

NEWCOMBE NOTES NOVEMBER 2023

MANY THANKS TO THESE AMAZING BOARD MEMBERS AND OTHER VOLUNTEERS

Music DirectorKathryn Whitney
Assistant ConductorKristina Stevens
AccompanistRobert Dukarm
President.....Peter Beliveau
Vice-presidentJohn Sease
TreasurerKeith Beange
Music LibrarianNorma Jee
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Secretary..... Mike Dunham-Wilkie
PiggybankCathy Stevenson
Webmaster & LivestreamingTom Fyles
Score PDFs for the website, voice tracks
and video streaming Heini Mathis

WEBSITE NEWS

Please check out our lovely new Newcombe Singers [website](#), a gift from Kathryn. The website has lots of room for photos, too.

New Logo: Thank you Kathryn for designing our beautiful new logo, too! Wow!



SOME AMAZING DONATION NEWS


Message from the President, Newcombe Singers' Board of Directors

Donations to our choir can be a great benefit to the choir and to the music community in general. These funds not only allow us to purchase more new scores and keep our membership fees more reasonable, but also encourage other musicians

and performing groups by hiring them to join us in our performances.

This year Newcombe received a generous anonymous donation which will give us the opportunity to enhance not only our choir but promote the work of talented new musicians in our community. To paraphrase our donor:

"I see such a great value in organizations like Newcombe Singers as a non-auditioned choir. It creates an opportunity for people who may have not had some of the musical advantages that I have been fortunate to receive in my youth and an opportunity to experience the joy of community singing. I would like to contribute to making it as rewarding an experience as possible."

 Peter Beliveau

FAIRWAY COMMUNITY CARDS

Fairway Market supports the community through donations via their Community Card Program. They donate 5% of your spending for groceries when you use the card at their stores.

The process is simple:

- ☐ Obtain a registered card from Peter Beliveau with an identifying number on it that allows the Market to track the amount of the donation dependent on your use of the card.
- ☐ You load your card at the service desk.
- ☐ Use the card to pay at a checkout, and you'll get a receipt with the remaining balance on your card after the completed purchase.
- ☐ Reload the card as your balance decreases.

Newcombe will receive a donation of 5% of the amount that you spend. These amounts are received quarterly.

Please support Fairway Market in their community support for Newcombe Singers.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE



Here we are at the end of October, and the membership list has finally settled itself. Some people have moved on, but left their membership fees as a donation. Thank you for that. And we hope those of you rehearsing only from home will be able to join us for the concert.

So...we have 22 sopranos, 22 altos, 1 tenor, and 9 basses. This should produce an amazing sound at our Christmas concert.

Cheers,  Sheila Grigg



SPRING PLANS...??

If you think your plans for spring will include singing with Newcombe Singers, please advise Norma Jee and Sheila Grigg of your intentions so Norma can order music for you. We can't wait if Heini is to have time to make the practice tracks before Christmas.

Cheers,  Norma Jee

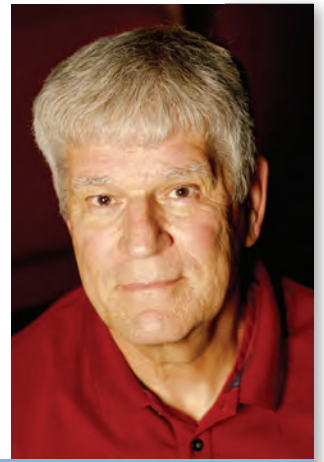
THANK YOU JOHN!

At the end of September, John Sease (now a skipper for Victoria Harbour Tours) offered our choir members two opportunities to go on a tour of the Inner Harbour and the Gorge Waterway. Each tour was 3 hours in length, and proved to be a wonderful bonding time for our choristers as well as a lot of fun.

Those attending heard many stories and learned many things about the history, people and buildings of Victoria. Audrey Griffin, a swimming champion from the 1920's who won all the swimming races from the Empress to the Gorge (Tillicum) Bridge regaled Norma Jee with her stories when they were neighbours. Did you know that Barbara Forsyth acted as Mrs. O'Reilly at Point Ellis House for years? Fran Dearman shared lots of stories about the buildings the naval reserve and merchant seamen used between sailings. So many people had fascinating facts and stories to share.

Thanks so very much, John.

 Marilyn Crump, *Newcombe Notes* editor



NOTES FROM ROBERT...

Bach Advent Concert

December 4th @ 7:00 pm

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (680 Courtney St.)

Selections from Bach's Christmas Oratorio and other Advent Cantatas

Victoria Cantata Ensemble:

Deanna Sills: Alto

Alex Chan: Tenor

Louis Dillon: Bass

David Barss: Trumpet

Robert Jan Dukarm: Organ

Allegra Singers Christmas Concert

1205 Pandora Avenue

Friday, December 8th @ 8 pm

Saturday, December 9th @ 2:00 pm

 Robert Dukarm



MUSIC DIRECTOR'S CORNER – FALL 2023



What a fantastic time I am having with the choir this term! Not only are we singing some of my all-time favourite music, but you are all singing so well. I hear improvements in our tone, intonation, and expression week on week. Thank you all for your willingness to follow me through our somewhat unorthodox warm-ups and techniques exercises. Congratulations to all of you for your great work in rehearsals and in between rehearsals. In your listening time, in your practice time—even when you simply think about choir, and the people in the choir, between rehearsals—you are making an important contribution to our choir culture and through it, to our wonderfully rich, uniquely Newcombe, choral sound. Thank you!

My preparation work for our Festivals of Light concert has all the pleasures of a standard concert prep period (your beautiful sounds, the stimulating challenge of managing our progress, the pleasure of leading this interesting music week to week.) But the fact that this concert was designed to reach out to our community and has brought with it added pleasures and I'm so pleased to share these with you now.

First, I had the great pleasure of attending a morning rehearsal of the choristers at the Chapel of the New Jerusalem at Christ Church Cathedral and watching their director, Donald Hunt, take these talented children through their warm-up and exercises. (The finger-number/scale degree exercise I did with you a few weeks ago came from the cathedral.) As part of their morning rehearsal, 10 girls and

boys auditioned for me, singing an anthem chosen for them by Donald. I heard quiet

voices, confident voices, but all were clearly very accomplished young musicians. I was especially touched to see how much the singers supported one another. They all listened while their colleagues sang, and great whoops went up from the group at the end of every solo. In the end, I chose three singers, Clare, Maya, and Scarlett, and wrote notes to all the others to tell them something I particularly liked about their performance.

Originally, I had said that I would hire two singers, with one on standby (receiving less payment, as they might not sing) in case the others fell ill. In the end, we decided that it would be nicer for the girls if no one was designated as the standby, but this posed budget problems as my budget was fixed. It's testimony to the commitment of the cathedral program to its singers' development that Donald Hunt made a donation to the Newcombe Singers from the cathedral singing budget ensure that all girls would receive the full soloists fee.

Second, learning and arranging the Hanukkah song 'Ma'oz Tzur' has been very interesting. A member of the Congregation Emanu-el, the synagogue in downtown Victoria, will be joining us as our soloist in this piece. Some of our longer-term members may recognize her name—Dr Frances Rosenberg—as a former member of the Newcombe Singers! Frances is a highly accomplished lady, and a sometime singing student of mine. She has taken our score to the Rabbi and they have

produced a wonderful translation for us, and have offered some changes to the text underlay in my score. I had a meeting with Frances this week during which she asked me if I still wanted to sing this piece in light of recent world events. I said to her and say to you as well that when governments attack one another, the people who live under them—or those with connections abroad who may live among us—need our friendship more than ever.

THOUGHTS OF SPRING

I've been hard at work planning our program for next season and have been so enjoying this process. As you will know from our website, our program is called 'Sakura: Songs from the Tree of Life'. It will celebrate the gift of cherry trees to the City of Victoria from our local Japanese community. The concert will be full of lush choral writing and exceptionally beautiful melodies. I'll be combining music by some of our top favourite composers (Bob Chilcott, John Rutter, Imant Raminsh), with spirited renaissance madrigals on the theme of love. We'll also be showcasing music and poetry by Japanese artists, including Ro Ogura, Cait Nishimura, and Joy Kogawa. If you don't know it yet, I encourage you to look up the folksong 'Sakura' to get your heart and your voice ready for Newcombes in springtime.

Finally, I want to take a moment to say thank you to the members of the choir Executive, our Board, the Music Selection Committee, those who run the draws at rehearsal breaks, and our technical team, especially Heini and Tom. The choir runs so smoothly and simply wouldn't exist without your efforts. In the words of another famous group of singers, "Thank you for the music! The songs we're singing. Thanks for all the joy [you're] bringing!" *cont'd.*

HOW TO PRACTICE

A question came in this week that was so important: what is the best way to practice your music? There are three answers to this question, each of them equally important.

First, practice with your open heart. Listen to your music until it becomes familiar and you learn to love it; read your texts as poetry and think about what they mean; learn about your composer and lyricist/poet so you see the piece as a connection between their heart and yours. Think about the whole program and what we are offering our audiences – it will always be a story of some kind on my programs - and where each piece fits into it. Now you know the human story, our starting point for singing. This allows us to sing from the heart.

Second, it is important to practice the gentle hand on your shoulder. The gentle hand is the part of your self that touches you now and again to remind you that learning music is a process and however you are on a given day with your music is the right way to be at that time. You can only know how well you are singing and how well you

are preparing after our concert. Until that happens, your gentle hand will be there to tap you on the shoulder and remind you to take a break when your voice is feeling tired, or when you can't quite hear an interval, or when there are too many notes and you feel overwhelmed. These are the moments for which we have gardens, friends, pets, and the fresh air to walk in.


Finally, once we've taken care of our first two points of practice, the rest is easy. Here is my list:

- ☐ First, read the words and say them over and over slowly in natural speech until you can say them without hesitation.
- ☐ Second, read the rhythms and say them with vocables (ba ba or ta ta, etc) until you can run them without making errors. It is always best to say your rhythms very slowly. You are teaching your mouth, eyes, and breath where the beats are. Never speed up while you are still making errors slowly.
- ☐ Third, put together the rhythm and the words (still no singing). Practice

slowly until you can say the words in the right rhythms. My rule is that if I can do it 5 times without an error, then I can move on to the next part

- ☐ Fourth, start to look at the music. Look at the overview of the melodies, i.e. how long or short, how fast or slow. How many phrases are there? How does your part fit in with the others (same music? Or same rhythm? Or different)
- ☐ Mark up your melodies in relation to the parts of your voice. Which parts will you sing in your high register, middle register, low register? Where might you breath?
- ☐ Finally, start learning your notes, starting always at the end of the piece first. Learning backwards builds in the impulse to know exactly what comes next and how to be prepared for it.
- ☐ Finally, have fun and if you're stuck ask for help. Be easy on yourself! You will definitely get there in the end and will give a great performance!

Wishing you happy singing!

 Kathryn Whitney



In recent years we have had several fundraising initiatives and the gift baskets which we raffle at our concerts have proven to be one of the most successful. In November we will be asking for items

CHRISTMAS GIFT BASKETS

to be donated and to make it easier we will have a list of suggestions which members can sign-up to bring. Audrey and Sheila put them together beautifully and they really are a treat to win.

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A big "Thank you!" to everyone for supporting Piggy Bank—weekly takings have been setting new records! A reminder, tickets are \$1 for one, or a bargain \$2 for three! Items to be raffled are always appreciated.

You can email Cathy at cathyongaliano@gmail.com

PIGGY BANK



CALENDAR – FALL 2023

Nov. 10th	Friday	Remembrance Day 10:00 call ? 10:30 – 12:00 Singing ?	Provincial Legislature
Nov. 14th	Tuesday	Sing-out 6:15 call 6:30 Singing Followed by 2nd half of rehearsal at St. Mary's	Shannon Oaks 2000 Goldsmith Street
Nov. 18th	Saturday	All-Day Rehearsal 1:15 - 3:45 6:30—9:00	St. Mary's Church
Nov. 21st	Tuesday	Sing-Out 6:15 call 6:30 Singing Followed by 2nd half of rehearsal at St. Mary's	The Cridge Centre 1307 Hillside Avenue
Dec. 3rd	Sunday	Carolling at the Carillon call – tbd (±4:00 ??)	RBC Museum Carillon 675 Belleville St
Dec. 9th	Saturday	Dress Rehearsal 1:15 call 1:30 – 3:45 Singing	St. Mary's Church
Dec. 10th	Sunday	Fall Performance 2:00 call 3:00 – 4:30 Singing	St. Mary's Church

NEWCOMBE SINGERS AND COPYRIGHT LAW

Canada follows International Copyright Law, which most of the rest of the world also embraces. We respect each other's intellectual property, whether or not it has been registered with the Copyright Office of any treaty country (Berne Convention, Universal Copyright Convention or World Trade Organization).

This protects people like Robert Dukarm, who is the composer of one of our scores, from the time of creating the work until 75 years after his demise.

The length of time changed from 50 to 75 years on Dec 30, 2022. If the work was already in public domain before that date, the new clause does not apply.

Each time we choose music, I check whether or not the composer is still alive, and/or whether the work is already in public domain. Britten died in 1976 so his work is protected until 2051. Definitely NOT in public domain.

Then I check our database and contact other member librarians in the BCCF, and locally, to see if anyone can lend us scores to meet our needs. If we are asked about borrowing a recently

purchased living composer, I check with that composer to see how they feel about lending. They are trying to make a living.

More publishers are "going virtual", so we can end up having to buy "licenses for copies". We cannot lend or borrow licenses though, and they are limited (sometimes 1 use) or require a minimum number. Each publisher is different.


Mainly we buy paper scores or books. These have to be recorded and stored.

Rest assured that Newcombe Singers has purchased or borrowed legal copies sufficient for our whole choir. But please dispose of your photocopies after our performance. Otherwise we would be breaking copyright law, and so would you.

If you have questions, please email me at Norma Jee normaje2008@gmail.com

If I can't answer them, I'll add them to my list for BC Choral Federation.

Cited: <https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/canadian-intellectual-property-office/en/guide-copyright>

 Norma Jee **Page 5**

HOW YOU CAN HELP PROMOTE THE NEWCOMBE SINGERS AND TICKET SALES FOR OUR CONCERTS

What we can do:

1. SOMETHING NEW—we have just listed our December concert on Eventbrite, and people can purchase tickets now in that way. Selling tickets through Eventbrite will give us more exposure and allow more people in our community to purchase tickets.
2. Promote our choir and concerts on Facebook and Instagram
3. Take one of the beautiful posters for our upcoming concert and post it in a busy place in your neighbourhood or other key location (seniors' center, church, pharmacy, coffee shop, etc.)
4. Sell tickets to our concerts. Advance tickets will be available for choir members to sell to friends and family, as usual
5. Tickets will be for sale at the door, as always, on concert days

Would you like to become the Go-to Publicity person for Newcombe Singers? If this interests you, please speak to anyone on the board of directors.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

NEWCOMBE

SINGERS

present:

FESTIVALS OF LIGHT

*A concert welcoming light's return in
Christian, Hindu, Jewish, and Indigenous song*

featuring:

A Ceremony of Carols by Benjamin Britten

with McKenna Jennings, harp & soloists from
the Christ Church Cathedral Chorister Program

Kathryn Whitney, *Music Director* ✦ Robert Jan Dukarm, *Piano & Organ*
Kristina Stevens, *Assistant Conductor*

music by:

Ola Gjeilo, Sarah MacDonald, Robert Jan Dukarm,
Russell Wallace, and featuring Frances Rosenberg, soloist

Sunday December 10 ❄️ 3pm

St. Mary's Church ❄️ 1701 Elgin Road ❄️ Tickets \$30 at Eventbrite or at the Door



presents

VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Sun Dec 3 • 2:30pm

• Berwick Royal Oak
4680 Elk Lake Drive Victoria

Sat Dec 16 • 3:00pm

• St. Mary Anglican Church
1973 Cultra Avenue Saanichton



• A VICTORIA GILBERT & SULLIVAN SOCIETY 2023 PRODUCTION •
• Norma Jee, Producer • gilbertandsullivanvictoria.ca •



**Close out the year in
the best possible way!**

Give back today.
Get back come tax-time.

Are you thinking about making an end of the year donation to your favorite charitable cause? If you said yes, you're not alone.

Please consider giving to The Newcombe Singers before December 20th. You will not only be helping a good charitable cause, but you can get receive back up to 53% of the donation on your 2023 tax return.

Follow your heart and save money on income tax by contributing to charity this holiday season.

You can either make a donation by e-transfer to pay.newcombesingers@gmail.com or our CanadaHelps listing ([https:// www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/newcombe-singers-association](https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/newcombe-singers-association)).

You can also make out a cheque to Newcombe Singers and mail it to: PO Box 23015 RPO Cook Street Victoria BC V8V4Z8.



ST. LUKE'S PLAYERS
COMMUNITY THEATRE SINCE 1948

Presents

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST PANTO



Written by Ben Crocker

Directed by Heather Lee

Evenings 7:00 • Dec 15, 16, 20, 21, 22

Matinees 2:00 • Dec 16, 17, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30

ADULTS \$18.00 • CHILDREN ≤12 \$10.00

• ORDER VIA EVENTBRITE OR AT THE DOOR •

Beauty and the Beast Panto is presented by arrangement with Ben Crocker

All performances are held at St. Luke's Hall, 3821 Cedar Hill X Rd • Like us on Facebook
Website: www.stlukesplayers.org • Phone: 250-884-5484 • Email: stlukesplayers@yahoo.ca