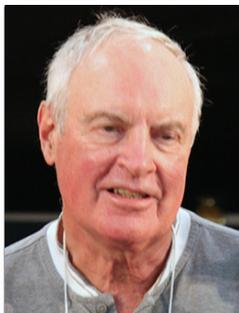


NEWCOMBE NOTES OCTOBER 2024

MANY THANKS TO THESE AMAZING BOARD MEMBERS AND OTHER VOLUNTEERS

Music DirectorKathryn Whitney
 Assistant ConductorKristina Stevens
 AccompanistRobert Dukarm
 President..... Peter Beliveau
 Vice-president John Sease
 TreasurerKeith Beange
 Music Librarian Norma Jee
 Membership Norma Jee
 Donations campaign head Ellen Godfrey
 PR "Wizard"Myrna Fisher
 Newsletter editor.....Marilyn Crump
 Grant Committee HeadMarilyn Crump
 Graphic Design.Beverly van Druten-Blais
 Secretary.....Cathy Stevenson
 Piggy BankCathy Stevenson & Sheila Randall
 Webmaster & LivestreamingRebecca Battilana
 Score PDFs for the website, voice tracks and video streaming John Sease



On behalf of the Board of Directors, I welcome back returning members as well as the many new members to The Newcombe Singers fall season. Our growth over the last two years has been dramatic! Kathryn and Robert's professionalism and status in the Victoria's choral scene have been a beacon for the attraction and retention of choir members.

Growth comes with the excitement of being able to now perform a larger and more varied number of choral pieces. Despite our growth we will continue to strive for a feeling of a friendly community spirit. As a non-audition community choir it's important that we all work as a team.

Each voice is important and with such a varied ability of singers in the choir, I would hope that the more accomplished singers will lend their talents to help those that are having difficulties with the music.

With a larger choir comes the challenge of keeping track of events and increased uncertainty and confusion of members. I will try to keep you up to date with group emails. The website is a key element in keeping you informed as well as help with the rehearsal files that you will find useful.

The email account which I use for my Newcombe activities is: peteribeliveau@gmail.com.

If you have questions about the operation of the choir please contact me. But if you have questions about the music, contact your section leader or Kathryn.

If anyone has life experiences, knowledge, or expertise that they feel would be of benefit to the choir, please volunteer to impart this information to the choir by contacting me. I hope you all find this fall program a growing and rewarding musical experience. 🎵

~ Peter Beliveau



FUN MUSIC FACTS:

Mozart sold more CDs than Beyoncé in 2016

In October 2016, the Universal Music Group released a box set celebrating the 225th anniversary of classical composer Mozart's death. The number of sales outperformed Beyoncé, Adele, and

Drake who had all won Grammys in that same year. Though this could have something to do with the fact that each set sold contained 200 discs, and each disc counted as one sale, it is still an impressive feat for a three-century-old composer!

GRANT COMMITTEE WORK FOR THE NEWCOMBE SINGERS

WHY DO WE APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDING?

As you will read in Ellen's article about how the Bridges donation campaign came about, the membership fees we each pay plus ticket sales, fundraising of all kinds and grants no longer cover all the costs of our choir. As we grow our repertoire by singing new and interesting music by living Canadian composers and enrich our performances by including outside musicians, we need to find additional funding. We are very new at applying for grants and have just recently had our first successes. We hope to build on that success going forward.

HOW DOES IT WORK WHEN WE APPLY FOR GRANTS:

1. We look for those foundations or agencies that support what we do and who we are, so we have a reasonable chance of being successful.
2. All granting agencies have specific times of the year when they accept applications, mostly in January for the spring, although some foundations have pre-Christmas dates for funding early in the new year.
3. When we apply for a grant, we must submit a budget for the event we

wish to be funded for, in addition to putting forth a well-written case for why they should support us.

The granting agency will only provide us money for the event we outline held on a specific date.

4. If we are successful at receiving grant money, there is a delay of a few months until we receive the funds, and we are not always successful at getting the full amount we apply for. For example, last winter we asked the CRD Arts & Culture group for \$3,000 and received \$2,250; and we asked the municipality of Oak Bay for \$1,000 and got \$500—still big wins.
5. We only apply for grants that support "projects" (our choir performances), as we do not qualify to ask for general "operating" funds from many granters. We'd have to have huge budgets of up to \$90,000 per year to qualify for that category of funding.
6. Granters will only give one grant amount per year to any group.
7. We are continually looking for new foundations/groups to submit proposals to, but in the last few years many important granting agencies like the BC Arts Council or the Canada Council have frozen funding and won't accept any new

applications until at least 2026. Clearly the grant landscape has become increasingly competitive.

HOW WOULD A DONATIONS CAMPAIGN AND GRANT FUNDING WORK TOGETHER?

1. Having an annual donations campaign in the fall to support our December concert or any other concert needs going forward would seriously help Kathryn with her long term vision and plans. It's especially helpful that donations raised from within the choir have few strings attached and can be used wherever needed.
2. I feel it's a nice balance to raise funds from within and then from outside the choir. The extra needs of both of our concerts could be covered in that way. When applying for grant funds, it's necessary to show that your organization works hard to raise money from other sources such as fees, donations, ticket sales, etc. We would be amply covered here. 🎵

~ Marilyn Crump, Grant Coordinator



FUN MUSIC FACTS:

Plants can grow faster if music is playing

Now, before you get your speakers out to test this theory, let's explain — it's not music specifically that makes plants grow, but rather sounds.

Sound frequencies of 125 Hz and 250 Hz induce the production of fructose 1,6-bisphosphate aldolase (ald) and

Rubisco small sub-unit (rbcS) genes, which are vital for photosynthesis. And, as you already know, photosynthesis results in energy, which translates to growth.

Further, green music (sounds like rainfall and birds chirping) and classical music promote seed germination, increased stress tolerance, and higher yields. So, don't be surprised if you hear music playing in your neighbour's garden.

SOME NOTES FROM OUR MUSIC DIRECTOR 🎵 🎵 🎵 🎵 🎵

When the natural world goes to sleep during long nights of polar winter, we sing stories of eternal awakening. Dreamweaver is a concert that celebrates creation stories inspired by winter night in the earth's Northern regions. I'm so glad to be performing this wonderful work with you.

As you know, Dreamweaver, the centrepiece of our concert, is a multi-movement work by Ola Gjeilo. Dreamweaver is scored for SSAATTBB choir, string orchestra, piano soloist, and soprano soloist. I'm thrilled that, thanks to our donors, and the incredible efforts of our fundraising team Ellen, Myrna, Marilyn, and Norma, we will be performing the work in its full scoring as it was meant to be heard.

Although not widely known in North America, the story of Dreamweaver is taken from the medieval folk poem Draumkvedet, which is a very familiar Christmas story in Norway. In the Draumkvedet—variously translated as 'Dream Poem' or sometimes 'Dream Hymn'—an ordinary man, Olav Åsteson, goes to sleep on Christmas Eve and wakes up on the twelfth day of Christmas (January 5 or the eve of Epiphany [the day when the three kings were said to have arrived]). On awakening from his long dream, Olav rushes to church and shares with the congregation the series of visions he had while he was sleeping. He has seen the afterlife, with visions of both Heaven and Hell. Now in the full understanding of what it means to be human, he has an urgent message for his fellow villagers: while we are living, all people must do everything they can to be kind and compassionate to one another.

I'm absolutely thrilled to be welcoming Deeandra Miranda as our soprano

soloist. Deeandra has just completed both her BMus in singing and her postgraduate Teacher's qualification at the University of British Columbia. Raised in Vancouver, she has only just this fall moved to Victoria to take up her first full-time job as a music teacher in Victoria. Her performance with us will be her solo debut in the city.

As you know, we have contracted a chamber orchestra of advanced students and faculty members from the Victoria Conservatory of Music (VCM) for Dreamweaver. Our concertmaster will be Dr Simon MacDonald, who is Head of Strings at the VCM. (Fun fact: Simon is also the brother of composer Sarah MacDonald, whose arrangement of 'Gaudete' we sang at our Winter concert in 2023. Both Simon and Sarah were raised in Victoria)

A very special aspect of our concert is that, owing to the presence of the orchestra, Robert Dukarm will be performing the rarely-heard piano solo part. This was originally improvised by Ola Gjeilo himself. I am so excited to hear Robert's performance of this very beautiful solo.

Getting Ready for Dreamweaver

By the time this newsletter comes out, we will have only about 4 weeks left of rehearsal before the orchestra and soloists start arriving to join us on Thursdays. I'm so impressed that we are sounding so wonderful already—thank you all for your wonderful singing, and your efforts to learn your parts. Thanks too to John and his team for the incredible work they have done to create so many hours of practice tracks for us.

So, giving our limited time, what is the best way to get ready for the concert? The best thing you can do outside

rehearsal is to get to know the music through listening. Please spend as much time as you can listening to the full performance recordings of our music. This really helps to put the shape and feeling of the pieces into your ear, body, and heart. Once we know how things go, learning our own notes becomes much, much easier. Also it guarantees that, even if we are singing a note that isn't right for our part, it will be right for some part! Please do indulge in deep, frequent listening of all our pieces, while cleaning up, while walking, while sitting and just enjoying them, in the car... Set yourself the goal of listening to each piece 10 times, preferably across 2 or three sessions on different days, before we rehearse it together. Thank you!



I want to say a very special thanks to Marilyn for producing this newsletter—a colossal achievement! We all appreciate your efforts so much! 🎵

~ Kathryn

THE STORY OF THE NEWCOMBE SINGERS BUILDING BRIDGES FUND

How did the Building Bridges Fund come to be? This is the story.

There were two threads that came together to create our new fund. The first, was Norma telling the Board that there were members of the choir who had asked her how to donate. They knew that donations to nonprofits (which we are) over \$25 get tax credit. And they wanted to support the choir but there didn't seem to be a place to donate.

The second thread is the story of Dreamweaver. Or perhaps I should say, the dream of Dreamweaver. When Kathryn provided the budget for Dreamweaver to the board she gave us two budgets. One for the Dreamweaver with just our choir. And one with the string orchestra and soloist as Ola Djeillo wrote it. The board listened to videos of Dreamweaver and was thrilled with it. We wanted to do it as the composer intended. But our budget only allowed us to do it with voice.

Kathryn went to work to try to lower the cost of the orchestra and soloists and found a way to significantly cut the cost. But still we could only have the full version by taking some of the budget from the spring concert.

Then the dream of doing Dreamweaver as it was written, and the idea of creating a fund for donations came together. We signed up with CanadaHelps so people could donate with a click. Kathryn integrated donation tabs on our website.

Then our team reached out to our members and so far, we have done well. We have raised \$2,375! Our goal is \$3,000.

We are almost there! If you haven't donated and want to do so, now is the time You can donate by Interac at pay.newcombesingers@gmail.com or bring a check to any rehearsal".

We now have a fund donors can donate to, and are on our way to our dream of singing Dreamweaver as Gjeilo meant it to be sung.

Thanks go
to all of us. 🎵
~ Ellen Godfrey



NEWCOMBE
SINGERS

Dreamweaver

by Ola Gjeilo

A concert of music from the polar night

with new works by
Sarah Quartel & Ramona Luengen
Victoria Conservatory of Music
Chamber Orchestra
with Deeandra Miranda, Soprano

Kathryn Whitney, *Music Director* | Robert Jan Dukarm, *Piano*
Kristina Stevens, *Assistant Conductor*

Sunday December 8 ❄️ 3pm

St. Mary's Church ❄️ 1701 Elgin Road

Tickets \$30 • Students \$20 • Children ≤ 12 Free via Eventbrite or at the Door

Page 4 ❄️ newcombesingers.ca ❄️

MUSIC LIBRARIAN



When I first volunteered to replace Heini Mathis as Music Librarian, I was surprised at the huge holdings our choir had.

Turns out quite a lot of it had been donated from other choirs or it had been performed a very long time ago, although much is still relevant and we do use it from time to time. Our choir has been around for close to 60 years after all.

I have not done much "weeding" which is part of a librarian's job, because I was unsure of which things we might need in the future. So we have tons of scores, but much of it may never be performed again. Here's why.

I remember finding one very objectionable set which had thick lipped stereotypical minstrel "folk" strumming banjos. That went out immediately.

Others have not been as easy to part with. Anyone want a large set of "South

Pacific"? Beautiful music but society's mores have changed in 6 decades.

If Cher can retire her 1973 hit song "Half-Breed" because she realized the lyrics were dated and offensive, (Elizabeth Renzetti, Zoomer, Vol 40, number 6), I'll be taking a 2nd look at "Potlatch Fair". Maybe I'll send an email to Stephen Chatman. The music is still for sale though. Tricky this job.

One of the perks of sourcing new material for our choir is that I get to "meet" some of these wonderful new composers whose works we are singing. When I contacted Sarah Quartel to see if she was OK with us lending "This Endris Night", we got into a very friendly exchange. She said "Yes, she was happy that another choir wanted to perform it". I replied that I was impressed with her generosity, because my son-in-law is a children's author. I know all about copyright and making a living as a young artist. Turns out Jeremy Tankard's book, Grumpy Bird, was her young child's favorite.

When we were trying to get our hands on Sarah MacDonald's newest work "Gaudete", I contacted her publisher at Encore Publications, who publishes

very exclusive things like King Charles' Coronation music. Tim phoned me from England so we could sort out the postage etc and we chatted about all sorts, including how I knew Sarah as a child and my daughter was still a friend. He mailed the parcel himself, after telling me he was off to Cambridge to record her choir singing this very piece, and would say hello.

As you can probably tell, our choir pays close attention to our responsibility around Copyright Law. So just a reminder that real scores (either hard copy or digital licenses) back up everything we perform. That means you cannot legally keep the scores you may have printed or purchased. They are considered "learning tools" and must never be shared or stored. We don't want them back (except the black binders) and it is your responsibility to destroy them after our last concert. Or return them to me and I'll shred them.

But perhaps this time you need to hang onto them until January, just in case we sell out and need to have a 2nd concert to satisfy our fans! 🎵

~ Norma Jee, Music Librarian

PIGGY BANK

Piggy Bank is an informal raffle held every rehearsal and is one of our most important fundraisers as well as being a fun event. Typically, between \$50.00 and \$60.00 is raised in ticket sales every week. Last year, Piggy Bank raised a total of \$1,600 for both seasons. Wow! Fantastic! This is a significant contribution



to the cost of purchasing new music for us to enjoy! A big THANK YOU to all who participated and made it the best year ever! Sheila Randal and Cathy Stephenson have been organizing Piggy Bank for the last few years. Tickets are one for \$1 and three for \$2, and are sold at the door and during the break. Members are asked to bring in items to raffle, and wine, chocolates and preserves are always popular. If everyone made one contribution each season, that would be ideal. This fundraiser is completely on a volunteer basis.

Please bring donations and any questions to Sheila and Cathy, and start collecting your toonies! 🎵

You can reach: Sheila Randall at sj.dj@shaw.ca

Cathy Stephenson at cathyongaliano@gmail.com



MEMBERSHIP

My 'Full-on' membership experience has been quite the wild ride!

Thank you for being patient with the long lines. We'll get better. I've learned I need a helper or two.

What a crazy first couple of weeks with more than 80 people showing up to 'try us out'. According to the BC Choral Federation, our policy is pretty unusual. And good I think! It gives you a chance to see if we are a good fit.

We seem to have settled at about 74 now but who knows? We're flexible.

I took over from Sheila Grigg in January when we had about 47 members, many of whom had already paid for the 2nd half of the season, and most of whom

had filled out a form in the year—sometimes several years ago in fact.

During the summer, I worked with the Board to get a new form which met our needs better and would be fillable online. With Beverly van Druten-Blais' help we tried a couple on the website. But it took Kathryn to redesign it so that it could be submitted directly to me. This is only part of what your Board and Director got up to over the summer...

So now we have the cool online form AND the ability to pay fees directly into Newcombe's bank account. I figured it would take a few years to get people on board with this level of computer technology but no. Already 2/3 of you are using both of these safe and time saving techno methods. We learned a lot during Covid eh?

By the way, I used to teach computer 'stuff' to high school students and staff, so if you'd like to learn more about Newcombe's technology treasures, please ask.

Some of you already have. This is an interesting and enjoyable part of being the membership person. I have talked to many of you on the phone and sometimes told the Newcombe story, or shared bits of info, but also learned something about members old and new. We are a community choir which really does have a strong sense of community. New members have told me some wonderful things they've noticed already. May you always feel like you belong. 🎵

Norma Jee, Membership 250-472-0232
normaje2008@gmail.com

MYRNA FISHER BIO



With sisters who were six, eight and ten years older than I, my first singing experiences involved "finding" a part to sing with them at home. Our mother seemed hopeful that we might become the next "Lennon Sisters". (Totally dated there!) Low alto was the only part not already taken, so that is where I added my voice, and I have sung alto ever since. My standard Southern Ontario Royal Conservatory background

has served me well as I have sung in choirs off and on from grade school to the present.

During COVID I had the privilege of participating in a couple of Zoom sessions with Kathryn. Her musical knowledge, creative vision and enthusiasm so impressed me that when I heard she had taken the helm of Newcombe Singers, I was eager to join. At the start of my fourth session, I am happy to have made that decision. Under Kathryn's experienced guidance, it is a pleasure to tackle the distinctive music she chooses. In the short time I have been a member, I have seen the choir bloom.

As a new Board member helping with promotion, I have volunteered to tackle Social Media. It is not a strong suit but I'm hopeful that we can harness online power to grow our choir and our audience. I need your help! If you have Facebook on your computer or mobile device—even if you are usually a "lurker" rather than a regular poster—please go to the Newcombe site and click on "Follow". Note that there is an old defunct Newcombe Singers site which is impossible to eliminate so please look for our distinctive wave logo to ensure you are in the right place. It should look like below.

I will be regularly posting little bits of choir info. When you see a new post, please click "like". Taking this action will boost our online visibility, drawing attention to our choir within a highly competitive field of many local choirs.

Questions? Great ideas for online posting? Email me at myrnafisher@mac.com

Sing with joy! 🎵 🎵 🎵 ~ Myrna Fisher • 1st Alto



The Newcombe Singers

Choir · 1.7 mi · 84 followers



The Newcombe Singers is a non-auditioned community choir, singing together in Victoria, BC



2 posts in the last 2 weeks



presents

VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Sun Nov 24 - 2:30pm

St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Church 1701 Elgin Rd. Victoria

Sat Nov 30 - 3:00pm

St. Mary's Anglican Church 1973 Cultra Ave. Saanichton

Tickets \$20, Students ≤12 Free via Eventbrite, from VGSS members or at the door

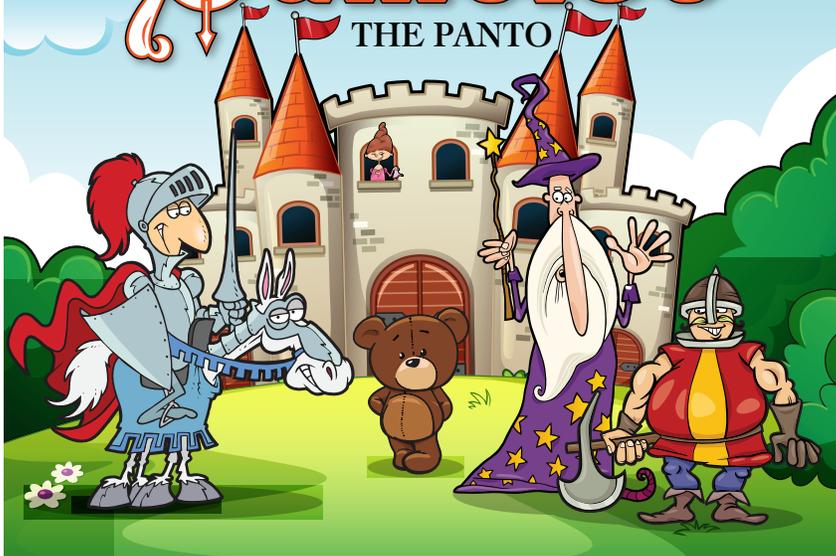


A VICTORIA GILBERT & SULLIVAN SOCIETY 2024 PRODUCTION

Adrian Sly, Producer • gilbertandsullivanvictoria.ca •

Camelot

THE PANTO



ST. LUKE'S PLAYERS

COMMUNITY THEATRE SINCE 1948

Eves 7:00 Dec 12, 13, 18, 19, 20

Mats 2:00 Dec 14, 15, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30

Our ever-popular panto has Charming Prince Arthur, the beautiful Guinevere, the hilarious Sir Laughalot, the wise Merlin, and the delightful Connie Clatterbottom on a magical journey. They will face off against the wicked witch Morgan le Fay and not-so-vicious Valerin.

Camelot, where princes and princesses, witches and wizards, invisible men and teddy bears come to life and the audience cheers the good and boos the bad.

Written by Ben Crocker

Directed by Heather Lee

Tickets \$18.00, \$10 Children ≤ 12 via eventbrite, at the Papery 734 Fort St., or at the door
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