to blend with the ensemble; and a commitment to come to rehearsals with music performance-ready. We affirmed that the chamber choir would give singers opportunities to perform challenging repertoire; that music would be distributed a month before the first rehearsal; that the number of rehearsals would be kept to a minimum; and that members would receive regular email updates.

This exciting "new kid on the block," the Bach Festival Chamber Choir, was launched in January, 2013 with 14 former Fagan Singers; by the spring of that year, membership had doubled. Members included former Ontario and National Youth Choir singers, conductors of school / community choirs, university music professors, church musicians, and emerging composers.

During 2013 and early 2014, we performed Bach cantatas, Moravian Service Hymns, and challenging contemporary compositions by such composers as Gjeilo, Sirett, Whitacre, Smallman, Emery, Nystedt, Stroope, Carriere, Marlene

Fagan, Healey, Holowitz, and Surti.

We will perform three times during the July, 2015 Bach Music Festival of Canada, and will participate as one of the Festival's Resident Ensembles in presenting the monumental *St. Matthew Passion* at the gala closing performance.

For more information, please visit <http://www.bachfestival.ca/>

**Gerald Fagan, O.Ont.**, known for his innovative programming, first appeared as a conductor in 1945, making 2015 his 70th year of performance. Over the decades, he has conducted virtually all the major works of the symphonic/choral repertoire, as well as countless chamber works for choir and orchestra. His latest adventure as artistic director of The Bach Music Festival of Canada allows him to work with the Bach Festival Chamber Choir, a new ensemble created with some of Ontario's finest singers.





The Canadian Men's Chorus (CMC) held its first composers' competition in September, funded by the Lloyd Car-Harris Foundation. Scott Christian, a Toronto musical director, composer, arranger, and pianist won the competition with his setting of Siegfried Sassoon's

World War I poem, *How To Die*. This composition was premiered on November 8 at the CMC concert, 'Honour: The Great War,' and was enthusiastically received by a capacity audience.



The CMC made its orchestral debut with the Stratford Symphony Orchestra in November.

Under the baton of Judith Yan, the chorus performed Bohuslav Martinu's 1939 composition, *Field Mass*, a Czech language work for baritone solo, choir, and orchestra. At that concert, the CMC also premiered a commissioned work by Chris Meyer. Entitled *Our Murray*, it commemorates the service and death of a WWI soldier from Stratford, with text from letters exchanged between Murray and his fiancée. CMC member David Ross performed the baritone solos in both works to great acclaim.

Also in November, the choir welcomed Christina Faye as its new collaborative pianist. She has held collaborative pianist positions at several major summer music programs. Currently she is the music director and organist at St. John's Dixie Anglican, as well as the accompanist for the Burlington Seniors Choir and the Training Choir 1 of the Toronto Children's Chorus.

The CMC participated in the November Fairmont Royal York Christmas Tree Lighting Celebration, benefiting the Children's Wish Foundation, and in December they were part of the LOFT Community Services Annual Holiday Concert, produced by Kelly Walker



In 2015, the CMC proudly continues its focus on the creation of new music with a commissioned work entitled, *When the Night Has Passed/Winter Wind*, by Anna Atkinson, Toronto singer, multi-instrumentalist, and composer. Anna and the CMC will premiere her new composition at the

'Canadian Women of Song' concert in February.

For more information about the CMC, please visit: [www.canadianmenschorus.ca/](http://www.canadianmenschorus.ca/)

**Arlene Jillard** joined the Canadian Men's Chorus in 2010 as Co-Founder, Founding Patron, and General Manager. A former secondary school teacher, she is also an ARCT (Honours Vocal Performance) with the Royal Conservatory of Music.





# Cantabile Chamber Singers: Update

Cheryll Chung

The Toronto-based Cantabile Chamber Singers (CCS) began its eighth season with 'Juxtapositions,' a mix of new music by Canadian, American, and English composers, featuring five world premieres. The performance also included music by CCS composer in-residence, Laura Silberberg, and Palestrina's exquisite Renaissance work, *Missa Papae Marcelli*.

At this concert, CCS debuted its first CD, *Chansons*, a compilation of music ranging from the Renaissance to compositions by living Canadian composers. The choir is excited to be working with Redshift Records and looks forward to 2015 when the album will be available digitally.

In addition to the regular season's activities, CCS participated in Toronto's Culture Days by performing at the city's premiere classical music venue, Koerner Hall. Founder and artistic director Cheryll Chung was interviewed by the Toronto Star, and the choir was highlighted in a promotional article about Culture Days leading up to the performance.

Most recently, CCS was invited to sing collaboratively with the Tallis Choir at the Sony Centre for the Canadian premiere of *Gladiator Live*. The choir worked in conjunction with American conductor, composer, and recording artist

Justin Freer, full professional orchestra, and soloist Clara Sanabras.

For more information about the Cantabile Chamber Singers, please visit: [www.cantabilechambersingers.com/](http://www.cantabilechambersingers.com/)



**Cheryll Chung** is a Toronto-based conductor, pianist, and teacher. She has traveled internationally to participate in conducting and music education conferences and workshops. She conducts and teaches in Toronto and believes in social outreach, promoting young emerging artists, and new music.



Photo by Richard J. Chung



The Canadian Orpheus Male Choir (COMC) has been active in the greater Hamilton area since 1977. At the beginning of its 2014-15 season, the “men who love to sing” brought Simon Irving, MA, FRCCO, on board as the new music director. Conductor Emeritus of the Guelph Symphony Orchestra, Simon is currently also director of music at Hamilton’s St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, and he performs in a piano-organ duo, ‘Four hands, Two Feet.’ Christine Chesebrough, a well-established violinist and music director/organist at Burlington’s Brant Hills Presbyterian Church in, was also welcomed as the COMC’s new accompanist.

Four honorary patrons were invited to join the COMC during the fall, lending the prestige of their names to the choir: Boris Brott, OC, OOnt, LLD, one of the most internationally recognized Canadian conductors and founder of the local Brott Music Festival; Brad Clark, a Hamiltonian, well respected for his years of service

plished pianist who accompanied the COMC at its 19th Annual Concert.

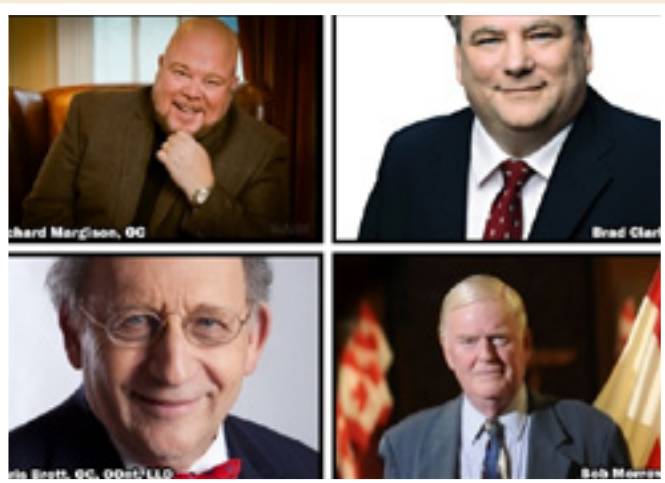


The choir launched the season with a successful fundraising concert for Most Blessed Sacrament Parish in Hamilton. Keeping up the momentum, the COMC hosted ‘Choirfest! 2014’ in Oakville, featuring five impressive choral groups; held a highly entertaining Spaghetti Dinner and Variety Show fundraiser in Burlington;

gave concerts in Barrie and Orillia; and sang as guest artists in Oakville’s ‘Circle of Harmony’ Christmas concerts.

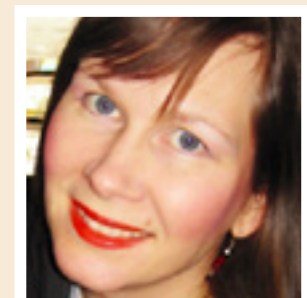
The COMC’s own Christmas concert, with special guests, The Blazing Fiddles, filled Hamilton’s Christ Church Cathedral with festive songs and toe-tapping music. Keith Thomas, COMC President, presented Jane Allison, Community Partnerships Manager for The Hamilton Spectator, with \$1,500 for their Summer Camp Fund. What a great note to end on -- and more splendid singing to come in 2015!

For more information, please visit: [www.comc.ca](http://www.comc.ca)



on City Council as well as in the non-profit sector and the Knights of Columbus; Richard Margison, OC, a Canadian tenor known worldwide for his powerful interpretations of classical arias; and Bob Morrow, Hamilton’s longest serving mayor and recipient of two Jubilee medals – an accom-

**Shiona M. Mackenzie** is a communications professional with a lifelong love of music. As Marketing Director, Shiona has successfully spearheaded the COMC’s first Patron search and developed the choir’s social media presence.





# Fanshawe Chorus London

David Holler

**F**anshawe Chorus London (FCL) has featured many noteworthy and gifted soloists in its 46 years as western Ontario's premiere symphonic ensemble. Since I became artistic director in 2012, the organization has undergone some changes, including its method of choosing soloists for its large symphonic works. The chorus still employs world-class soloists, but there is a movement toward introducing London and Ontario to some young rising stars in the opera/oratorio world.

The Christmas season brought the choir's semi-annual tradition of Handel's *Messiah* back to London. FCL introduced three up-and-coming world-class soloists at this concert. Soprano Alexandra Smither, a London native, dazzled the audience with her brilliant coloratura and effortless range. Ms. Smither took third prize at the 37<sup>th</sup> Eckhardt-Gramatté competition, was a winner at the 2013 Ontario Music Festival Competition, and placed second at the National Music Festival of Canada. She holds a Bachelor of Voice Performance, Honours, degree from the University of Toronto and received the 2014 Tecumseh Sherman Rogers Graduating Scholarship. She is currently working on her Master's degree at the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University.

Mezzo-soprano Marjorie Maltais is completing a Master of Music in Literature and Performance at Western University. In addition to her operatic experience, she has also performed with various ensembles in Québec and Ontario, including the Tafelmusik Baroque Summer Institute Chamber Choir, le Choeur Polyphonique de

Charlevoix, the King's University College Chamber Choir, and the Guelph Symphony Orchestra.

Anthony Varahidis, a Toronto-based tenor, studied with Darryl Edwards at the University of Toronto. These three young people stood as equals to more experienced Hamilton baritone, Roland Fix – all four bringing new life to this beloved classic.

Affirming its mandate to support young soloists as they begin their professional careers, Fanshawe Chorus London will hold its second Western University Vocal Competition in the new year. The winners of this competition will be featured at the choir's May concert, 'A Night at the Opera.'

For more information, please visit:  
[www.choruslondon.com/](http://www.choruslondon.com/)



**David Holler** is the artistic director of Fanshawe Chorus London and the Mohawk College Community Choir in Hamilton. He is currently a doctoral candidate in choral conducting at the University of Toronto.



FANSHAWE  
**CHORUS**  
LONDON



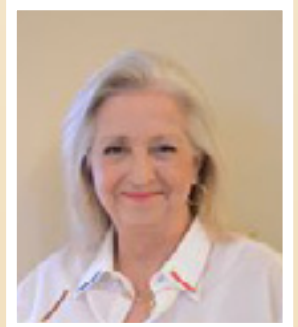
**T**he Halton Jazz Choir Singers (HJC Singers), formed two years ago, is a community SATB vocal jazz group serving the Halton region. I joined the group because I enjoy the dense, tight harmonies of vocal jazz, as well as the challenge of singing in a small ensemble.

Plans for 2015 include continuing our retirement facility performances, collaborating with a community swing band, and joining with local high schools' jazz bands on some SATB and big band charts, thereby raising the profile of vocal jazz in these schools.

Because our goal is to have no more than three singers per part, we established a rather intensive audition process. This approach ensures that new members have the strong musical background needed for a small vocal group environment.

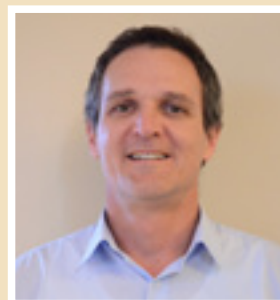


As an end note, I share this comment from Darcea Hiltz, our founder and music director: "I am so very proud of these singers for several reasons -- their commitment to learning the challenging skill of four-part tight harmonies of vocal jazz in a small group setting, and their keenness to educate and entertain is an inspiration! A truly wonderful way for me to spend my retirement is by teaching the vocal jazz idiom to this highly motivated group of skilled professionals who share my passion for vocal jazz! Awesome!"



In order to bring the vocal jazz genre into our community, we perform at local retirement facilities several times a year. We also participated in Oakville's 'Annual Kerr St. Christmas Tree Lighting' event, performed at the Ireland House Museum, and presented our first ticketed concert in December.

We are always interested in hearing from talented singers. Please contact Darcea Hiltz at 226-909-2152, or visit: [haltonjazzchoir.com](http://haltonjazzchoir.com).



As a child, I sang and played flute and piano; in university I picked up tenor saxophone. My music was put on hold while raising a young family, but I decided that now was the time to investigate the vocal jazz genre.





For ten years, the Kingston Chamber Choir (KCC) has performed to “move and inspire.” Now in its eleventh season, the choir has decided to spread its wings and reach a broader audience.

Its mission of providing a “richly varied repertoire” remains constant for the KCC. In December, they departed from their traditional *Messiah* concert by performing J.S. Bach’s *Christmas Cantata 147, Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben*. Earlier in the year, they premiered a commissioned piece titled *Bawajigaywin*, by Winnipeg aboriginal choral composer/conductor Andrew Balfour.

“We are eager to introduce more Kingstonians, as well as music lovers from surrounding regions, to one of Canada’s most renowned chamber choirs,” said Dr. Jean Stairs, President of the KCC Board of Directors. “Plans are underway to perform in new venues and to collaborate with other high-caliber musical groups in the area. The past decade established the Kingston Chamber Choir as one of Kingston’s cultural gems. An amazing choir that produces an exquisite choral sound is a key reason our Board of Directors is now launching strategies aimed to further diversify and grow our audiences.”

One strategy to reach these goals is retaining the services of Marjorie Sim, communications consultant and former journalist, who is providing development, communications, and administrative services to the KCC this season. Sim will

focus on raising funds to enable the KCC to perform at a wider range of venues, collaborate with other choral and arts groups, finance future tours, upgrade the website to a more user-friendly design, and develop a concert program format with more opportunity for sponsor advertising.

She will also improve the KCC’s current and future communications with its audiences by broadening audience demographics and delivering information about KCC concerts, events, and activities to parts of the Kingston community that may currently be underserved.

For more information, please visit:  
[www.kingstonchamberchoir.ca/](http://www.kingstonchamberchoir.ca/)



**Marjorie Sim** served as Communications Consultant to the Oakville Children’s Choir (OCC) for two years, after filling the volunteer role of Communications Coordinator for four years. During her time with the OCC, Sim assisted the organization to become self-sustaining through increased memberships, sold-out events, and new sponsors and donors.



Ten years ago, a group of about 30 enthusiastic closet Springsteens and Morissettes came together in downtown Toronto to form newchoir, a community choir with a rock repertoire. A newchoir concert is an occasion of unexpected SATB arrangements of classic rock and pop songs from every decade since the 1970's. The newchoir approach is unique because of its more structured training opportunities, an annual performance season, and live rock band accompaniment.

Now in its tenth year, newchoir has grown to 160 singers, performs at Koerner Hall in Toronto with special music guests such as Steven Page, and is a popular flash mob hired by national and international corporations. What started as a come-one-come-all chorus is now a trained group of amateur singers with a two-year waiting list.

In January, 2015 newchoir performs a double-bill unplugged concert with Juno award-nominated group, Cadence. In March, newchoir has been invited by music producer / arranger Deke Sharon to sing his repertoire live at Carnegie Hall. In May, the group returns to Koerner Hall, performing a far-reaching mix of rock, rockapella, and pop music arrangements.

“What makes us so compelling, what we strive to do, is to create a rock concert experience for the audience...but with 160 voices,” says artistic director Scott Pietrangelo. “Even the audience members who’ve seen us before can’t expect or believe what we manage to do as a choir. Every

concert. It’s pretty incredible. And it’s amazing to watch the choir give so much of themselves to the performance. They just can’t help it.”

Ever aware of its role in the community and the example it sets for using music to empower people, newchoir supports the Regent Park School of Music and the St. James Town ‘Reaching Out Through Music’ project – inner city music programs that encourage young people to work toward fulfilling their singing dreams.

Everyone has an inner rock star. Now everyone has a chance to introduce that rock star to the world!

For more information please visit: [www.newchoir.ca](http://www.newchoir.ca)

**Jennifer McIlroy** has been a member of newchoir since 2008, as an alto, small ensemble member, and soloist. When she’s not accessing her inner Adele, she teaches Business at Centennial College, and is president of The Manager’s Mentor Group, Inc.





# North Metro Chorus: Pure Four-Part Harmony

Jane Kitchen

North Metro is a Toronto-based chorus of women of all ages, creating amazing music with pure four-part harmony in the barbershop style. Our fall season was a busy one, with two November performances of our show, 'Metro Chorus: Breakthrough!' at Global Kingdom Ministries in Scarborough. We shared the stage with two Sweet Adelines International (SAI) quartets, S.L.A.M.! and Spritzer, and with a very talented musical performing family, The Ballagh Bunch.

We performed three sets, including our 'Toy Soldier' set, with which we won the SAI Championship in Denver. There were several magical moments on stage, but we really had a blast unveiling the *Cup Song* from the movie *Pitch Perfect*, complete with red cup choreography on the risers and in the front row. Thanks to all our supporters for coming out -- we love to sing for you!

We are now embarking on our nine-month journey of preparation for SAI competition. As 2014 Region 16 champions, we earned the right to represent our region (which includes parts of upper New York state and southeastern Ontario) at the International convention in Las Vegas this

October. It is always exciting to learn new music and choreography that we will debut in front of several thousand sister Sweet Adelines.

We welcome visitors to our rehearsals! Come find out what singing in the barbershop style is all about, and visit us on Wednesday nights at 7 p.m., St. Clement of Ohrid Macedonian Church, 76 Overlea Boulevard.

We wish everyone a Happy New Year! Check our website for news, and join our email list at:

[www.northmetrochorus.com](http://www.northmetrochorus.com).



**Jane Kitchen** has been a member of North Metro Chorus since 1997. She currently sings lead and is the PR Chair.



# Oriana Women's Choir: A New Twist on an Old Favourite

Julia Lee

Oriana Women's Choir is a Toronto-based choral ensemble that has earned a stunning reputation for musical excellence and versatility. In November, the choir premiered a new arrangement of Vivaldi's classic, *Gloria*, at Grace Church on-the-Hill, Toronto.

Oriana's artistic director, Mitchell Pady, developed this version based on eighteenth-century accounts of its earliest performances. He knew that Vivaldi's *Gloria* was originally written for the women students and staff of the Ospedale della Pietà in Venice. Mitchell was familiar with the standard SSA and SATB arrangements, but he wanted a fuller, more complete setting for women's voices.

beautiful, rich, low notes from the altos.

The choir was ably supported by organist Michael Bloss. The premiere was very well received by the audience, and Mitchell is exploring the possibility of making a published score available to other women's choirs.

For more information on the Oriana Women's Choir, please visit: [www.orianachoir.com](http://www.orianachoir.com)

**Julia Lee** is a long-time member of Oriana Women's Choir and currently serves as Chair of the Board of Directors.



Knowing the considerable vocal range of the Oriana choristers, he researched several early scores of *Gloria* and created an SSAA version drawn from original four-part SATB arrangements. He achieved this by transposing portions of the tenor and bass parts up an octave, while retaining the flow and line of each voice part. The result is a fascinating interweaving of vocal lines, featuring frequent voice crossing between the first and second sopranos, interesting chords with unexpected dissonances and resolutions, and





The Ottawa Children's Choir (OCC) looks forward to connecting with youth in Canada's northern community through the 'Nipiit Katittut – Voices United Educational Engagement Project.' This project, which connects the OCC and the Inuksuk Drum Dancers, is inspired by a desire to create meaningful links between the two groups through a shared love of music.

When they arrive in Iqaluit, OCC choristers will participate with their Iqaluit peers in choral workshops in elementary schools and share their music by performing at the Elders' Centre and at a church service. They will also premiere a new Canadian choral composition by Kingston composer Mark Sirett, which incorporates elements of both local cultures. This work will be showcased in Iqaluit as part of an educational music festival involving all schools in the community.

The Inuksuk Drum Dancers will then visit Ottawa, where they will participate with OCC choristers in the national Unisong choral festival at the National Arts Centre, along with choirs from across Canada. They will also take part in team building and leadership activities, and present a concert with all three choir levels of the Ottawa Children's Choir.

Through their love of singing, these youth will participate in workshops, performances, festivals, and cultural activities, sharing their talents and experiences with both the Iqaluit and Ottawa communities. Opportunities for leadership and community-building through music education will be afforded to both groups of youth. Seeds planted during this exchange will leave a legacy in both northern and southern communities.

These young people will also experience mentoring one another, creating bonds of friendship, and learning more about the diversity in their respective communities. The Ottawa Children's Choir is honoured to have this opportunity to engage with other young Canadians through the power of song.



For more information about the OCC, please visit: [www.ottawachildrenschoir.ca/index.shtml](http://www.ottawachildrenschoir.ca/index.shtml)



**Jackie Hawley** has been artistic director of the Ottawa Children's Choir and Music Director of its Chamber Choir since 2008. She has conducted and toured internationally with adult, youth, and children's choirs, and has been a clinician for choirs and schools for more than 25 years.

You may be familiar with C.H.H. Parry's *Jerusalem* or *I Was Glad*, but it's unlikely you have ever heard his oratorio, *Judith*. Why has a major oratorio by one of Britain's best-loved composers been neglected for 125 years?

Although Parry was self-critical of the oratorio and struggled with the score, the first performance of *Judith* in 1888 was an overwhelming success. Parry had Europe's top musicians backing him up. Hans Richter conducted the premiere at the Birmingham Festival. Alexander MacKenzie conducted *Judith* at the Crystal Palace, Stanford conducted a London performance, and when the Three Choirs Festival performed it, Elgar played violin in the orchestra under Parry's baton.

Parry was not so lucky with the press. George Bernard Shaw panned Parry's large choral works with scathing reviews, suggesting that all his oratorios should be burned. He perceived Parry's approach as "academic" and preferred Elgar's unbridled, self-taught approach. So, like many works of Victorian design, masterfully crafted with vibrant detail and vivid emotional and dramatic character, Parry's music fell out of favour with twentieth century audiences.

One reason for the disappearance of this work was Novello's reluctance to publish the vocal and orchestral scores. To overcome this problem, Pax Christi Chorale is creating a new edition of the *Judith* score with the help of the foremost Parry scholar, Dr. Jeremy Dibble, of Durham University, UK. Along with a team of students from York University, Pax Christi is creating a digital edition of the

score from which instrumental parts can be produced.

*Judith* tells the story of the liberation of the Jews from their Assyrian captivity, the restoration of faith to their leader, Manasseh, and the heroic role played by Judith

in defeating the enemy general, Holofernes. The oratorio includes a mezzo soprano aria which has made an enduring contribution to our church music repertoire: the hymn tune Repton ('Dear Lord and Father of Mankind'). Echoes of this tune reappear as a leitmotif throughout the work.

Pax Christi will present the North American premiere of *Judith* at Koerner Hall in May. This concert will be the culmination of a musical detective story, and the hard work of York University graduate students.



For more information, please visit:  
[www.paxchristichorale.org/](http://www.paxchristichorale.org/)

**Stephanie Martin** is associate professor of music at York University, director of Pax Christi Chorale, Schola Magdalena, and a prolific composer of choral music.



# Queensmen of Toronto Male Chorus

Lloyd Hetherington

**B**ased in west Toronto, the Queensmen Male Chorus (QMC) has 20+ members and performs mainly contemporary music in churches, retirement homes, and the Etobicoke Assembly Hall.



This fall the chorus welcomed a new music director, Oksana Vignan; a new accompanist, Becky Windhagar; and a new president, Jeremy Service. The Board is very pleased with the new team, and the QMC is looking forward to an exciting spring season.

choirs gather every year in late May to present 'Ontario Sings,' a massed choir concert. This year AMCO member choirs will meet in Brantford; in May 2016 the Queensmen will host 'Ontario Sings' in Toronto, and planning is well under way for this event.

In the fall prior to 'Ontario Sings,' a workshop is held to help AMCO choir members improve their vocal skills and performance techniques. In the fall of 2015, the Queensmen will host this workshop for approximately 100 male singers from southern Ontario.

Please visit our website at: <http://queensmen.net/>

The organization's outreach program awards Queensmen performance bursaries to young male singers interested in choral music. The two young men who received bursaries for the Fall, 2014 season sang with the chorus at all its performances. The bursary competition is now open for the February - May, 2015

session -- four spaces are available for high school, college, or university male students. For an application form and information on how to apply, visit:

[www.queensmen.net/Bursary.html](http://www.queensmen.net/Bursary.html)

The Queensmen's Christmas concert in early December was very successful and included, as in the past, the youth choir from Rosethorn Public School, conducted by Elizabeth Cattell. At the end of the concert, the men in the audience were invited to sing with the chorus, which had been previously arranged. They performed the last number with QMC choristers, making it a truly joyous occasion.

The QMC is one of the six male choirs that make up the Associated Male Choruses of Ontario (AMCO). The member



**Lloyd Hetherington** is the Promotions and Production Manager of the Queensmen of Toronto Male Chorus and has been with the choir for six years

# Rainbow Chorus of Waterloo-Wellington

by Judy Steers

The Rainbow Chorus began in 1994 as the vision of four friends who wanted to create a queer-positive space for people to gather, sing, and perform. Since then, it has grown to a non-auditioned SATB choir of nearly 50 members. Based in Guelph, it is the largest LGBT choir in Canada outside of a major urban centre - 20 years of passion, pride and singing.

Under the direction of Annetta Whetham, the Rainbow Chorus performs Broadway and popular music with cho-

going to Parliament Hill for a group photo shoot and then spontaneously bursting into an impromptu performance. The choir rocked it out with *Some Nights*, and then stilled

the crowd by singing Pete Seeger's *To My Old Brown Earth*, in a beautiful choral arrangement by Canadian Paul Halley.

The choir has been enriched by partnerships with other choirs over the years, including the Guelph Chamber Choir, Harcourt United Church (Guelph), WomEnchant (Niagara), Singing Out (Toronto), and the Hamilton Gay Men's Chorus.



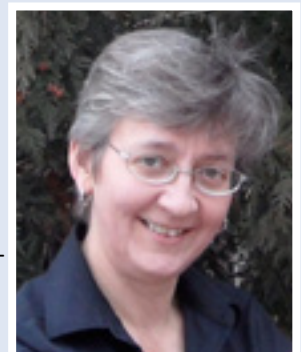
reography, richly harmonized choral selections, folk songs, and traditional music from around the world. The fall season featured African music, and the spring season focuses on composers, landscapes, and stories from across Canada. In addition to presenting four public concerts each season, the Rainbow Chorus has performed at international festivals, Carnegie Hall, Kiwanis festivals, GSA conferences across the region, and at numerous outreach events.

In 2014 the choir celebrated its 20th anniversary and participated in its third Unison festival in Ottawa, a quadrennial event for LGBT choirs from across Canada. This event is a wonderful weekend of singing and performing, involving more than 20 choirs and hundreds of singers from coast to coast. One of the highlights for the Rainbow Chorus was

The Rainbow Chorus has become a strong, supportive community for its members -- a lot like family. We're looking forward to what the next 20 years holds for us.

For more information, and to see videos of the choir, please visit: [www.rainbowchorus.ca](http://www.rainbowchorus.ca)

**Judy Steers**, originally from Montreal and now living in Guelph, is an alto, a drummer, and Concert Production Coordinator for the Rainbow Chorus.





# Summer Institute of Church Music Chorale

Jane Best

The Summer Institute of Church Music (SICM), based in Whitby, is Canada's only annual summer program in church music. Founded in 1970, it is an intensive week-long residential summer retreat and study program for church musicians and choristers.

Each year the SICM Chorale is formed from the full-time participants in the week-long SICM program and choristers from Durham Region registered in SICM's Chorister Program. Under the direction of the session's choral director, the group rehearses from Sunday to Wednesday and participates in a concert on Thursday evening in Oshawa.

In 2014, about half of the nearly 60 singers were enrolled in the Chorister Program and joined with the SICM regulars for rehearsals with Dr. Lee Willingham, who directed the 2014 SICM Chorale. The rest of us had additional sessions with Dr. Willingham, examining various choral leadership issues.



During approximately 12 hours of rehearsal from Sunday through Wednesday, Lee challenged us, taught us, laughed with us, and transformed our very mixed group of singers into a musical community. We were accompanied by Christopher Dawes, who supported us throughout rehearsals and performance, switching back and forth from organ to piano.

Our concert on Thursday evening was interspersed with wonderful organ music performed by David Palmer, our organ instructor during the SICM session. A post-concert reception brought a memorable week of music, learning, and fellowship full circle.



We had a wonderful time learning to approach very different pieces of music with confidence and the 'right' amount of energy. Our repertoire ranged from Tallis' *If Ye Love Me* to *Jeremiah's Fire*, by Rollo Dillingworth. We were privileged to sing *A New Creed*, by Jeff Enns, *Love Never Ends*, by Eleanor Dal-

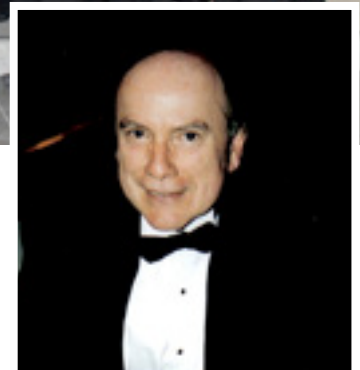
ey, and *And As I Wake*, by Stephanie Martin, commissioned by SICM in 2013 in honour of Ruth Watson Henderson

For information on the July 2015 Summer Institute of Church Music, please visit: <http://sicm.ca>



**Jane Best** is currently the House Manager for the Summer Institute of Church Music. She lives on Manitoulin Island where she teaches music lessons and directs the Manitoulin Community Choir. She is one of the worship leaders for her church, and has written a number of published hymns and choral pieces.

## TEMPUS CHORAL SOCIETY



Okville's Tempus Choral Society has been invited by Distinguished Concerts International New York (DCINY) to sing at Carnegie Hall on April 12, 2015. Tempus members will join choristers from around the world in a self-paid, mass choir performance.

Last year, Tempus choristers sang in a DCINY-organized concert at the Lincoln Center, where 700 choristers combined to perform Handel's *Messiah*.

"We were thrilled at the positive response we received last year to our audition CDs," said Tempus artistic director, Brian Turnbull. "Again this year, we feel honoured to be joining a large international group of talented choristers in New York, this time at Carnegie Hall."

The 2015 performance will feature *Dona Nobis Pacem*, by R. Vaughan Williams. Suggested to DCINY by Tempus artistic director, Brian Turnbull, this famous cantata is an impassioned plea for world peace.

For information about the Tempus Choral Society, please visit: [www.tempuschoralsociety.com](http://www.tempuschoralsociety.com)

**Dave Adeney** sings second tenor with the Tempus Choral Society



## Toronto Chamber Choir Consort: New Program



For over four decades, the Toronto Chamber Choir's mission has been to present creative programs of Renaissance and Baroque repertoire, performed in a historically-informed style and meeting a high musical standard. The choir also performs music from later periods which complements or illuminates its core repertoire.

The Toronto Chamber Choir, under its new artistic director, Lucas Harris, is pleased to share the success of the inaugural year of its new program, the Toronto Chamber Choir Consort, designed to give solo opportunities and voice-section leadership to singers who are interested in early music and historical performance.

This season, four extraordinary young women have joined us in a dual partnership of mentorship and leadership. We are eager to continue to grow this program, and encourage lovers of early music who are interested to learn more about us.

For more information about the Toronto Chamber Choir Consort program, please visit: <http://is.gd/Zs3IQH>



## Yorkminstrels Show Choir

Sandi Horwitz



This year the Yorkminstrels Show Choir marked its 40th anniversary. To celebrate this milestone, the newly-rebuilt St. George on Yonge Anglican Church hosted the choir for a full-house public concert in April. The choir performed its mainstay repertoire of Broadway selections, old favourites, and contemporary songs.

The mixed-voice Show Choir has an extensive repertoire, is costumed and choreographed, and works off-book for the approximately 15 concerts it performs each year. It is an offshoot of the Yorkminstrels, a group that was, for 50 years, the GTA's largest community musical theatre company; it ceased stage productions in 2008. The Show Choir was started in 1974 by several longtime members of the original Yorkminstrels company, with Harry McCarthy

as the founding musical director. Their focus was to take entertainment into the community by singing at seniors' residences, nursing homes, condo / church / synagogue social groups, and at civic and private functions.

Over the years the Show Choir has performed at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, Royal Ontario Museum, Ontario Science Centre, Breakfast Television, and has made many other public appearances throughout the GTA. The choir has also presented joint concerts with the Metropolitan Toronto Men's Police Chorus and the North York Concert Band.

The 30-member choir is currently led by Judy Scott-Jacobs, well-known musical director in the community and, coincidentally, a life member of The Yorkminstrels. The choir rehearses every Wednesday evening at Cummer Lodge. New members (especially men!) are always welcome.

For more information, please visit: [www.yorkminstrels.com/show\\_choir](http://www.yorkminstrels.com/show_choir) or contact Sandi Horwitz at [horwitz@rogers.com](mailto:horwitz@rogers.com)

**Sandi Horwitz** is Public Relations Director for the Yorkminstrels Show Choir.



**A**lthough gospel music has its roots in America, there is world-wide interest in this genre. Hot spots of note include Japan, Poland, and England, and Canada has a vibrant gospel music presence in Ontario, Montreal, and Nova Scotia.

The birth of the Toronto Mass Choir (TMC) in 1988 was an opportunity for interested singers to join a gospel choir. With ten albums and countless performances over the past 25 years, the TMC continues today as a visible sign that gospel music is alive and well in Canada.

Gospel choirs, like pipe organs, have an iconic sound and a powerful presence that is hard to duplicate -- the swaying robes, clapping hands, and driving rhythms can be an exhilarating experience. Although gospel performances are found in popular culture, attending a live gospel choir concert or having the opportunity to sing in a gospel choir is relatively rare for most Canadians. For this reason, I have been conducting, writing, and recording gospel music, and presenting workshops in Canada and abroad, for the past 30 years.

After joining the York University faculty in 2005, I began working to raise the profile of gospel music in Canada. I formed the now 100-voice York University Gospel Choir, which performs regularly at schools, music festivals, and other events. That same year, I founded the 'Gospel Inter-Varsity Explosion' (G.I.V.E.), an annual event which invites gospel choirs from other post-secondary institutions to

gather at York for a full-day workshop and performance. In February, 2005, the Toronto Mass Choir hosted the very first 'Power Up!

Gospel Music Workshop' which is now co-hosted annually by York University and will be held again in February, 2015. This popular event has grown to include over 25 different workshops on all aspects of gospel music and musicianship, and provides a unique window into the world of the gospel choir.

And don't forget the 'City Youth Gospel Project' each May (YouTube it!).

If you want to know more about gospel music, visit [www.tmc.ca](http://www.tmc.ca), or contact me directly at [info@burkemusic.ca](mailto:info@burkemusic.ca). Hallelujah!



**Karen Burke**, a graduate of McMaster University and the Royal Conservatory of Music, is a professor of music at York University. She is the director of the Toronto Mass Choir, and she also conducts numerous gospel music workshops in Canada and abroad.



# Concert Listings / Festivals & Events

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February 07, 2015

Woodstock Fanshawe Singers, **Feast Your Ears on Us: A Celtic Fare Craigowan**, Oxford Golf and Country Club, Woodstock. 7:00 p.m. \$25  
[www.woodstockfanshawesingers.ca](http://www.woodstockfanshawesingers.ca)

February 07, 2015

Mississauga Festival Choir, **Festival of Friends**, Eden United Church, 3051 Battleford Rd, Mississauga. 8:00 p.m. [www.mississaugafestivalchoir.com](http://www.mississaugafestivalchoir.com)

February 13, 2015

Cantemos CD Launch Fundraiser for Upper Canada Choristers, **Music of the Americas**, Grace Church on-the-Hill, 300 Lonsdale Rd., Toronto. 7:00 p.m. \$40 (416) 256-0510 [www.uppercanadachoristers.org](http://www.uppercanadachoristers.org)

February 21, 2015

Grand Philharmonic Choir **Grant Us Peace - Music of Haydn**, Estacio and Vasks Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. North, Kitchener. 7:30 p.m. \$20 - \$75 519-578-1570 [www.grandphilchoir.com](http://www.grandphilchoir.com)

February 22, 2015

Kingston Chamber Choir, **Responding**, St. Georges Cathedral, 270 King St. East, Kingston. 2:00 p.m. \$25/\$20/\$10 [www.kingstonchamberchoir.ca](http://www.kingstonchamberchoir.ca)

February 28, 2015

The Peterborough Singers, **Soul**, Calvary Church, 1421 Lansdowne St. West, Peterborough. 2:00 p.m. \$30 adults/\$20 (under 30) /\$10 (students) 705-745-1820 [www.peterboroughsingers.com](http://www.peterboroughsingers.com)

February 28, 2015

The Amadeus Choir of Greater Toronto, **A Celtic Celebration**, Eglinton St. George's United Church, 35 Lytton Blvd., Toronto. 7:00 p.m. \$40/\$35 416-446-0188 [www.amadeuschoir.com](http://www.amadeuschoir.com)

February 28, 2015

Chorus Niagara, **Life Eternal**, Calvary Church, 89 Scott St., St.Catharines. 7:30 p.m. 1-866-617-3257 [www.chorusniagara.ca](http://www.chorusniagara.ca)

February 28, 2015

Ottawa Bach Choir, **Orlando di Lasso: Lagrime di San Pietro**, Knox Presbyterian Church, Ottawa. 8:00 p.m. \$50/\$40/\$35 [www.ottawabachchoir.ca](http://www.ottawabachchoir.ca)

March 01, 2015

MCS Chorus, **How Mozart Sings**, St. Hilary's Anglican Church, 2055 Hurontario St., Mississauga. 7:30 p.m. \$10 [www.mcschorus.ca](http://www.mcschorus.ca)

March 06, 2015

Elmer Iseler Singers, **Warrior Songs**, Walter Hall, Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, 80 Queen's Park, Toronto. 7:30 p.m. \$40 / \$35 / \$15 416-217-0537 [www.elmerisellersingers.com](http://www.elmerisellersingers.com)

March 07, 2015

MCS Chorus, **Mozart for Mississauga**, First United Church, 151 Lakeshore Road West, Mississauga. 7:30 p.m. \$20/\$10 [www.mcschorus.ca](http://www.mcschorus.ca)

March 19, 2015

Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra & Chamber Choir, **Bach, St. John Passion**, Trinity-St. Paul's Centre, Toronto. 8:00 p.m. [www.tafelmusik.org/concert-calendar/concert/bach-st-john-passion](http://www.tafelmusik.org/concert-calendar/concert/bach-st-john-passion)

March 20, 2015

Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra & Chamber Choir, **Bach, St. John Passion**, Trinity-St. Paul's Centre, Toronto. 8:00 p.m. [www.tafelmusik.org/concert-calendar/concert/bach-st-john-passion](http://www.tafelmusik.org/concert-calendar/concert/bach-st-john-passion)

March 21, 2015

Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra & Chamber Choir, **Bach, St. John Passion**, Trinity-St. Paul's Centre, Toronto. 8:00 p.m. [www.tafelmusik.org/concert-calendar/concert/bach-st-john-passion](http://www.tafelmusik.org/concert-calendar/concert/bach-st-john-passion)

March 22, 2015

Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra & Chamber Choir, **Bach, St. John Passion** Trinity-St. Paul's Centre, Toronto. 3:30 p.m. [www.tafelmusik.org/concert-calendar/concert/bach-st-john-passion](http://www.tafelmusik.org/concert-calendar/concert/bach-st-john-passion)

# Concert Listings / Festivals & Events continued

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March 28, 2015

Mississauga Festival Choir, **Psalms and Solitude - A Lenten Concert**, First United Church, 150 Lakeshore West (one block east of Mississauga Rd.), Mississauga. 8:00 p.m. \$25/\$15 (under 12)  
[www.mississaugafestivalchoir.com](http://www.mississaugafestivalchoir.com)

April 03, 2015

Cantabile Chorale of York Region, **Good Friday Charity Benefit Concert**, Thorhnill United Church, 25 Elgin St., Thornhill. 7:30 p.m. Entry by donation  
905-731-8318 [www.cantabile.ca](http://www.cantabile.ca)

April 11, 2015

Amadeus Choir of Greater Toronto, **Of Heart and Tide**, Trinity-St. Paul's Centre, 427 Bloor St. West, Toronto. 7:30 p.m. \$15 - \$40 416-446-0188  
[www.amadeuschoir.com](http://www.amadeuschoir.com)

April 18, 2015

Elmer Iseler Singers, **Island Lore - The Mystic Tide**, Christ Church Deer Park, 1570 Yonge St., Toronto. 4:00 p.m. \$40 / \$35 / \$15 416-217-0537  
[www.elmerisellersingers.com](http://www.elmerisellersingers.com)

April 25, 2015

MCS Chorus, **Baroque Favourites**, Westminster United Church, 4094 Tomke Road, Mississauga. 7:30 p.m. \$20/\$10 [www.mcschorus.ca](http://www.mcschorus.ca)

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## Festivals & Events

### Canada

February 20 - 22, 2015

**Power Up 2015**, Toronto, [www.tmc.ca/powerup](http://www.tmc.ca/powerup)

February 22, 2015

CAMMAC Toronto Region Reading, **Mozart's Solemn Vespers**, Christ Church Deer Park, 1570 Yonge Street, Toronto  
<http://cammac.ca/en/activites-regionales/toronto>

February 28, 2015

The Toronto Mendelssohn Choir, **Singsation Saturday**, Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St., Toronto.  
[www.tmchoir.org/singsation-saturdays/](http://www.tmchoir.org/singsation-saturdays/)

April 18, 2015

The Toronto Mendelssohn Choir, **Singsation Saturday**, Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St., Toronto.  
[www.tmchoir.org/singsation-saturdays/](http://www.tmchoir.org/singsation-saturdays/)

## International

March 04 - 08, 2015

**Chorofestspiele**, Bad Krozingen, Germany.  
<https://tr.im/KrxO5>

March 06, 2015 - March 08, 2015

**Cantate Amsterdam**, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.  
[www.musicandfriends.net](http://www.musicandfriends.net)

March 19 - 23, 2015

**The Fukushima Vocal Ensemble Competition**, Fukushima, Japan.  
<http://www.vocalensemble.jp/en/>

## Job openings:

[www.choirontario.org/JobManager/list](http://www.choirontario.org/JobManager/list)

## Singers Wanted:

[www.choirontario.org/AuditionManager/list](http://www.choirontario.org/AuditionManager/list)

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