



BCCF Newsletter

Lifelong Singers

Brevis Edition

Dear Readers,

Most of you will be immersed in the sounds of music as you prepare for performances in your community. What a privilege we have to spread the joy of singing in our many areas of the province. What a privilege to meet with others who share this joy, and spend time rehearsing for the pure pleasure of making beautiful music together.

Choral music stirs our emotions and brings us into places of excitement, peace, rest. And how much we needed music, especially during this past season.

The people of British Columbia were affected deeply by the wildfires that ravaged so much of our beautiful province, especially in the Cariboo. As a Kamloops resident, I saw the many people who were evacuated to our city, not knowing what they would face on their return home.

In August, I walked in the city's core which was like a ghost town. My breathing was impaired even though I have never had respiratory problems. I will never forget those days. More than that, my thoughts went to what it would be like to have a chronic respiratory illness—one that is always with you and affects your activities, your dreams and your lifestyle. As dense smoke covered our city, complaints were few when we compared our situation with those who had been evacuated. However, there were many people in the city who were the hidden victims—those who couldn't leave their homes because of the smoke, those with respiratory illnesses that affected their daily breathing at the best of times.

I was inspired by a colleague to check out **The Breathless Choir**. You will find the article on Page 3 of this newsletter.

As Christmas approaches and we lift our voices in beautiful arrangements of songs for the season, may your days be merry and bright. And, let's take a few minutes to pause and be thankful that we can breathe freely and enjoy the cool temperatures with smoke-free skies.

Janette Walker

BCCF Vice-President

Program Chair, BCCF Lifelong Singers



TO CONTACT

THE BC CHORAL FEDERATION:

www.bcchoralfed.com • P.O. Box 4397

Vancouver BC V6B3Z8

1-877-733-9688 or 604-733-9687

bccf@bcchoralfed.com

Upcoming Events - Winter Concerts

BROCK HOUSE KERRISDALE CHOIR, VANCOUVER

The **Brock House Kerrisdale Choir** will be performing a number of sing-outs at community centres and seniors' residences for the Christmas season. Watch for information on the BCCF website for their concert on February 3, 2018.

EnCHOR, VANCOUVER December 8-17, 2017

Vancouver Symphony Orchestra Traditional Christmas Concerts. Once again **EnChor** and the **UBC Opera Ensemble** join forces as the Concert Choir for these festive events, featuring the VSO's Assistant Conductor, **William Rowson**, and the irrepressible **Christopher Gaze**. Go to EnChor's website for concert details at www.ensor.ca/concerts. In addition to its performances with the VSO, EnChor will perform Christmas music on **December 1st** at **Crofton Manor**; sing for children and families at **Vancouver International Airport** on **December 6th**, as they check in for the **Flight to Find Santa**, a project of the **Make a Wish Foundation**; and sing carols at **Canuck Place** hospice on **December 7th**, during their annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony. On **December 9th**, EnChor will perform for the **Callanish Society**, an organization that provides support for people living with cancer.

THE JEWELTONES

Tuesday, December 19, 2017-7:30 pm

The **Jeweltones**, a 12 voice women's group in Kamloops, will be joining several choirs in the city for this year's **Choral Rhapsody** which will be held at the **Sagebrush Theatre**, 1300 9th Avenue. Each choir will perform one or two selections and there will be a Christmas carol singalong included in the program. Admission is with a contribution to the **Kamloops Food Bank**. During the months of November and

December, the choral ensemble will also be presenting their Christmas repertoire at five seniors' residences and a **Rotary Club** function.

KAMLOOPS HAPPY CHORISTERS Tuesday, December 19, 2017-7:30 pm

The **Kamloops Happy Choristers** are joining several choirs in the city for this year's **Choral Rhapsody** which will be held at the Sagebrush Theatre, 1300 9th Avenue. Each choir will perform one or two selections and there will be a Christmas carol singalong included in the program. Admission is with a contribution to the **Kamloops Food Bank**. During the month of December, the choir will also be singing at two seniors' residence. Check www.facebook.com/KamloopsHappyChoristers for more details.

KENT STREET CHORISTERS, WHITE ROCK

Friday, December 1, 2017-7:30 pm

The **Kent Street Choristers**, a choir of 70 men and women who hosted the **BCCF Seniors' Chorfest 2017**, will be performing **Come All, Rejoice! Come All and Sing!** at the **First United Church**, 15385 Semiahmoo Avenue, White Rock. Admission is \$15 (children 12 and under-free). Tickets are available from **Kent Street Centre** (1475 Kent St., WR, 604-541-2231) or choir members.

PEACHLAND VARIETY SINGERS Sunday, December 10, 2017-2 pm

The **Peachland Variety Singers** will be presenting **A Canadian Christmas** at the **50 Plus Activity Centre** on Beach Avenue, Peachland. The performance will feature solos and a Christmas carol singalong. Admission is by donation and refreshments will be served after the concert.

Upcoming Events - Winter Concerts

PENTICTON TUNE-AGERS

Sunday, December 10, 2017-2:30 pm

The **Penticton Tune-Agers Choir** and **Orchestra** will be presenting **Christmas Visions** at the **Shatford Centre**, 760 Main Street, Penticton. Admission is \$15.

If you have any questions about these concerts, please contact Janette Walker at janettewalker01@gmail.com

WEST VANCOUVER

HERITAGE CHOIR

Sunday, December 17, 2017-1:30 pm

The members of the **West Vancouver Heritage Choir** will be performing their annual Christmas concert at the **Seniors' Activity Centre**, 695-21st Street, West Vancouver. Admission is \$7.50 for adults and \$5 for children.

DID YOU KNOW...

There are people who live with chronic respiratory conditions every day. Maybe you know someone who has one of these conditions. Maybe you are one of those people.

There is such inspiration in knowing that singing can have a powerful effect on people who suffer with COPD, asthma, and other respiratory diseases. It can literally save their lives, both physically and emotionally. At the very least, singing improves the quality of their lives.

The Breathless Choir performed in 2015 in New York, singing **Every Breath You Take** to an audience of family and friends. **Gareth Malone**, choir master from Great Britain, spent five days working with eighteen people who had little hope of ever singing again but Gareth was not deterred as he is renowned for inspiring singing with unlikely people. With breathing being a constant challenge, their performance was a momentous victory. Among the choir members were two first responders to the 9/11 attack on New York City who struggle with breathing every day.

In Gareth's words:

"All through history, people have sung and made music because it makes you feel better about yourself. It makes you feel better about your fellow man. It comforts, it consoles, it amuses, and it's so simple; it's just you and your voice,

and your breath. I'm no doctor but I see the impact music has made on these people's lives. And I see how much good singing has done in their souls and I think a little bit in their bodies as well."

You can hear an inspiring YouTube video of **The Philips Breathless Choir** and read the testimonials of this choir online.

Gareth Malone and the Philips Breathless Choir



Spotlight

LINDA LANGEVIN'S STORY

(Linda directs the **Kamloops Happy Choristers** choir and also sings with the **Jeweltones**):

We all have heard the rumors that singing is good for you. From a very personal level, I can tell you that is absolutely true. I have a chemical sensitivity that has caused serious lung issues including asthma and COPD. Every year, my lung capacity diminished until the specialist told me that my life needed to change if I wished to grow old. So began some radical changes in my life. Things like removing carpets, fabric curtains, and limiting my exposure to the outside world. A year later, my lung capacity was stable, but still not so good.

Then I began to sing again in choirs. The specialist was amazed that I was able to recover so much and we both agreed that it was the benefits of singing.

RON HAGERMAN'S STORY

(Ron is on the Board of Directors for the **BC Choral Federation** and is the BCCF Treasurer):

It was in the summer of 2011 when I was diagnosed with COPD, a severe lung disorder. On reflection I must have had it for years.

After I started taking my medicine and spent a week in hospital, I started to adjust to my new life. It was full of restriction including a few inhalers to make sure I could breathe.

I had sung as a boy and now I took time to listen to my brother's choir. I enjoyed it so much and, even though I didn't have much breath, I asked the director if I could join. She auditioned me and said I would be more than welcome. She knew about my breathing problems but felt singing in a choir could allow me to sneak a few extra breaths from time to time.

That was six years ago and I now sing in two choirs. I have sung solos and duets. And the

best part of all? My doctor says I am/ have been doing the best thing I could for my condition. My illness, well described as one that only gets worse, has not done so! Why? Because I exercise my lungs almost every day. I encourage you to watch **The Breathless Choir**. Take it from one who knows— "Singing Works"! Start and enjoy your new, longer, healthier life.



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