

MANY THANKS TO THESE AMAZING BOARD MEMBERS AND OTHER VOLUNTEERS

- Music DirectorKathryn Whitney
- Assistant ConductorKristina Stevens
- Accompanist Robert Dukarm
- President.....Peter Beliveau
- Vice-presidentJohn Sease
- TreasurerKeith Beange
- Music LibrarianNorma Jee
- MembershipNorma Jee
- Donations campaign head Ellen Godfrey
- PR "Wizard" Myrna Fisher
- Newsletter editor Marilyn Crump
- Grant Committee Head Marilyn Crump
- Graphic Design..... Beverly van Druten-Blais
- SecretaryCathy Stevenson
- Piggy BankCathy Stevenson & Sheila Randall

- Webmaster & LivestreamingRebecca Battilana
- Score PDFs for the website, voice tracks and video streamingJohn Sease



EXCITING SPRING SEASON

What an exciting spring season ahead of us! The choir member numbers have grown wonderfully this season with a great mix of new members, some with limited choral experience, as well as experienced choral singers. This is what a non-audition, non- profit choir is all about, giving a voice to choir members and bringing that to the community at large to enjoy. Your Board of Directors (BOD) is going into uncharted waters given our sell out concert last fall at St. Mary's. The BOD has decided to hold two concerts this season in a new venue. We will perform the concert *Ocean* at Broad View United Church on Saturday May 3rd and the following day on May 4th both at 3 PM. Thanks to Kathryn's efforts, we will be singing with the Emily Carr String Quartet. This excitement of collaborating with the Quartet needs to be shared with your friends, family, and the community at large so that it is more widely promoted. Newcombe has FaceBook and Instagram Social Media pages. If you are on Social Media we need you to post your "likes" and share with their friends and family your participation in these concerts.

As I have mentioned in the past, with approximately 80 members with varied life experiences and skills there has to be a number of members that have the ability and hopefully the desire to see the choir thrive. This requires not only your voice but also by sharing your talents in an administrative form. I hope you can come forward, as a number of you have done over the years, to distribute the volunteer administrative load in many different ways.

My term as President of the Board will be legally ended as of our AGM on May 27th 2025. I trust that I can leave a growing vibrant choir under the direction of someone willing to replace me. In my term I took on multiple duties such as stage and choir manager which are not in the duties of the President of the Board of Directors. I will endeavour to continue some of these duties to lighten the role of the incoming President but there must be a new President to allow the choir to exist!

I would like to thank you all for the support you have shown to me and hope the transition to a new President puts us on a smooth path to the future of the choir. 🎵

~ Peter Beliveau

Happy St. Patrick's Day



INTRODUCING OUR NEW BCCF SOUTH ISLAND REGIONAL REP, SARAH STARKWEATHER

Hello Dear BCCF South Island Choirs:

I am thrilled to introduce you to our new South Island regional representative, Sarah Starkweather. Sarah has been appointed to this role which covers our 30 member choirs in Victoria and the CRD area. Here is a brief note from Sarah introducing herself. We are excited to welcome her enthusiasm, skills, and energy to the BCCF team.

~ Marilyn Wolovick
*BCCF Island Coordinator
Chair of Access, Equity, Diversity and
Inclusion (AEDI) Committee*

From Sarah:

I was raised in Ontario, then spent many years abroad before settling in the Victoria area with my family in 2020. Scared to sing in public for the first

40 years of my life, I joined a community choir on a whim 9 years ago; now I am seeing how much choral singing I can fit into my last 40 years. I currently sing with The Choirs YYJ and Ensemble Laude, and love hearing other local choirs whenever I can. I'll be reaching out to choir reps individually in the coming weeks, but please don't hesitate to email me sarah.starkweather@gmail.com in the interim if you have any questions about BCCF or if you need any help that we might be able to provide.

~ Sarah Starkweather
*BCCF South Island
(Victoria and Capital Region)
Regional Coordinator*

To Note: Sarah sang with Newcombe Singers in the fall, too!

MEMBERSHIP FEES

The membership for the spring season of the Newcombe choir was finally formalized recently. The Board of Directors felt that there still was some concern that the policy of handling the fee payments was not formalized and was always dealt on an individual basis. The policy that is now in place is:

MEMBERSHIP FEE POLICY 2025

The BOD has tried to keep our membership fees as affordable as possible. The present policy of paying membership fees has been reviewed and a more defined policy is hoped to clarify the payment of membership fees.

Prospective members for each season have two scheduled rehearsals to decide if the Newcombe Singers is the "right fit" for them. Fees are then payable by the third scheduled rehearsal.

If a member pays their fees and has extenuating circumstances that does not allow them to continue with the choir they should submit a request to the BOD via an email to me. The member can donate that fee to the Choir and receive a tax donation, have the fee held in payment for the next season's membership, or request a refund. A refund will be adjudicated on an individual basis. 🎵

~ Peter Beliveau

GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR OUR MAY CONCERT: AN UPDATE

At the end of January, I sent in two grant proposals to help fund our May "Ocean" concert. The first (and largest) application was to the CRD Arts and Culture Support Service. We will find out if our application was successful by the end of March, so fingers crossed.

I also sent in an application for funding to the Municipality of Oak Bay. We should learn if that application was successful in April or May. Again, we are hopeful.

Looking for new grant opportunities and working on applications is an on-going effort, and we would appreciate help from anyone in the choir who has knowledge and experience doing such work or who would like to help out. If that is something you'd like to do, please contact me anytime. 🎵



~ Marilyn Crump, *Grant Coordinator
Newcombe Notes Editor*

NOT EVERYONE CAN SIGHT-READ

The public might regard the singers of a choral group to have the ability to sight-read any given music pieces. In fact, 95% of the singers are not FAT AMY from PITCH PERFECT, hence we do need a piano or tuning fork to give us the right note to begin with. It takes hard work and efforts to practice and master the right notes. It is only the another 5% who are genius that could "sight sing" any new songs.

MUSIC DIRECTOR'S CORNER



It's with great pleasure that I jot down a few words about our music this season in our newsletter. Thank you very much to Marilyn and

Beverly for the wonderful work keeping us all connected with this important publication. Here are a few fun facts about our current program, OCEAN.

Where did the idea for OCEAN come from?

Our OCEAN program started on Saturna Island, the most southerly of our Gulf Islands, where I am lucky enough to have a few friends (including members of our Newcombe 'Saturna Contingent'—four dedicated choristers who make a two-day trip each week to sing in our choir!). In 2022, I became involved in a collaboration with Saturna musician-artists Mark Timmings and the late Stephen Morris, whose piece 'Narvaez Bay' uses the key of F major to express the tension at the heart of tidal dynamics, translating actual Government of Canada data of lunar, solar, and tidal movements across a year in a bay on Saturna into musical language. (You can hear a performance of this wonderful piece here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVe8Z4ZCyzE&t=16s>.) I found this project so moving. For the first time, through its expression in music, I understood the elegant, eternal dance taking place between these powerful but delicate forces, that has been going on for millennia. I wanted to develop a concert program for the Newcombe that would give our choir the chance to experience

how well music can both depict the ocean and express our relationship with it. The Newcombe Singers Ocean program was born.

How did you design the program for OCEAN?

I wanted our OCEAN program to explore our intimate and complicated relationship with the great salt-water bodies of the world. Since humans began walking the earth, we have lived in partnership with the ocean. We shelter in the great coves it carves into the land around us; we take sustenance from the rich life that swims and crawls in its waters; we travel long distances on its slippery surface; we can't look away from its incredible beauty, yet we know too well that, in its wrath, it is able to wipe out entire civilizations with single travelling wave. I wanted our program to express the two living beings in this intimate partnership: humans and the ocean itself.

How did you choose the music for OCEAN?

First, I decided that the Ocean, which existed long before us and will survive long after we are gone, should both sing to us in its own voice and have the final word. The ocean's voice rises with the first drop of water in a rainstorm, leading to the song of moon in its eternal dance with the ocean, and the beautiful melodies of both the seal and the whale. We finish with the best choral piece I know that expresses the ocean's power and delicacy: Jake Runestad's incredible piece, *The Secret of the Sea*, which we are performing with the superb Emily Carr String Quartet. The part of our program that leads to the ocean's song in strikingly different. We sing stories of the brevity

and intensity of human lives at the shoreline: ballads of wives and widows, of fishermen and sealers, of those who venture forth in ships, and their love stories.

What part of our OCEAN program almost didn't happen?

Times change and the political content of melodies can shift almost beyond recognition. Newfoundland-born composer/conductor Kathleen Allan withdrew her song 'The Sealer's Ball' from circulation a number of years ago owing to controversy surrounding the seal hunt in Eastern and Northern Canada, which is now illegal in some areas and highly regulated in others. I had a long email exchange with Kathleen about this piece, which she did not want performed out of respect to current laws and in honour of the populations, especially Inuit hunters, that have been negatively impacted highly invading non-indigenous seal hunting in past decades. It was only when I told her about the two sides of our program—the seal hunt in the first half vs. the song of the seal in the second half—that she agreed to release the song. Special thanks are owed as always to our Librarian, Norma Jee, whose tireless efforts to source and acquire our scores make our singing of this and all our music possible.

What has no arms and no legs and will be attending our OCEAN concert?

The 'Ambassadors of the Sea', who will be rolled into our venue in their saltwater tanks by staff from our community partner, the Shaw Centre for the Salish Sea. Don't forget to visit our 'petting zoo' at intermission! 

~ Kathryn Whitney,
Music Director, The Newcombe Singers

BUILDING CHORAL BRIDGES

Last September we launched a donation campaign we call 'Building Choral Bridges'. We set an ambitious target: \$3000! And here's what happened. We raised \$4,506.20!!

The idea was that our choir has serious goals: to sing the best music we can with the best partners, to reach out to others in our community to join us in that effort, and to put our choir on a sound financial foundation so we can do what it takes to sing great music.

Donating is of course voluntary, and there are many other ways to support Newcombe Singers that you can read about in this newsletter.

Together we are making Newcombe Singers stronger and our reach longer. And we're all very proud of our sopranos, altos, tenors and basses!! The heart of it all.

In the fall of 2025, we will launch our second Newcombe Singers Building Choral Bridges campaign with a new target and new goals. We will do this to strengthen and build the

bridges so we can invite splendid musicians to join us. So we can sing the marvelous music Kathryn finds for us, especially those pieces that allow us to support local musicians and composers and to share music which is less often heard.

Our "Dreamweaver" concert was thrilling, a sell out and a standing ovation! The Conservatory string ensemble raised us to a new level. With the support of you, our donors, we can continue to build those bridges, acquire the great music, join with splendid musicians, make great music. . . and have fun!

So, watch for the announcement of the 2025 Bridges Campaign and the great music Kathryn has planned for the fall 2025 singing season. 🎵 ~ Ellen Godfrey



LET'S SELL OUT AGAIN!

Our "SOLD OUT" December concert was a thrill. We hope to sell out again, but we need to start now, with all hands on deck.

Please consider helping out in the following ways:

- 🎵 **Think about prominent places where you might put up posters** once we have them printed.
- 🎵 **Share our concert dates with anyone and everyone.**
May 3 and 4 @ 3pm
Broadview United Church
- 🎵 **Give an enthusiastic personal invitation to friends, acquaintances and family members.** Be sure to tell them about our exciting musical guests and representation from Shaw Centre

for the Salish Sea. Consider sharing your favourite piece of music, or the fun challenge of singing in different languages. There is no substitute for word-of-mouth advertising

🎵 **Offer to pick up tickets from choir for people you know.** This will save them from the surcharge applied to Eventbrite tickets.

🎵 **Follow our page on Facebook and/or Instagram.** Check regularly for new posts and respond to each post with a like, love, comment, and/or share. **This takes little effort but has a HUGE impact in spreading word about our choir activities and our concerts.**

We have tried several approaches to paid advertising and none has been as effective or inexpensive as Facebook! For our December concert, we saw a strong correlation between Facebook ads and Eventbrite ticket sales.

We are always open to input for promoting community awareness about our choir, and growing our audience. If you have suggestions, please chat with Ellen Godfrey (Alto 2) or Myrna Fisher (Alto 1).

A MESSAGE FROM ROBERT

Hello Newcombe Singers. If any of you are interested, Peter Dent, a former music director of the Newcombe Singers and I have recently finished recording an album (our 3rd album) of swing jazz and Latin music on the violin and piano.

I'd be happy to put together a CD for anyone that would like one. The cost is \$10.00 per CD.

Thank you very much for your support. 🎵

~ Robert Jan Dukarm





"I'm gonna need even less tuba."

SMILE TO KEEP THE SINGERS FROM SINGING FLAT (THAT IS WHY WE NEED A CONDUCTOR)

Smile is such a magical expression for a choir. For the audience, a smile could easily spark joy while listening to the choir performance. On the other hand, rather than demonstrating the professionalism and happiness behind singing, smile also keeps us from singing slightly out of tune because it helps us to relax our neck muscles. However, the lifting-the-chin strategy is a temporary fix to any given flat notes, but it is not a permanent solution. Hence, that is why some choirs tend to have conductors to always ask the singers to smile! 🎵



PIGGY BANK

Piggy Bank and Concert Gift Basket raffle is a very successful fundraiser for The Newcombe Singers.

Piggy Bank is held at every rehearsal and raises

approx \$70.00 in ticket sales every week. Last year together with gift baskets raffled at the concerts, this amounted to over \$3000.00 — a significant contribution to the cost of purchasing new music for us to enjoy. Sheila Randall and Cathy Stephenson have been organizing Piggy Bank for the last few years. Ticket are 1 for 1\$ or 3 for 2\$ and are sold at the door and during the break.

Members are asked to bring in items to raffle. Wine, chocolates and preserves are always popular. This is a volunteer fundraiser and we ask members to bring in a donation each season. Please bring donations and any questions to Sheila and Cathy. And start collecting toonies.

Also a month before concert time we will have a list of items that are popular in the gift baskets and ask members to write their name by an item and this will help create the gift baskets raffled off at our concerts. These have been extremely popular and tickets for these beautiful baskets are \$10.00 for 1 ticket or \$20.00 for 3 tickets. Audrey and Sheila put them together beautifully and they really are a treat to win. Members and the audience will have fun purchasing with a chance to win.

Lastly a big THANK YOU to everyone supporting this fundraiser. Who's going to win next week? 🎵

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



Cathy Stephenson at
cathyongaliano@gmail.com



MUSIC LIBRARIAN REPORT



Newcombe Singers has a long tradition of being involved in the music choices our choir sings. We have a very large inventory of

music, but alas, some of it is not likely to be sung by our current choir. If you know of groups that might want to do "South Pacific" for example, we could use the space.

Kathryn has presented us with wonderful new and exciting offerings and worked in collaboration with our Music Selection Committee to create superb concerts. We still make some suggestions, but are certainly very grateful for the rich choices she presents to us and her willingness to listen to our concerns.

Newcombe Singers follows International Copyright Law. As music librarian, I purchase digital licenses or hard copy scores and also arrange to borrow scores from choirs and choral

societies across Canada. I am always mindful of an appropriate balance between purchasing and borrowing. For the Ocean Concert, Newcombe only had 84 scores in our Library, so I purchased 514 scores and borrowed 393. That's still less than BCCF suggests for borrowing.

We always have enough copies available for all current members, including those who may not be able to sing in performances. We include our choral scholars or other guests, plus Kathryn and Robert or other musicians. Members, even those far away, are welcome to use our music and participate in livestreamed rehearsals, thanks to Rebecca Battiliana et al.

It is important to realize that we are making a huge commitment to supporting living composers from around the globe, but to do so means we have a very real responsibility to abide by the law. As choir members, we need to destroy any music we have copied or stored on our devices once the concert is over. Of course, you can

always buy your own copy if you really want to "collect" what you've sung.

Some composers insist that their scores never be stored on websites, where they might be accessed by those who have not paid to do so. That is why our scores are in a "members only" page. You will also find that the scores disappear from our website after the concert.

A super part of my "job" is meeting composers all over Canada and the world. I now have email and other contacts with Franco Prinsloo, Jake Runestad, Sarah Quartel, Sarah MacDonald and others. My singer daughter is jealous!

We are very proud of our growing community choir and hope to continue on our exciting journey in music, building many kinds of Choral Bridges. Thanks for being part of the team! 🎵

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



TWO BANANAS



TUBA NANAS

CHORAL SINGING IS CONSIDERED A DECENT SPORT FOR EVERYONE

Other than brining the joy of singing and improving the function of lung and heart, singing could zap 100 to 136 calories an hour, depending on the weight and singing position (stand vs sit). It is higher than playing bowling (95 calories) and grocery shopping (117 calories). Even better still, if you move while singing, whether playing an instrument, dancing or acting on stage, extra calories will be burned, depending on the intensity of the movement.



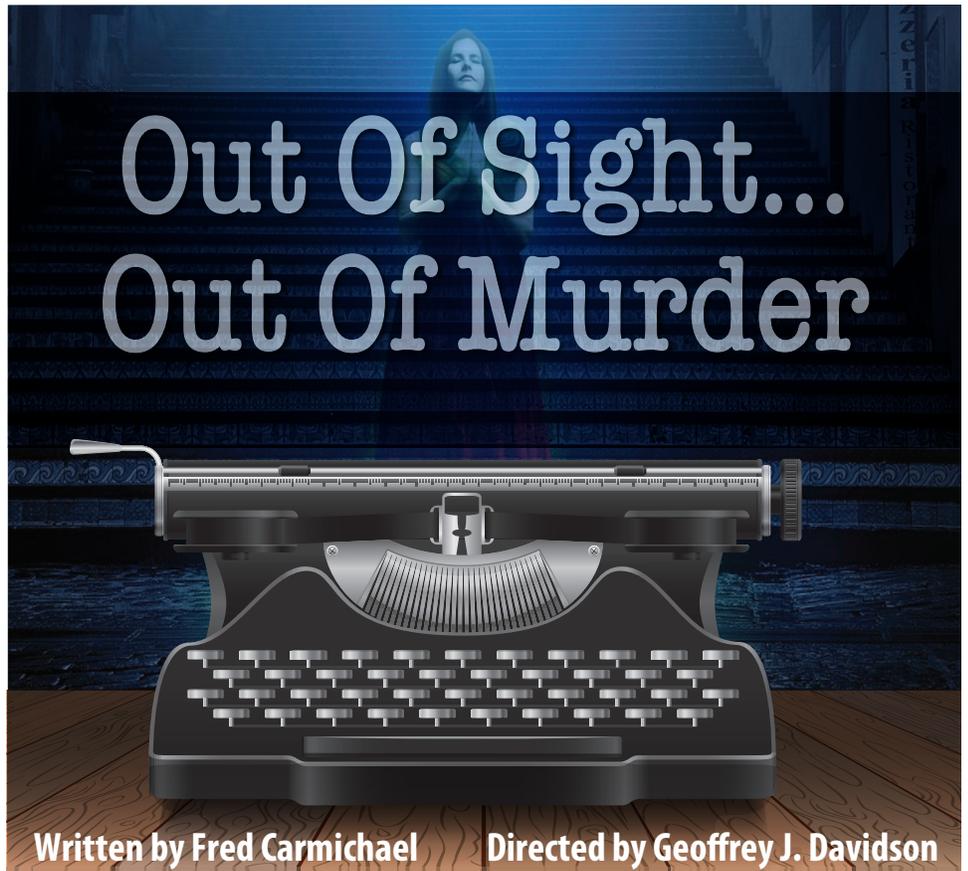
ST. LUKE'S PLAYERS
Community Theatre Since 1948

*Presents an unusual
Murder Mystery*

Evenings 7:30
Mar 12–15 & 19–22

Matinees 2:00
Mar 15, 16, 22, 23

Tickets \$18.00 available
via Eventbrite, at The Papery,
734 Fort Street or at the door



Written by Fred Carmichael Directed by Geoffrey J. Davidson

Performances are held at St Luke's Hall, 3821 Cedar Hill X Rd • www.stlukesplayers.org • Email: stlukesplayers@yahoo.ca



*Victoria Gilbert and Sullivan Society
presents this semi-staged production*

Peter Butterfield
Music Director

Heather Lee
Stage Director

Robert Jan Dukarm
Accompanist

**Elizabeth Sly
& Linda Troke**
Producers

**Sat APRIL 5 at 7:30
& Sun APRIL 6 at 2:00**
Dave Dunnett Theatre
Oak Bay High School
Tickets via Eventbrite or Cast/Crew



**Sat APRIL 12 at 2:00
& Sun APRIL 13 at 2:00**
Charlie White Theatre, Sidney
Tickets via Mary Winspear Centre



Tickets: Adults \$40 Students w/ID \$20