



Music Director's Report

2019-2020

Not that it ever happened to me, but sometimes a teacher would give an “incomplete” for a grade or course evaluation. Unfortunately due to the Covid-19 pandemic that has swept around the world, that is how we find ourselves as our fiscal year ends: our grade for the 2019-20 year is an incomplete!

There were 42 singers (16S+13A+5T+8B) registered for the fall semester, including 2 new members. On Saturday, November 9th, we held our 3rd annual marathon rehearsal, at the home of Isabelle Delage. It included sectional rehearsals (sopranos, altos, men) and full choir rehearsals in the morning and early afternoon with choir members bringing their own lunch. It was well attended, and a lot was accomplished. With Iroquois United Church being sold, our Christmas concert was held on Sunday, December 8th at the Christian Reformed Church in Williamsburg with 205 in attendance. I think we were all disappointed with the turnout (the lowest Christmas concert turnout since 2011), but it may have been due to the fact that the North Granville Concert Choir held their concert at the same time. Dr. Gerry Rosenquist was our Emcee. After the Christmas concert, we were invited to the home of Isabelle Delage and Leo Israel for a lovely pot-luck dinner. On Tuesday, December 10th, several singers sang Christmas carols in the atrium of the Winchester District Memorial Hospital as they lit their Christmas tree. (A video was made by the Nation Valley News.) On Wednesday evening, December 18th we performed some of our concert repertoire at the Hartford Retirement Residence in Morrisburg. Many retired to the Timmie's after that performance and were grateful to Brian and Lis Vandenberg for their kind and generous offer to pick up the tab.

As per usual, the winter/spring semester draws slightly fewer singers, and this time the choir had 38 singers (15+12+5+6) registered for the winter/spring semester. We had big plans for the semester, teaming up with the Cumberland Community Singers to present concerts in Orleans and Williamsburg. The last time we had teamed up with another choir was in 2011 when we presented joint spring concerts with Ottawa's Bytown Voices, which I also conducted. That was much easier to plan than with another choir and another director. Because of some of the difficulties (especially regarding logistics), I was somewhat relieved when the Covid-19 pandemic put an end to that (rehearsals being suspended after March 11th). Little was known at the time and the Board met virtually (a first!) and decided to re-assess things and hopefully resume rehearsals after Easter. That was not to be, and in the end, all further rehearsals and the spring concerts were cancelled.

It is incumbent on *all* singers to work on recruiting new members for our choir. They do not have to be able to read music, but a good ear and good attendance are most important! Increasing our membership has many benefits (including musical and financial).

We really are blessed to have Margaret Whisselle as our accompanist. She does such a marvellous job. Much of our success is dependent on a good accompanist. Her ability to give

the choir advice on vocal techniques is also greatly appreciated as well as rehearse half the choir when we hold sectional rehearsals at the beginning of each semester.

I would like to thank everyone on the SVS Board of Directors for their contribution to the successful business side of the choir. A lot of behind-the-scenes work is efficiently taken care of, which contribute to the success of the choir. As Margaret Whisselle and I both derive all our income as musicians, we want to express our sincere thanks to the Board who initiated and unanimously passed a motion to pay us for the duration of the semester whether there were any more rehearsals and a concert or not. We also send a big thank you to the choir, as there were a record number of singers who contributed to the sponsorship campaign this year, enabling us to surpass last year's record.

Serving on your Board of Directors for 2019-2020:

President:	Mike Ouellette	Past President:	Annette McRae
Vice President:	Lorraine Howard	Secretary:	Lis Vandenberg
Librarian:	Carol Barkley	Treasurer:	Rhonda Schneckeburger
Social:	Judy Veinotte	Sponsorships:	Isabelle Delage
Member-at-large:	Rosemary Wells	Ex officio:	Robert Jones

At this point, we do not know what stage the pandemic will be come next September. We hope it will be the status quo, and plan accordingly!

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Jones (Music Director)
June 5, 2020