



Barry Yamanouchi Celebrates Thirty Years as Accompanist for Orpheus



Barry Yamanouchi 30th anniversary with Orpheus

Alan Sanderson

At its concert on Remembrance Day Vancouver Orpheus Male Choir celebrated Barry Yamanouchi's thirtieth anniversary as the choir's accompanist. The current music director, Liana Savard, who has worked with Barry for almost twenty years, thanked him for his invaluable assistance as not only a great accompanist but sectionals leader and sound engineer as well!

Morna Edmundson, who was the choir's music director at the time when Barry joined the choir in September, 1994, presented the award. Brian Jamieson, the choir's president, presented Barry with a cheque based on contributions from both current and former choir members. Barry received a standing ovation from the sold-out audience.

In 2014 at the Chorfest banquet Barry was the recipient of the BCCF's Joyce O. Maguire award for exemplary service as accompanist for several Lower Mainland choirs. May he continue to serve them for many years yet!

30 YEAR

Anniversary Award

presented to

BARRY YAMANOUCHI

In recognition of your 30 years of dedicated service and contribution as accompanist to Vancouver Orpheus Male Choir with our profound appreciation and gratitude

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**Vancouver Orpheus Male Choir - Harrison Hot Springs Retreat.
September 2024**

The Orpheus Retreat

(Harrison Memories)

Jamie Thomson

And there we stood by the lake, Cameras searching for neat,
Not really knowing the meaning
Of the word retreat.

It could mean a place away
From the urban war. Or it could mean turn and leave the battle
Roar.

Or it could mean to have another cocktail to treat
Yourself once more, after all isn't that really what life is for?

For whatever reason the time had come for there is music out there to be conquered and won.
Soon floating in the pool and the setting sun.

And now to the pool and the rising of notes to be sung
as we bobbed and swayed in harmony like dolphins crooning one by one.

And the audience exploded, that is all but one, who was onshore wetter than water, and a stranger to fun.

But now off to the pub a good meal and a sing along for all to join in,
The spirit lifting to the rafters smiling within.

Now to tomorrow and the challenge once more to catch the meaning of the notes and timing to develop and explore.

And so to the meaning of retreat, is it to build, perfect and repeat? Oh, I guess it really depends on how you point, nod, and don't retreat.



Editorial

Mac Jones



Deadlines, deadlines, searching for material, finding time to sit down to write "something". As I sit at a tiny desk in a tiny (400 sq. Ft.) park model trailer in Indio, California, these are my thoughts regarding my promise to work with Rob to put together something that might hopefully pass as worthy

material for inclusion in the December issue of the Orpheus Herald. The fact that many of our fellow Orpheus members will not see the sunny side of 70 years of age again has some bearing on my choice of theme for this editorial. How does one write something of value that has the theme of "ageing" and how to deal with it?

You have all likely heard the trite expression regarding age that goes something like this.... "If I had known I was going to reach this age, I would have taken better care of myself". Although this phrase is essentially meant to be humorous it does carry some sense of responsibility. What would any of us have done differently to prepare us for "racing" into our seventies, or eighties, or with some luck, walking slowly into our nineties? Likely not much different from what we have done, unless we abused our health to our detriment and then found out almost too late that this was not a good idea.

In my humble opinion (and Margot says I have never had one of those), most of us had some early beginnings in the field of music, either with piano lessons, instrument lessons, or even voice lessons; and these events were fortunate for all of us even though there were times that were not as pleasant as getting outside to play with friends and not be forced to do something that seemed somewhat "foreign", such as practicing the piano. Were we not fortunate enough to have parents or friends who did their best to promote this "avocation", I would venture to say many of us here in Orpheus would not be here, simply because we were exposed to something greater than ourselves and saw and heard something that would stay with us for the rest of our lives.

Getting back to the beginnings of this phase of our lives, there was often a motivation to continue that was a bit more than just having to keep at it and

satisfy Mom or whoever it was who insisted on practice. If I may, I would like to illustrate what happened to me over the many years. I think many of you will be able to identify with some parts of this. In my case, the endless hours of boring practice took on a new meaning when I discovered that I could pick out songs playing one note of melody and eventually added chords to augment the melody, much to my Mom's pleasure. From then on, I needed no impetus or urging to practice. I loved to play "by ear" and now there was a problem getting me to practice the lesson material. This as it turns out is not that "uncommon" among us Orpheans. Without formal training of any sort, many of our members have picked up music in some form just by being patient and understanding the joy it gave us simply by being part of something previously unknown.

In an earlier edition of The Herald, I ran through the various steps I did to get to the point where I almost chose music as a career as an apprentice flautist with the Royal Canadian Artillery Band in Halifax, NS. I have often wondered what my life would have been like if I had taken up that offer rather than attending University and studying something else. Music, however, in all its various forms made a lasting impression on me and it stays with me to this day. And why does this happen, one may ask? It is because music is different, especially to those who have no idea what it is and I feel sorry for those who do not have the ability or the desire to get something "more" out of any of the various forms of music. My high school music teacher, who in many ways I regarded as my mentor was influential in my decision made at the tender age of 18. He said that whatever I decided to do, that music would always have an important place in my future. Thankfully he was so right!

Music is not for everybody! I must state that at the outset. My Mom had the wisdom to make me aware of the biblical story of the man who had a "talent" and did not use it and what he suffered because of his ignorance. That was enough for me to keep on "truckin" and continue with music in its many forms. And I am so very glad that I did! Singing as part of a male voice chorus has been arguably one of the most enjoyable parts of my life to this point and my wish is for it to continue as long as I am able to give it my best shot!

As I reflect at this age on what my life has been, I can report that music has been one of the most important parts of my life, my love of family not withstanding, for which I am eternally grateful.

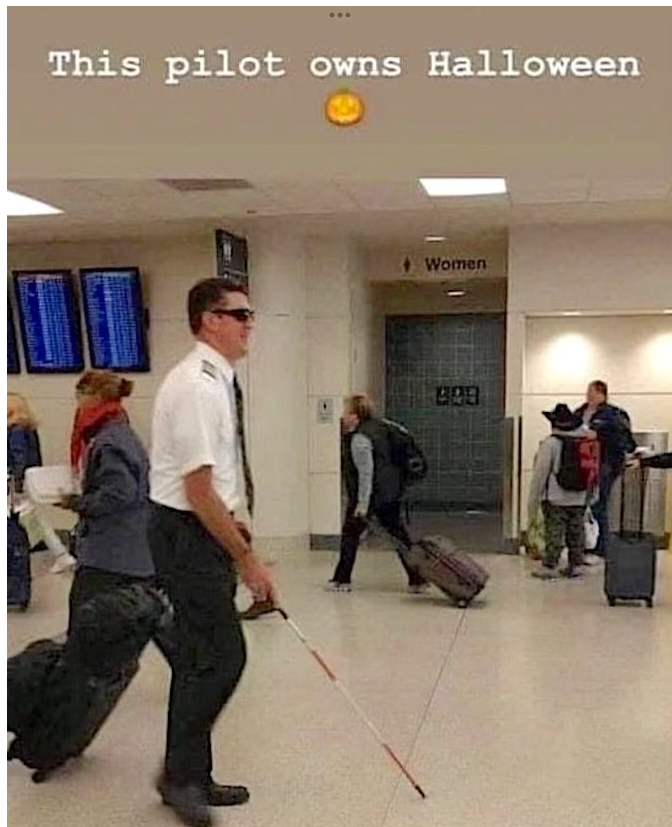
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VOMVC has been my social salvation and I have enjoyed all the events associated with the choir. Spending time in California for the past 21 years has also been a pleasure for me and for Margot and we have associated ourselves while there with a choir (of sorts...) that sort of fills in the gaps that we miss when we cannot be with Orpheus.

At this age, music has more importance for me than it did in my younger years not only in the "musical sense" but in addition it has afforded all of us in Orpheus an opportunity for continuing social contact, which as we all realize is a very important component of successful ageing. John Donne wrote many years ago that "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main." Now I understand what he meant by that.

It is gratifying to see that we care for those of us who were stalwart past members (Eric Davies) and we choose to honour his past commitment to Orpheus. It illustrates that we have a heart, we are more than just a male voice choir and we care for those who have been a part of Orpheus in the past and who deserve our honour and respect.

And with that, may I take this opportunity to wish all of you peace and tranquility in 2025 and hopes for another great year of choral singing!!



Who is Mario Romero?



Mario Romero is one of our newest members having joined Orpheus in January of 2024. Although Mario doesn't have any formal musical training, he's been passionate about music since childhood. Mario's grandparents used to say "I can tell when Mario is coming back home from school, because I can hear him singing at a distance".

Back in Mexico, Mario's wife encouraged him to learn how to play guitar to accompany his singing, so he got an old guitar and a book of guitar chords from a friend, and he has been playing ever since in parties and friends' get-together events. Mario enjoys singing karaoke and many friends ask him to sing along with them, so he can support them and act as back-up when friends lose their way through the song.

At the present time Mario has a small collection of musical instruments including some guitars, a Bolivian charango, a Turkish darbuka, a Peruvian cajon and many other percussion instruments.

Mario retired from work in January of 2023 and keeps active playing pickleball a couple of times a week and enjoys traveling abroad 2 or 3 times a year. The list of countries he has visited around the world is steadily increasing.

In December of 2023 Mario was invited by Harold Shubert to sing with Orpheus. Mario enjoys singing together with his fellow choristers and is very grateful for the opportunity to learn to read music in a formal setting and be part of the wonderful world of Orpheus concerts.



Reflections of a Tour

Glen Davis



On Wednesday this week (*late June*) I drove from Halifax to Cape Breton. As I passed the Holiday Inn Express in New Glasgow I had a moving memory of that lovely Syrian family who so graciously opened their café on a Tuesday night to serve us so hospitably, and the tears they shed as we sang to them as we left. I made a stop in

Antigonish to visit the home of the Peace by Chocolate business. It is a very successful chocolate factory run by another Syrian refugee family. They now employ 50 workers, mostly Syrian. Our Kerrisdale Church sells their generously discounted chocolates every Christmas season to raise funds for our refugee sponsorship program.

Then, I crossed the causeway onto Cape Breton, had a delicious seafood chowder lunch with great coconut cream pie, passed the Spruce Brewery and the Herring Choker Café, and the signs for the Gaelic College. Then I persuaded my old Corolla to make that tough climb to the peak of Kelly's Mountain which proudly displays this sign: "You have reached the summit of Kelly's Mountain. You are 242 m above sea level." I can still hear our bus erupting in laughter at the astounding height of this little hill. Then on to Sydney and out to Marion Bridge and the beautiful Mira River. Thinking about our ceilidh in the packed community centre, topped off with singing Song for the Mira with the audience brought a tear to the eye. I wish you all could come back and spend more time here sometime soon!

BTW, we survived the heat dome but the 35-degree heat (44 degrees on the humidex) made my tennis game on Thursday a bit uncomfortable,

Have a great summer everyone.



On getting old:
It's scary when you start making
the same noises as your coffee maker

Henley on Todd

Bud Rosenberg



Most of you have heard about the famous regatta, Henley on Thames. But have you heard about the Henley on Todd? This regatta is held in the Australian outback city of Alice Springs. The city is located in roughly the geographical center of the Great Sandy Desert and is very hot and very dry. The river running through the city is the Todd River. Every year the city hosts their own Henley Regatta but, as most things Australian, with a twist. The Todd River has no water flowing in it except during the short, unpredictable wet season.



Years ago someone, probably a nostalgic Englishman, came up with the idea of holding a regatta on the dry river bed. What? Boats need water to float on! Not in Alice Springs! You see, the boats they have no bottoms. They are crafted with tubular frames with light material sides from chine to sheer. A team of "rowers" (4 or 8 intrepid sailors likely fueled by copious amounts of beer and wine) lift the boats and with feet free have foot races on the dry river bed. For those of you who watch YouTube do a search for Henley on Todd. No doubt about it these Australians can make fun from preposterous conditions.

Years ago we traveled to Uluru (formerly known as Ayres Rock) via Alice Springs. During our stay in Alice Springs we were treated to a desert thunderstorm. It something to behold! The downpour quickly filled the Todd River and washed out one of the bridges spanning it. The storm caused widespread flooding. But not for long. The next morning the river was almost dry again. These are weather extremes that one must see to believe. There was no regatta scheduled for that day.

Liana's Bobblehead

Rob Forbes

Our fabulous Artistic Director, Liana Savard, celebrated her birthday on October 18th. It occurred to me that she has reached the pinnacle of her success in her profession. In the performing arts world and more particularly in sports, that success is frequently marked by the presentation of a bobblehead figurine in the image of the recipient. It followed that now would be the perfect moment for Liana's image to be added to the bobblehead Hall of Fame. And so it came to be.



The Trails Test (Thoughts on Music and Life)

James Hayden Thomson

Looking down from the
mountain we've climbed
When the clouds shift
From time to time,
We can see trails
In the brush and pines
and wonder how we
made it here, made
The climb.



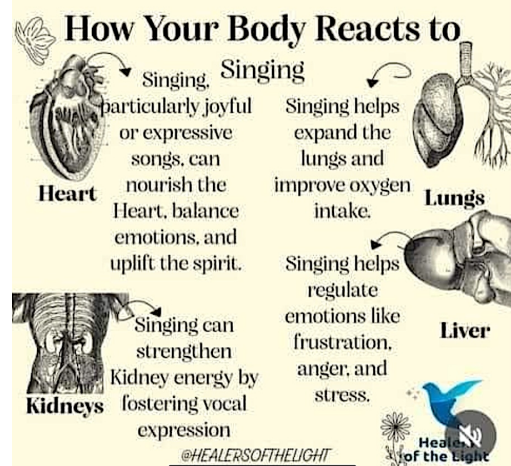
The pure paths were
Easily sped with a smiling star so quickly read.
The camps by the creeks
The fires, the nights song far too short, calling,
gone.

Then the other trails read from the hill,
where the trail ended the night still,
Shreds clutching shadows preying for dawn.
The suns smile, the only hope to be drawn.

But still you craved the summit, you moved on
Past the ruins, youth gone.
You held the meaning
To stand the summit
Alone, strong.

So maybe, in hindsight
The hard trails were the best,
the ones that called your test,
your spirit,
your resolve to rise above, change, evolve.

The easy trails are the lure
Straight ahead, sure.
But it's hardship that builds character, you endure,
That makes the summit so
Sweet, so pure.





World Premier of Sophia Colpitts TTB song "The Good Old Days"

The Good Old Days

Sophia Colpitts, Composer

On November 11, 2024, The Vancouver Orpheus Male Choir performed "The Good Old Days", a song composed and arranged for TTB voicing by Sophia Colpitts. This amazing 16 year old high school student attended the performance along with her family. Sophia expressed her appreciation at her introduction to the audience and our choir: "Thank you for inviting me to the performance! It was so lovely. The choir did an excellent job of expressing the meaning of the piece. It was a pleasure to watch!"

We look forward to future compositions by Ms. Polpitts and congratulate her on her talent.

Music Hath Charms To Soothe The Savage Breast

Dr. Allan Schwartz, Ph.D. Guest Contributor

This famous quotation from William Congreve (1670-1629) evidently has a lot more truth to it than he ever realized four hundred years ago.

To complete the quote: "Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast. To soften rocks, or bend the knotted oak."

According to Dr. Michael Miller, Director of the Center for Preventive Cardiology at the University of Maryland Medical Center, listening to music that makes you feel good could have health benefits that might prevent a heart attack.

According to Dr. Miller, earlier studies showed that music affects heart rate and blood pressure. In addition, he states that laughter and prayer improve cardiac performance.

Dr. Miller's research group selected a group of healthy participants for his study of the effects of music on the cardio vascular system. Subjects selected a type of music that was joyful and made them feel good and a second type of music that made them feel anxious. Using a blood pressure cuff, the researchers discovered that the people who listened to joyful music had an increase in blood flow of the brachial artery, a very healthy response. However, the artery flow decreased when the subjects listened to anxiety producing music.

What is very significant is that the increased artery flow was equal to what people experience after doing aerobic exercise.

So, what this means is that for you to remain heart healthy, it is important to do such things as: a) be careful about what you eat, b) maintain a healthy weight, c) exercise regularly d) provide yourself with the opportunities to laugh as much as possible, and, finally e) listen to music that you find joyful and is not anxiety producing. Performing these types of activities on a regular basis might allow you to prevent a future heart attack or stroke. At least, that is what the findings seem to suggest.

How it works:

So, keeping your heart and mind healthy is very much a "laughing matter." You see, stress is a killer. Stress pumps lots of adrenaline into our system, resulting in the release of all types of bad stuff that clogs our arteries. However, the activities discussed above reduce and even reverse the impact of stress. Music, laughter, exercise and all the others, help release endorphins that create a

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wonderful, relaxed and euphoric feeling. That is just the opposite of what work and other problems does to us.

Let yourself laugh and, listen to happy music. "Soothe that savage breast" and live longer and happier.

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About MentalHealth.com

MentalHealth.com is a health technology company guiding people towards self-understanding and connection. The platform provides reliable resources, accessible services, and nurturing communities. Its purpose is to educate, support, and empower people in their pursuit of well-being.

Dr. Allan Schwartz is a medical writer with over 30 years of clinical experience as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. He writes about various mental health disorders, eating disorders, and issues related to relationships, stress, trauma, and abuse.

Photos from rehearsal and concert on November 9th at the Seaquam Theatre.
Orpheus Artistic Director Liana Savard with Band Director Jim Tempest.
Orpheus MC Glen Davis.



Rehearsal with the Delta Concert Band at the Seaquam Secondary School Theatre

River Cruising the Rhône

Rob Forbes



We love to travel, and what better way to celebrate our 50th anniversary than to take a river cruise in France. A few years ago we were introduced to river cruising with the Australia based Scenic Company. It's an all inclusive cruise; all accommodation, excursions, food, drinks and services are included. We plied the waters of the Bordeaux region; the Gironde, Dordogne and Garonne, a countryside dotted with multitudes of famous French vineyards.

Fast forward to the Spring of 2024. Post the lean year of COVID, everyone was craving to travel. Deals were to be had and we were on that list, considering an appropriate destination to celebrate our anniversary. It was perfect timing that Scenic was enticing past patrons with two-for-one deals. We also had WestJet travel awards as well as a companion discount fare. So we booked an eleven day Scenic cruise on the French Rhône river.

Our itinerary was flying economy plus from Vancouver via Calgary (grrr) to Paris, a couple of nights in the Gare de Lyon area, take the TGV train to Lyon where we stayed at an ultra luxury hotel for a night before embarking on the [Scenic Sapphire](#) "spaceship". We were gifted a soon to expire credit from close friends of ours, so we booked a Junior Suite. There were about 140 odd guests already milling around getting acquainted.

Arriving in Paris, we spent a couple of days reacquainting ourselves with the wonderful cafes and bistros that are located everywhere. Our hotel was a block from the train station, so with just a carry-on bag each we walked to the SNCF station hopping onto the TGV (Tres Grand Vitesse" high speed train to Lyon. Once settled into the comfy seats we ambled through the city to the open countryside accelerating to an easy 320 kph. Looking out to the beautiful green scenery of rolling pastures, woods and small towns we notice the words "laissez vous rêver", "Let Yourself Dream" etched on the train windows. Indeed!



Lyon is the World Capital of Gastronomy, right up our alley! We wasted no time and headed out for a walk about to inspect the immediate vicinity for eating possibilities. We decided to splurge for dinner when we found a Paul Bocuse restaurant just a block away. Paul Bocuse was a pioneer of nouvelle cuisine, known for his innovative and high-quality restaurants. He received many awards and honours, including Chef of the Century, and the Legion of Honour.

The day of embarkation we joined in on a precursor event to the cruise; a group cooking demonstration making chou pastries. Carol and I being foodies, ended up familiarizing several of our soon to be shipmates with some basic kitchen skills.

Stepping on board, with the obligatory glass of champagne in hand, we were introduced to the crew in the spacious lounge. The events coordinator outlined the plans for the cruise and excursions while our luggage was brought to our cabin. I won't detail our daily itineraries in detail, but note the highlights instead.



Scenic being an Australian company, most of the guests are from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the UK which suited us

just fine. We have developed a close relationship with several of the shipmate couples.

All of the meals on board were excellent with a large selection from the buffet for all three sittings. Made to order eggs for breakfast and specialty items for lunch as well as for dinner. Also an invitation for dining with the Captain at least once

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on the tour. Wines of the region were served daily matching the locale we were sailing in. On board entertainment happened every night, except for a few special music events off board. Singing and dancing occurred after dinner when no evening excursions were planned.

There were several excursions to choose from every day, from bus tours to guided walkabouts in the towns and villages we moored at as well as hiking and bicycle tours.



Although most Burgundy wine tastings are at the “négociants” or non vineyard wine makers, small vineyards do make their own wines and offer tours. We visited one such 1re Cru vineyard called “[Château de Garnerot](#)” owned by two delightful ladies. The vines were just budding and the latest vintage was sumptuous.



The next tour was to the famous “[Village Blanc](#)”, not just a restaurant dedicated to the cooking skills of George Blanc, but an entire village, a foodie paradise with a 3 Michelin star restaurant. We attended a cooking demonstration at his cooking school where several chefs prepared some Bresse chicken that has appellation d'origine contrôlée status.

We were also treated with an “amuse bouche”



made from a pound of butter, an equal amount of foie gras and other high fat ingredients to

guarantee the onset of a heart event.

Next was a day in Avignon, a walled city and site of the [Avignon Papacy](#) from 1309 to 1376 during which seven successive popes resided in Avignon. A delightful place to walk through with many curved street, lots of high end clothes, jewelry and shoe stores. The palace is magnificent, fully furnished and just the place for a grand dinner complete with a Baroque string quartet.



The following morning included a tour of the market with the ship's chef. Cheese, cheese, glorious cheese, and meat and spices and... well, you get the picture. YUM! Back on board we had another cooking experience with the chef where we each ended up with a rather large steak. Burp!



Farther down the river we experienced the French Grand Canyon and “Grotte de la Madeleine”, an

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impressive cave replete with very large stalagmites and stalactites.

Back in Lyon for two more days. First an evening concert at the sumptuously decorated hall "Collège lycée Ampère" where we were treated to an a cappella concert with ten singers. I was right in my

element; a glass of wine in hand and ears piqued. We were invited to sing along with two songs, both of which I knew.

On our last cruise day we visited the [Basilica of de Notre-Dame de Fourvière](#), a UNESCO World Heritage Site perched on the bluff overlooking the city. The inside is lit by 6 stained-glass windows offering a light emphasizing a rich decor. The materials used for the building and the decoration rival in quality and beauty, white marble from Carrara, pink granite from the North of Italy, blue marble from Savoy, green onyx, silver and gold pieces, union of ebony and ivory. Stunning!



Topping it off, a walk through the town weaving through curved narrow streets with shops, shops and more shops.... and restaurants! A fitting end to fabulous cruise.

On the way back home we spent two more days in Paris where we had dinner with a UK couple we met on our first Scenic cruise. They came by train from London via the Chunnel to have dinner with

us at a great little restaurant a block from the Eiffel Tower. A perfect end to our 50th wedding anniversary celebration.



Speaking of travelling, there is no truth to the rumour that Alan Sanderson's attire includes wool socks with his shorts.



Sailing the Panama Canal

Mac Jones



This "cruise" had been on my bucket list for some time and it seemed a good way to celebrate 50 years of marriage and see the Panama Canal. We left Vancouver harbour on Sept. 29 on board the MV Nieuwe Amsterdam, of the Holland America Cruise line.

There were many interesting ports to visit enroute in the US, Mexico, and Central America, and eventually the Panama Canal following some 16 days at sea and visiting ports. One of our favourite stopover / visits was Hualtco in Mexico and I would recommend that area for a visit. Very interesting. Great weather. Lovely people!

Seeing the Panama Canal was, however, the highlight of this voyage and it did not disappoint. Some of the facts that I had previously entertained were about to be corrected. For one thing, I was completely surprised by the amount of ships waiting to use the canal on the Pacific side. Just before we entered early one morning, I stopped counting at about 50 ships waiting. Close to the same number was noticed on the Caribbean side when we exited the canal some 12 hours later. When the canal was completed many decades ago there were no bridges across this waterway, where now there are 3, connecting North and South America.

There is not sufficient space here to go into detail on the history of the construction; however, a few facts warrant mention. The French, who had some experience with canals (the Suez Canal was one of their accomplishments), gave up on this project



and the Americans took over the task and were eventually successful. The Americans took over much of the land surrounding the canal zone (which became a separate country) during the construction and for some years following the completion until 1978, when the canal zone was returned to Panama.

The Panama canal is not "new", having being completed in 1914, which is a phenomenal engineering feat, considering the state of the technology at that time. The cost of completion in today's \$ was over \$15 billion. The cost in terms of lives lost is even more impressive. Over 5600 lives were lost out of 56000 workers during the 8 years of construction mostly to malaria, which was attributed to insect plague, mainly the mosquito. The canal is considered as one of the man made wonders of the world, and over 1 million vessels transit the canal on an annual basis.

To relate an example of the enormity of the problem, enough earth was excavated to cover the island of Manhattan to a depth of over 2 metres. The construction necessitated the creation of a large lake in the middle of the passageway which provides enough water for the operation of the canal as well as fresh water for the country of Panama.



The cost of the one way passage for the ship I was on was close to \$45,000 US, Panama being the sole beneficiary of this amount. The canal, however, is close to running out of water for use in the day to day operation. Yes, global warming has had some bearing on this as the lake in the middle is refilled with rainwater which for the past decade has been steadily decreasing, thus necessitating the building of a newer and larger canal to the Northwest of the original canal which can handle larger vessels and use considerably less water due to modern engineering improvements in hydrology.

If you have seen pictures of the canal in operation, you might have noted that there are small powerful

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“locomotives” that I had thought were used to pull the ships through the canal from both sides. That was my perspective which was totally incorrect. These small powerful machines are designed to place the ship, using cables and ropes, in the exact middle of the canal without it touching the sides, leaving a mere 2 feet between the ship and the canal sides, while the ship powered itself through the various locks. I watched this intently as we transited the canal, expecting a small aberration or deviation which would cause the Nieuwe Amsterdam to scrape the side of the ship. Didn't happen! Amazing precision!

Prior to the creation of the Panama Canal, the only way to sail from the Atlantic to the Pacific or vice versa was to go the long way around via the tip of South America; however, now that global warming is becoming a reality, the Arctic Ocean is providing another alternative by providing a safe Northwest Passage. By the way the late Stan Rogers had written a song about the Northwest Passage, which many of you have likely heard.

Anyone out there interested in writing a song about the Panama Canal? Perhaps one has already been written; however, it is not to my knowledge, and it very likely would not carry with it the romance that has been a part of the “Northwest Passage”.

**IS ANYONE REALLY
COMFORTABLE
HOW THEY SAY
WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE?**

Morna Edmundson Appointed Member of the Order of Canada



The Governor General of Canada



Morna Edmundson is an award-winning choral director and the co-founder of the Elektra Women's Choir. An inspiring mentor whose innovative programming, commissions and engagement serve as a lasting legacy

for the choral community, she has helped establish Vancouver's national and worldwide reputation as a choral mecca.

Morna was the Founding Director of the Vancouver Orpheus Male Voice Choir.



Terry Randall, Music Committee Chair, and Artistic Director Liana Savard managing the recordings of twenty-one songs submitted by Orpheus members to consider for future repertoire





VOCE members Brian Jamieson, Terry Randall and Ron Fielden synchronizing their schedules.



Rehearsal afterglow at the River's Reach Pub. Phil Haagenson, Jennifer Homes, John Hawkes, Ron Featherstone, Glen Davis, Jim Kirk and Rob Forbes (*behind the camera*).
Come join us after any Tuesday rehearsal.



Surprise!
A pretty good look alike, yes?



What to do during a power outage?
Rehearse your music!



Who owns a purple pickup? David Justice!



Orpheus open rehearsal night on December 10. An evening when members bring family or friends interested in singing with the choir. This annual event is an opportunity for us to encourage potential new members to join the choir.



VYC Heading to Korea

Carrie Tennant, Artistic Director

We are thrilled to announce that VYC is one of five choirs invited to perform at the Jeju International Choral Festival taking place this coming February in Korea! This is such a prestigious event, and truly - we are BEYOND excited. The calibre of the invited choirs is extremely high, and we are SO proud to be representing North America.

As you can imagine, for an event with this level, it is essential that every one of our singers be able to participate, so that we are able to sing our very best for this international audience. This is not a tour or a pleasure trip -- these singers are traveling to Korea to represent our city and our country.

Accessibility remains a significant challenge. Seventy percent of the nearly 600 singers in our organization come from equity-deserving families, and one in four wouldn't be able to participate in

VYC without financial aid. Our singers are university students, and high school students with part-time jobs. Some come from families where the singers' part time jobs help contribute to monthly living costs for their families, others are from families brand-new to Canada with parents working two jobs, and some of our singers are all on their own, living on the other side of the world from their families. VYC is determined to help make this opportunity possible for everyone in our ensemble.

Our goal is ambitious: we aim to raise \$120,000 to cover half of the \$2,300 flight cost for each of our 70 young singers. This support is central to making this opportunity accessible to every voice in our choir. A gift of \$1,150 funds half a flight, but every contribution, large or small, is an important step towards making this opportunity possible for ALL of our singers.

The Vancouver Youth Choir is a registered charity, and can accept tax deductible donations and issue tax receipts.

With much love, and many thanks,

Carrie Tennant

Artistic Director, Vancouver Youth Choir

Note: Orpheus donated \$500 toward this trip.

Support VYC's Journey to Jeju

Orpheus Winds it Up!

Mac Jones

Our music season wound up with a great party on Saturday, December 14 at the home of Charles and Barbara Carington Smith. Once again, it was a tremendous success and was attended by many VOMVC members and spouses who enjoyed a great evening of fine food, and great singing.

Great food notwithstanding, the highlight of the evening had to be Marilyn Rushton performing at the keyboard and leading the singing of many selections, helped ably by our super competent artistic director Liana. Especially delightful was the selection "Six White Boomers", a tribute to our friends in Australia who do not have the privilege of a Santa Clause reindeer troop. The Boar's Head Carol was also a surprise and a very welcome piece of history for all to enjoy.

We are now having a well deserved hiatus and will commence our musical activities on January 7, 2025. Happy Holidays to all and best wishes for all in 2025.

[Click here to connect to John Hawkes Christmas Party video.](#)



Rob Forbes and Ron Davis carry in the Boar's Head (*made by Rosalind Sanderson*) for Alan Sanderson's rendition of the "Boar's Head Carol". This carol was sung in Queen's College, Oxford, a tradition going back to the early 1500's.



Marilyn Rushton leading us in a carol sing, guided by Liana Savard and Ken Rushton.



The Orpheus Christmas Party in full swing. Our appreciation to Barbara and Charles for once again hosting this event.



Ron Fielden and Brian Webster in full Christmas Sweater regalia.

Memories of Rita

Alan Sanderson



Liana has told us that one of the songs we will be learning next spring is "Home, I'll Be." Jean MacLennan, the director of Shuswap Men's Chorus in Salmon Arm, has suggested that we sing it with her choir when we perform with them there on May 24th. Her choir is already singing it, and she thinks together we

will sound wonderful!

The song was written by Rita MacNeil and released in 1990 when she was at the height of her fame both in Canada and internationally. Most of you have probably not had a chance to look at the lyrics yet, but they are essentially a paean to Cape Breton (Glen Davis will love that!). The most recurring line apart from "Home, I'll Be" is "I caress you, oh, Cape Breton in my dreams".

Those of you who have been in the choir for several years will know that this is the second song by Rita MacNeil that we will be singing. For many years we sang "Working Man" with the much-missed Terry Probert singing the solo. Those of you who have been in the choir even longer will remember that on our first Maritimes tour in 2003 we actually sang "Working Man" outside Rita's teahouse in Big Pond in Cape Breton. Unfortunately, Rita was not there at the time.

The arrangement of the song that we will be singing is by Larry Nickel, an arranger who is well known to us as we commissioned him to make the arrangement of James Rankin's "Fisherman's Son" that we performed on our recent Maritimes tour as well as in local concerts.

So, as you can see, between Rita and Larry, we have close connections to this song. I'm looking forward to learning and singing it!

Note: All text in blue is [hypertext](#). Click on text to take you to the Internet site for this topic.

The Vancouver Orpheus Male Choir acknowledges that we perform on the traditional territory of the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the x̱məθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

Merry Christmas Orpheus

Brian Jamieson, President



I hope that everyone had a great Christmas dinner on Sat Dec 14. Thank you to John Hawkes for putting out a little video. Looks like a great time was had by all. And thanks to Charles and Barbara for hosting the dinner.

I enjoyed an excellent birthday weekend in Birch Bay. I had a fabulous dinner in Ferndale.

It was great that the choir got to do at least one small Christmas concert. Everyone enjoyed singing along with Eric at his senior's residence in Ladner. It sure seemed like all the people there enjoyed the singing.

For Christmas I hope that everyone gets to spend some time with friends and family. And I hope that everyone can get out and enjoy some Christmas lights somewhere. I was able to go to Pioneer Park in Ferndale and see how they had lit up pioneer homes with Christmas lights. It made me think of how they light up Heritage Village in Burnaby.

People seem to have their traditions at Christmas time. I hear lots of people watch and sing along to The Sound of Music. One of my favourite things to watch on YouTube is the 1987 movie of A Child's Christmas in Wales. It stars Denholm Elliott. It was so neat to see the place where Dylan Thomas wrote his stories while we were in Wales on tour.

So, have fun and enjoy life this Christmas.

See everyone in 2025!



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