

Tuesday, October 6, 2020

# MUSIC MATTERS

Arnprior Community Choir Newsletter



Issue 2 - 201006



*Lisa Webber, Director*

## Let Music Surround Us

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## A Message from Lisa



I've always loved to learn. I grew up in a family of teachers. My grandparents were long time custodians in the Winnipeg school system and were so proud of their "girls" who became teachers. Later in life, when my grandma suffered from dementia, she asked my then pre-teen Anthony endless times if he was going to be a teacher when he graduated. He always said "No, I'm thinking of a trade". Because she didn't always remember his answer, the conversation went round and round until finally Anthony relented and said "Yup, a Teacher". Over the years I've learned to ski, hook a rug, make perogies, play euchre and even drive a stick shift! Finding joy while learning was definitely not always easy (especially stalled in the middle of a busy intersection). I think we'd all agree that during COVID isolation learning new things was daunting and FAR from joyful. Sanitizing groceries, wearing a mask, not hugging! But, we adapt, we try to be flexible and we learn how to make do. Musically, it's another story. Our common bond of choral singing has been taken away. Singing together, breathing together, laughing together, performing together has been put on hold. We must find other ways to create the same feeling we get after choir rehearsal. Virtual recordings, Zoom nights, singing while "muted" and individual rather than together is our new reality. Embrace it; join in, it won't be forever. In the meantime, let's try to enjoy our choral ties to one another and strengthen our amazing ACC organization. "The Joy of Learning" was inspired by CBC radio podcast from Friday, Sept. 4<sup>th</sup>. Grab a coffee, relax and enjoy inspiring interviews all about "learning"!

<https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-2-as-it-happens/clip/15796386-as-it-happened-the-joy-learning>

This segment of **MUSIC MATTERS** reveals what we have in store for you this month.

Week One is always our newsletter.

After that we have lots of surprises up our sleeves.

**The sky's the limit! Don't miss a minute.**



**MUSIC MATTERS**

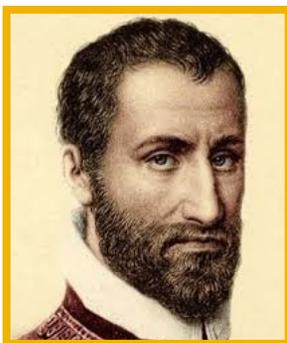
ACC's Monthly Newsletter



### ***Choral "Greats" - What Makes Them So Great?***



In this session, we'll explore and listen to some of the choral "greats" - Palestrina, Bach, Handel, Britten, and Rutter! We'll take a walk through the centuries and learn what some of the infamous composers wrote, their style, how they set lyrics and most importantly, how their music affects both the audience and the singers who sing them. We'll listen to choral examples from Renaissance to Modern Day and discuss what gives us "goosebumps", what moves us and what choral works make our individual top 10 playlist.



***Giovanni  
da Palestrina***



***Johann Sebastian  
Bach***



***George Frideric  
Handel***



***Benjamin  
Britten***



***John  
Rutter***

Coming this Month ...

MUSIC MATTERS



*Ian Guenette*

### Tips and Tricks for Efficient Sight Reading

Join us as we explore tips and tricks that will help improve your sight-reading abilities. Whether you are new to sight reading, or a seasoned professional, this session is for you.

We will look at different ways to analyze your score to better help you understand its structure, which will in turn help you learn the music faster and more efficiently.

### Spooktacular Halloween Social



What better way to celebrate Halloween than a jam-packed, fun-filled, Zoom SPOOKTACULAR party! We'll be joined by none other than our funny friend, former ACC bass, tenor/bass composer extraordinaire and all-around "Arrogant Worm", Mike McCormick. You don't want to miss Mike's jokes, songs and general wackiness.

PLUS, you must come to the party in costume! All costumes must relate to a song title, a song lyric or famous musician. Be ready to write down what each party-goer's song/costume combination is. "Rhinestone Cowboy"; "Devil Woman"; "Ghostbusters"; "Rocket Man"; "Ring of Fire". Use your imagination...possibilities are endless!



*Mike McCormick*

**In this section learn things you never knew about your choir mates.**



**Martin and Sue Sandford, Bass and Alto Section Leads**

Music was part of our lives from a very early age. Choral and instrumental music was played on the BBC *Third Programme* and on "78" records, later superseded by new-fangled LPs.

We sang at home, at church and all through our school years in choirs, singing folk songs, opera, oratorios and sacred music. Once we married, we naturally joined a choir and as soon as the boxes were unpacked at each of our 5 homes (in Bath and Shrivvenham England, and Kingston, Port Hope, and Almonte Canada) we'd find a good church and a good choir to join. Some choirs were big, some tiny, and we've sung for audiences of 20 and audiences of 1,000 - it doesn't matter - the singing is what's important.



When we moved to Almonte in 2016, I had to go to England to help care for a sick grandchild. By the time I returned 2 weeks later, Martin had checked out 2 local choirs and after one rehearsal at each, we had no doubt which one we wanted to belong to. The Director was delightful, the accompanist capable and intuitive, the members welcoming and the music fun to sing. And here we are at ACC, every Tuesday, rain or shine, or snow and fog as it was every week that first winter! Sometimes we arrive tired and in no mood to sing, but when we leave we are energized.

Martin loves adding the harmony to pieces and I so enjoy the feeling of "together with a common purpose" that permeates each rehearsal, as we strive to make the most lovely music we can. Our favourite piece that we've sung here is the Haydn *Missa Brevis* in F. There was great satisfaction in performing a piece that many found intimidating and in doing it well. We love the relaxed yet disciplined approach that Lisa brings to each rehearsal. Her charm, wit, patience and boundless good humour make Tuesday evenings one of the highlights of the week.

## Sue Koch, ACC Webmaster



My name is Sue Koch and I live in Braeside with my husband Jay and two dogs. We moved here in 1998. I'm originally from Penetanguishene, Ontario (always an attention-getter during passport checkpoints). Jay and I met at the University of Toronto. After a few years of city living, we decided to return to our small-town roots. I have always loved the open and inviting spirit of this community, even though no one can place my family tree (being from away and all).

In my professional life, I run a small company that publishes assistive reading software for struggling learners. It's very rewarding but can be stressful at times, so I was looking for a creative outlet that would also get me away from my computer. I played instruments and studied music as a teenager, but never had the courage to try singing. I knew Lisa and some of the choir members from Two Rivers, all of whom finally convinced me to come to that first rehearsal in September 2017.

Choral singing is such a joy. My biggest lesson is learning to let the mistakes happen and not worry about hitting every note. (That, and don't make the "I really messed up" face or gasp when I miss a page turn.) The choir is forgiving, and all of the voices together create something truly amazing.

I look forward to learning more about choral techniques in this "sabbatical year" and will be excited to see everyone again on Tuesday nights.

## Maureen Rueckwald, Social Committee



Hello fellow choristers I am Maureen Rueckwald. Arnprior has been my home for 31 years. Growing up I belonged to school and church choirs. I was even a member of a trio known as the Blue Angels, the youth division of the St. Andrews United Church choir in Pakenham. We were named for our blue choir gowns!

My return to choral singing as an adult saw me joining our amazing choir in 1994. It became "mom's" night out. Twenty-six years and two children later I am still thrilled that I joined. I have served on the Executive as President, Secretary (written meeting notes were taken . . . email and website came later) and Music Librarian. Currently, I am part of the dynamic social duo M&M who provides snacks at rehearsals, shops for gifts/flowers plus prepares and presents speeches at our concerts.

The power of choral singing evokes memories of the excitement and fear of my first concert and the feeling of accomplishment after performing a challenging classical works in a foreign language. I enjoy our Dessert Musicales the most . . . costumes, decorations and goodies of course! Our all Canadian content concert a few years back is one of my favourites.

Friendship development is such an integral part of our choir and is evident from the volume of our conversations as we catch up before rehearsals begin each week. I am game for another 26 years of singing and socializing if Lisa is up for it!!



### Cheryl Jarvis Woods

My name is Cheryl Jarvis Woods. My husband Bob and I have lived in the Almonte area since 2003. Once our sons were in university, we decided to move here from the Westboro area of Ottawa to try rural living. We love it and are still enjoying our quiet 15 acres in the country.

I am writing this as much as a musical inspiration as choral, since my personal musical journey has taken me on a very scenic route.

Some of you know me, as I had the pleasure of substituting in as your accompanist at a rehearsal, or you may have met me through Almonte in Concert as I was previously a board member (including President) and rehearsed a massed choir for a special concert with Lydia Adams and the Elmer Iseler Singers. I know that some of you sang in that choir. Some may recognize me from playing at St. Andrew's in Pakenham for a Christmas service and working with their lovely choir, or you may sing in my Almonte Workshop Singers. I know you in ACC, as I have had the absolute pleasure of attending your concerts and hearing your beautiful sound as you sing your incredibly wide variety of music.

I was lucky to have piano lessons, wonderful music programs in elementary school in Winnipeg and a fabulous music program in high school in Ottawa. That began my journey with a solid footing. I would be delighted to talk about the benefits of a strong school music program, but I know I'd be 'preaching to the converted'!

At Ottawa U, I studied piano as my major instrument and the organ as my minor. I was also privileged to study accompanying with Evelyn Greenburg, which started me on a lifelong path in that direction.

One of my favourite piano solo pieces is Liszt's Etude in Db (Un Sospiro) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KY6V-qy3PwI>. I'd need to practice a lot to play this one again!

I began my church music career while in university, as organist and choir director at Woodroffe United Church. There is nothing like learning on your feet as a young person with endless energy! I remember those days fondly. When you think back on life experiences, many of them are tied with memories of a certain piece of music. Malotte's The Lord's Prayer is such a piece. ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4O\\_8DBj99s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4O_8DBj99s))

A choral 'adventure' I experienced as a young adult was barbershop singing. I learned to sing in tight harmonies, the requirement for a well tuned ear and memorization of music and choreography. Lots of fun. If you are looking for a new choral adventure to add to your own experience and skill set, I recommend it. There are a few choruses in the Ottawa area. Here are some recordings to whet your appetite.

Capital City Men's Chorus: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUNPIOWb660>

Sweet Adelines: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=700598777014803&extid=Vc5JNcKemvKbnFvj>

My career as a teacher spanned 31 years with the Ottawa Public School Board/Ottawa-Carleton District School



Board, as a music specialist and later, a classroom teacher. I worked with choirs, recorder ensembles, and directed musicals. It is a wonderful way to reach children, and provide them with musical experiences they will hopefully remember well. In 1998, Orpheus Musical Theatre produced *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*. I was asked to gather and rehearse a children's choir for this production. This was my introduction to Orpheus, and many years of involvement in musical theatre followed. Here's a snippet of this wonderful show. <https://youtu.be/QtpzoGj-1V8>

I am often a rehearsal accompanist for musical theatre, with Orpheus and with other local theatre companies. I've also often been Assistant Musical Director at Orpheus along with the accompanist role, to assist with conducting rehearsals and teaching. Three of my favourite shows I have played are *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Ragtime* and *Grease*. There are many recordings on YouTube to enjoy. Too many to choose just one.

Musical Theatre led me to another special opportunity, more recently. I am the Musical Director of Ottawa's 'Oh Canada, Eh?', a dinner theatre that ran in Niagara Falls for 26 years and opened in Ottawa last year. I also was MD for a production of 'Suds' with the same company last March, but we were only able to perform our opening weekend before we were closed down. We are looking forward to another 'Oh Canada Eh?' season once we are able to safely reopen. Here's a shameless promotion from our opening July 2019! <https://ottawa.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=1718795>. It's a wonderful showcase of Canadian music.

Very dear to my heart is the wonderful group of singers in my Workshop Choir in Almonte. The nature of a workshop choir means that generally we do not perform. We tackle some more difficult works and learn as we do so, touching on some theory along the way, as well as choral favourites and newer pieces. We have the time to focus and work on music without concert deadlines – a luxury – although sometimes we must admit to missing performing! We have an SSA group as well as the full choir. We've been very lucky to sing some lovely choral arrangements by our own member, the talented David Sale of Pakenham, and have in our midst other musicians and members who bring a wide variety of interests and talents. This will be our 11<sup>th</sup> season, whenever we are able to get started this year. Faure, Donald Patriquin (from Montreal), Pierre Massie (a local composer/choir director), John Rutter, Bach and Healey Willan were on our list for this past year. Here are some of my personal favourites the choir has sung.

For the Beauty of the Earth by John Rutter <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1bDoMfYErE>

Eric Whitacre's The Seal Lullaby: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fuLDD7O29T4>

Ubi Caritas by Maurice Duruflé: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OF0tmPeQ0Xc>

As you can see, I have enjoyed a breadth of experiences, and encourage you to do the same – to embrace new opportunities and challenges as they come your way.

I close by saying how lucky you are to have the talented and effervescent Lisa Webber at your helm. Enjoy your choral year, and the singing once you are back together again.

*2020 - 21 is ACC's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.*

*Until we can meet again in person, the Anniversary committee wishes to share their ideas for future celebrations.*

***Join in the exciting countdown!***



### **Becky Hollingsworth , 30th Anniversary Committee**

It seems a lifetime ago that we had our first meeting to plan the 30th Anniversary Year for ACC!

There was an excited buzz coming from the dozen or so people sitting around a large square table at the Rec Centre in Arnprior. Ideas were popping! And everyone started choosing the events they would most enjoy assisting with. I chose a Gala Celebration, with dinner and dancing (maybe to a small, excellent combo).

Many of us don't have time or the opportunity to put on our fancy clothes and enjoy each other's company very often. (For instance, the only time I've seen Don Palmer dressed up was when he wore his red, green, and white Christmas socks, under his black pants, at one of our concerts!)

So, check your closets (You may have to lose that COVID 15 lbs.!) or use our Gala as an excuse to shop. Polish your dancing shoes and brush-up on your steps. We've got some partying to do!



*How many Choir Directors does it take to change a light bulb?  
Nobody knows, because no one ever watches a Choir Director.*

**Don Palmer, 30th Anniversary Committee**

I moved to Arnprior from Winnipeg in the summer of 2012 and joined the ACC that fall. I was immediately thrilled to be part of a choir that not only sounded good, but where fun and fellowship was inherent in every practice.

As I met other people, non-choir members, it was evident that the community was proud to have ACC in town. I had several people say things like, "The Christmas season doesn't start until I hear the beautiful Christmas concert from the choir."

For this reason, when we started to brainstorm events for the 30th anniversary year, I thought that it would be important to get involved in more events that attracted the community. The first event of that nature was to again be in the Santa Claus parade. We have been in the parade before, but a return would be a fitting part of our anniversary celebrations.

The other event that I thought would be fun would be a "flash mob". A surprise performance at a popular location would certainly capture attention. Both events would delight the choir members and our supportive community.



*How many Altos does it take to change a light bulb?  
None. It's too high!*

**30** *Years of Singing*  
**Let Music Surround Us**

Here are the answers to September's Quiz. How did you do?

1. *What year was the ACC established?*  
**1991**
2. *What Ottawa-based organist/teacher gave Ian his initial start in Organ Performance Studies?*  
**Jennifer Loveless of Notre Dame Cathedral-Basilica, Ottawa**
3. *Name the most famous Christmas "oratorio" that Handel composed. Hint: the audience traditionally stands up in one section*  
**Handel's Messiah. Story: King George II stood up during the Hallelujah chorus at the Messiah's 1743 London premiere. When the King stands, everyone stands! No one really knows why ... perhaps overcome with emotion, a sense of reverence or maybe just a bad case of gout.**
4. *In 2019, what "Halloween Hat" was our esteemed music director wearing?*  
**A halo – of course!**
5. *Which of these is not a vocal type: baritone, mezzo, spinto, countertenor.*  
**Spinto. Lisa is a mezzo; baritone is "in between" tenor & bass; a countertenor, well, google musical examples if you've never heard of one!**
6. *Finish this sequence: DO MI RE FA MI SO FA....*  
**LA SO TI LA DO TI RE DO**
7. *In November 2015, who was our choir workshop leader*  
**Linda Crawford. Linda contributed our September Choral Inspiration**
8. *In 2019 ACC performed Haydn's Missa Brevis in F. What does missa brevis mean?*  
**Short mass – literally!**
9. *Which two universities did Lisa attend?*  
**University of Lethbridge and University of Ottawa**
10. *What is the password for our websites' Members Corner?*  
**accsings**



**You'll find the answers in next month's newsletter.  
If you attended Lisa and Ian's sessions in  
September this quiz will be a breeze.**

### October Quiz

1. Name the muscle that engages when we take a deep, low breath?
2. What is Ian's favourite genre of music? Which composer would he choose to perform?
3. What is the best vocal exercise for smoothing out our upper and lower registers?
4. In the time signature 6/8, how many eighth notes can be found in one bar of music? Bonus: how many "pulses" do we typically count in 6/8 time?
5. List all the words that are "diphthongs" in this song lyric. *"She's like the swallow that flies so high"* (Newfoundland Folksong)
6. Name two differences between a community choir and a church choir.
7. When you have a very long phrase or section in choral singing and the director says you cannot breathe for 20 bars (!) what can the singer do to create the desired effect?
8. Name the 2019 documentary that features an organ competition following young organists in search of success. (Ian has several friends in this film, and he was even cheering them on in the audience!)
9. When exercising fast, clear consonants, should you use a voiced consonant or a voiceless consonant?
10. How many altos does it take to change a lightbulb? (Don's session joke of the week! I'm an alto, and I actually got a chuckle over this one!)

Speaking words of wisdom, let it ...



## Poem

O great and most merciful conductor,  
We have erred and strayed from your beat like lost sheep,  
We have waited on our fellow choristers to sing the first note,  
We have offended against the dynamic markings,  
We have sung those notes which we ought not to have sung,  
We have left unsung those notes which we ought to have sung,  
And there is no tunefulness in us.

But thou, O conductor, have mercy on us miserable singers,  
Succour the chorally challenged,  
Restore thou them that need extra note bashing,  
Spare thou them that are without pencils,  
Pardon our mistakes and have faith that hereafter,  
We will follow thy direction;  
We will lift up our faces from the pages of our scores,  
And henceforth will fix our eyes on thy shining countenance,  
And sing together in perfect harmony.

## Groaners

Why do fish make such good musicians?  
Because they know their scales.

What kind of soap did the composer use?  
Anti-BACH-terial Soap

### For Halloween

What is a skeleton's favorite instrument?  
The trombone.

What is a mummy's favorite kind of music?  
Wrap Music



*Why didn't Handel go shopping? Because he was Baroque.*



## Eat Your Veggies

Bach Choy



Frank Cilantro



Elvis Parsley



Bob Dillan

