



Lending My Voice

by Helen Harrison, Editor

After a year away from my friends in the Stratford Concert Choir, it is a delight to be back and singing with you again. Even on the nights when I feel like I'd rather put my feet up and veg at home, the experience of making music with such a wonderful group of musicians boosts my spirits and re-energizes me.

I am excited about this issue of our newsletter. Ian has written a delightful article sharing a bit about his personal journey with music. A lovely tribute to Mickey Kuindersma was contributed by her good friend Jean Moorehead. Amanda Vander Ploeg has written two short articles introducing a couple of our newer members. We hope to keep using the newsletter to help us learn more about each other and to share personal reflections about our experience of SCC. If you are interested in having a brief article written about you or if you know of another choir member with an interesting life journey, please let us know. Why not write a short article yourself (200 to 300 words) about what the choir has meant to you to share in our next issue. Submissions should be sent to hharrisonwriter@gmail.com.

I hope you enjoy this issue and want to wish you all a blessed Christmas season as we make music together and celebrate Christ's birth with family and friends.



A Tribute to Mickey (Maria) Kuindersma

by Jean Moorehead

Mickey was a very dear friend. She sang beside me at Concert Choir practice and introduced me and many choir members to Cyberbass on the computer. She was an encourager and ready to listen when things didn't go just right. Besides the Concert Choir we did many things together at our church like going to Bible study, singing in the choir, helping in the church kitchen, I think you get the idea, she was just always there and I'm finding it hard to believe that she's no longer here. However now she has joined a far greater choir in Heaven where there will be no wrong notes and discords just Heavenly music. You were a great friend. I'm missing you Mickey.

Condolences to the Kuindersma family from the Stratford Concert Choir

Marilyn McCaul: A Profile

by Amanda Gray Vander Ploeg



For the past 2 years, Marilyn McCaul has been singing with the Stratford Concert Choir. She is a First Soprano and has been singing her whole life!

Marilyn and her husband, Phil Thomas, moved to New Hamburg from Saskatoon two years ago. They were in Baden for a wedding and decided to check out the area. They fell in love at first sight and even bought a home before they headed back west.

Marilyn is the main caregiver for her husband, who has been ill for about 12 years. She tells me it is hard sometimes, but because of his ability to stay positive and not to wallow in self-pity and his wonderful sense of humour, it is not a hardship. They have fun together and are a good team.

Marilyn has sung with numerous choirs – University of Saskatchewan Chorus, Mohawk College Choir, Burlington Civic Chorale and the Bach Elgar Choir in Hamilton to name a few.

Once settled into New Hamburg, finding a choir was not difficult. Current SCC Artistic Director, Ian Sadler, once held the baton for the Bach Elgar Choir and when he brought his talents to Stratford, Marilyn knew that she wanted to sing with him again.

When I asked Marilyn what the best part of choir was, with no hesitation she answered "Ian Sadler". "He is the best conductor," she said. "His professionalism, and the kind way with which he speaks and explains things to the choir" is why I love being in the Concert Choir.

Coming up in December, the SCC is performing with the Stratford Civic Orchestra in the concert "Stratford at the Festival". Marilyn is most excited because we are performing one of her favourite pieces of music, Charpentier's *Midnight Mass de Noel*. Another of her favorites, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, was recently performed by the Stratford Concert Choir.

Marilyn is pleased to be part of such a fine group and enjoys the variety of composers that the SCC performs.

It Will Change Your Life Forever

by Ian Sadler

It will change you forever.

It is great to be on a winning team. Whether you are a soprano, alto, tenor or bass, you are on just that! Rehearsals, tours, concerts, recordings, social events, fundraising ... the STRATFORD CONCERT CHOIR is a winning team. It is hard work, fun, a commitment, discipline, time, but so rewarding for all of us.

It will change you forever.

"So, how much singing have you actually done?" demanded the organist of St. Paul's.

"Well sir, actually, not very much. Just in my singing lessons and today."

The little 8 year old boy studied his shoes and cleared his throat nervously and proceeded to sing, "Come, Holy Ghost" by Thomas Atwood. Three days later, my father received a letter by First Class Mail carrying the good news that I had been offered a place in the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, England.

It was to change me forever.

The next 5 years were filled with 2 daily choir practices, daily services in the Cathedral, 2 on Fridays, 2 on Saturdays, 4 on Sundays - a total of 490 services each year! The Queen attended services 2 or 3 times each year and the President of the United States came twice while I was a chorister. We once sang for the Queen Mother at her private 70th birthday party.

It was to change me forever.

Singing is a wonderful art, or 'gift', as some call it. We all have different voices but with training and rehearsal a group of us can sound like a fine tuned instrument. I remember all the rehearsals I attended from age 8 to 14. It was hard work but

It changed me forever.

The seeds of my love for music were planted at the age of 8 when I was a junior chorister. As a member of the St. Paul's Choir, I was fascinated with the mighty organ in the Cathedral with its tremendous sound from *pppp* to *ffff*, the console high up in a loft with its hundreds of controls, five keyboards, a secret telephone and an intriguing spiral staircase concealed within a wooden screen.

It Will Change Your Life Forever

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It changed me forever.

At age 12, I decided that I would follow a career in music, learning the organ, conducting, choir training, and accompanying. Music is an international language. It knows no barriers. So, at age 21, I immigrated to Canada to follow my musical journey. My time in the cathedral choir had given me confidence, discipline to concentrate despite fatigue, work over long periods of time on single projects or pieces of music with patience (although not always!).

My children, Emma and Christopher, age 14 and 13 respectively, both sing and take piano lessons. I hope that they too will grow through music.

It will change them forever.

The Voice Newsletter Staff:

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 Contributors to this Edition:
 Amanda Gray Vander Ploeg: *member profiles*
 Ian Sadler: *It Will Change Your Life Forever*
 Jean Moorehead: *Tribute to M. Kuindersma*

Upcoming Events in 2010

Monday, November 22 7:30 p.m. ~ **Dress Rehearsal** for Christmas in Stratford

Sunday, November 28 3 p.m. ~ **Christmas In Stratford Concert** featuring **John Rutter's Gloria**, and favorite carols, with special guests the **Melody Shop Brass Ensemble**

Friday, December 10 **SSO** ~ **Dress Rehearsal** for the Messiah, Charpentier's Midnight Mass de Noel and selections from Vivaldi's Gloria.

Saturday, December 11, 7:30 p.m. ~ **Christmas at the Festival Concert** with the Stratford Symphony Orchestra

Wednesday, December 15, 6:00 p.m. ~ **Carols** at Stratford General Hospital

Be thinking ahead. Do you have something to perform at the Valentine's Cabaret?



Jonathan Hunse: A Profile

by Amanda Gray
 Vander Ploeg



Born and raised in Hamilton, Ontario, Jonathan Hunse is a music man. He sings and plays piano, drums, guitar, and bass – although not usually all at once!

Six years ago Jonathan married Julie and they spent 2005 living and teaching in New Zealand. They have now settled here in Stratford with their 2 kids – 23 month old Willem, and 6 month old Janelle.

Jonathan tells me he thoroughly enjoys his job teaching math and chemistry at Woodland Christian High School in Breslau, Ontario (just outside of Kitchener). Right now, he is on parental leave until May, but he is continuing as the conductor of the 55-voice concert choir and 16-voice chamber choir there.

Jonathan is involved in music at the Stratford Christian Reformed Church as a pianist and Praise team member.

This is Jonathan's first year as a member of the Stratford Concert Choir and he says the best part so far is the Tenor section!

The most recent SCC performance (October 2010) was entitled "Viennese Delights" and included works from Mozart, Schubert, and Haydn. For Jonathan, Mozart's Requiem was a highlight. When asked what his favourite piece of music is that he has sung with the SCC, he answered "anything that starts with "Quam olim Abrahae."

Besides parenting, music and teaching, Jonathan also loves to read good novels, eat good food and going on camping and canoe trips – and he occasionally does do these all at once!

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The Stratford Concert Choir also gratefully acknowledges the support that has been received from other benefactors as well as the continuing support of our **own choir members**.
 Without all of you.....there would be no Stratford Concert Choir.

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 SCC fundraising committee at:
 terry@marklevitz.com
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To all our sponsors

The Stratford Concert
 Choir along with the
 Staff of
 The Voice
 wish everyone and
 their families, a very
 Blessed Christmas

And all the best
 for the coming year

REMINDER
 Dress Rehearsal with the
 SSO ~ 7:30 at the Festival
 Friday Dec. 10th
 Concert: Saturday, Dec.
 11th at 7:30 PM.
 SCC members enter by
 stage door