

chorister

Associated Male Choruses of America

Volume 25: Number 1

First Quarter – 2002

Music Contest

Harry Learoyd

Sometimes we forget the many benefits that are provided by our association.

We remember that stirring singing of our moving selections on Big Sing Programs when hundreds of men's voices are united; we fondly recall some of the friendships that have developed over the years with men and their families in other cities and towns. Some of the "crazy" antics during the Afterglows come to mind, sometimes too easily. We recall with tears in our eyes as we sing certain songs, some of our former members who are now singing with the "heavenly choir".

But our association has other benefits too! The very important Scholarship Fund has continued to give financial support and prestige to young student-singers who are studying, rehearsing and performing so well at colleges and universities (I trust that you are giving these young people opportunities to perform with your choruses.) They are our future!

One of the lesser-known benefits of ours is the MUSIC CONTEST. Let me bring you up to date on this topic.

1998 Winner

THERE'S A WIDENESS IN GOD'S MERCY

Rhonda Woodward (composer)

This work was so impressive that it was also published in SATB

Kelman Hall Publishing Co
100 Ahrens St., Kitchener, Ontario
Canada
N2H 4C3

2000 Winner

FRIEND

Jeff English (composer)

4922 Palisade Drive, Lansing, MI 48917

Mr. English took on the expense of publishing this work himself. As you are aware, this selection has been chosen as the theme song for the 2003 International Big Sing in Lansing, Michigan. It is a wonderful selection!

1999 Winner

HOLY PEACE

David Bruhn (composer)

Leslie Music Supply – Publisher

PO Box 471, Oakville, Ontario

Canada
L6J 5A8

2001 Winner

SONG OF THANKSGIVING

Willard Fast (composer)

565 Hammond Road, Hastings, MI 49058

At this time, Mr. Fast and the contest chairman are trying to find a suitable publisher.

These are all excellent chorus selections, suitable for small, medium-size and large choruses or for District Sings and, in the case of "Friend", for an International Sing. Chorus directors are continually looking for music – why not look at our contest winners?

For more information about the rules for the contest, check the web site or contact the Contest Chair at hlearoyd@idirect.com or by mail at 23 Dalegrove Crescent, Etobicoke, Ontario, Canada M9B 6A5.

Men of Music Sing for Charity
Donald A. Peterson
Field Editor
Michigan Male Chorus Association

As they have for nearly a quarter century, Midland, Michigan based Men of Music presented a pair of Christmas concerts as a way of giving back to the community that supports them. The concerts, which are free to the public, feature an intermission holiday sing-along during which a free-will offering is taken to help support Midland area charities. Fully 100% of the donations are passed to local non-profit charitable organizations each season.

For the past several years, funds raised by the chorus have been matched in part by the Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL) and, for the first time this past Christmas, by the Lutheran Brotherhood as well. Overhead costs of presenting the concert is borne entirely by the Men of Music.

The public has responded well to the concerts and to the spirit of giving. Approximately 1000 people attended each of the two performances in 2001 and

contributed more than \$4400. At a separate Bay City, Michigan performance, the audience donated an additional sum of nearly \$1300. With the matching funds, the Midland chorus in 2001 was able to present their local charities with more than \$8500.

Since initiating the Christmas concerts in 1987 the chorus has distributed more than \$67, 0000 (including matching funds) to over a dozen local organizations.

Under the direction of Grace Marra, the Men of Music take an active part in the cultural experience of the Midland area. In addition to being strong supporters of the MMCA and AMCA, the group is part of the Music Society of Midland and the Midland Center for the Arts. Its 60 members come from a broad area of Michigan's Saginaw Valley and take pride in their 66-year history of bringing fine music to appreciative audiences in central Michigan.

Upper Midwest District Sing 2002
April 26 and April 27, 2002

Eau Claire, Wisconsin will be the place to be during the last weekend of April this year. The Upper Midwest District sing will be held at the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire Zorn Arena. Bob Wierman, co-chair of the event has informed us through the web site that the Singing Statesmen will perform a solo number and be joined by the massed choruses for two numbers. An Afterglow at the downtown Holiday Inn Convention Centre will follow the Saturday evening concert.

For more information about the event, please contact John Case, 2113 Mead Street, Eau Claire, WI 54703 (FAX 715 720-9018). E-mail at jcase@wwt.net



GOLF TOURNAMENT TO RAISE FUNDS FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

Many of our choristers like to play golf and some golf almost as well as they sing. Some choristers golf better than they sing (no further comment). Why not join the two activities and raise some money for the scholarship fund at the same time?

I am proposing a golf tournament for the entire Association to be held any day during June 2002 at the course of your choice. The activities at the nineteenth hole would be optional. Get a foursome together at the course of your choice and send a minimum of \$5.00 per golfer to the scholarship fund through your chorus. Send your scores to me at dplunkett4@cogeco.ca

We will assume that all scores are honest scores and we publish the best scores and the worst scores in the Chorister. A trophy will be presented at the fall meeting to the district raising the most money.

Fore!

FIRST PLACE HAMILTON MALE CHORUS CELEBRATE 60 YEARS

(Joe Love) luyvrpb@idirect.com

The First Place Hamilton Male Chorus from Hamilton, Ontario is celebrating 60 years of making music. The group has performed as The International Harvester Male Chorus and the Case IH Male Chorus until last year when the choir changed its name to reflect the name of the United Church where they practice.

All Ontario choruses will be celebrating at the Anniversary Sing on Saturday, April 20, 2002 at the Polish Hall on Fairview Street in Burlington, Ontario. There will also be some special guests and Dan Plunkett promises not to play the harmonica unless he is asked by a number of people.

The Ontario district is proud of the First Place Hamilton Male Chorus, which has been a member of AMCA since 1952 and a charter member of AMCO.

MICHIGAN DISTRICT BIG SING

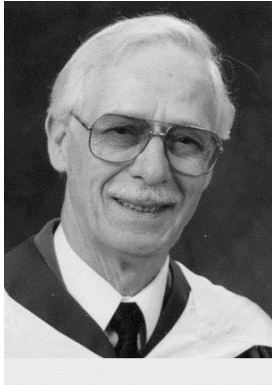
John T. Fleming

The Michiana Male Chorus of South Bend, Indiana is proud to present the Michigan Big Sing on Saturday, April 27, 2002 in South Bend, Indiana. The concert will be held at The Morris Center for the Performing Arts in downtown South Bend. The size, atmosphere and acoustics are unparalleled in the area and will add much to the enjoyment of both the audience and participants.

The Afterglow will be held at the Ramada Inn just north of the downtown area. Shuttle bus service will also be available.

Contact Chairman Walt Stitt wbstitt@datacruz.com

AMCA Historian Robert P. Woodland



As one recently appointed to this position, I should introduce myself to the many members of AMCA who do not know me. I am a founding member of the Kawartha Male Chorus, based in Lindsay, Ontario. Prior to Kawartha, I sang with the Queensmen of Toronto for some years. I was Secretary of KMC before accepting this position. I also served as Editor of the AMCO Newsletter for several years. For anyone interested in other biographical information, I am still married to my wife of almost 53 years, the former Effie Melendy of St. John's Newfoundland. We have five children and eight grandchildren scattered across North America. I am retired from the Queen's Printer for Canada. I hold a Professional Management Certification from the Canadian Institute of Management and a B.A. in History from Trent University.

THE GLORIFICATION OF THE MALE CHORUS

"As the great curtain rose, it disclosed 856 choristers seated, . . . twenty-two rows in all. It was indeed an impressive sight. The house was no less impressive. Every seat was filled-the boxes were crowded-even the orchestra pit had been floored over so that additional seats might be available. "The first number, 'Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones'-with accompaniment of two pianos and organ-was a tremendous one. If there ever was doubt as to the ability of the great chorus-trained as individual clubs, with but two massed rehearsals-to do really great team work, it was dissipated with the singing of the first phrase . . .

...Each conductor played it (the chorus) as if it were his own instrument and the response-in precision, phrasing, modulation and interpretation-was little short of marvellous. It proved, . . . as an eminent critic said, that 'a thousand men can sing a pianissimo as well as a quartet-if they know how'.

" . . . The program ended with *Adeste Fideles* with the audience on its feet, bringing the concert to a close with the magnificent chorus in which all joined . . .

The writer referred to the respect and support of the press as being essential to the Association's success. He quoted from a number of favourable notices sent to them from the press.

"N.Y. Sun: These combined clubs made an excellent impression in the reflection of their

admirable purpose, in the fine pianissimos and intelligent restraint used in conducting such a large body of men and in the admirable quality of tone revealing vitality, good intonation and praiseworthy ensemble."

"N.Y. World: When they sang the Hunting Song from Robin Hood we actually felt the therapeutic value of it in a succession of waves surging up our spine."

"N.Y. Herald-Tribune: In a well-chosen program, the massed chorus sang well, avoiding any impression of unwieldiness. Their combined tone was of a full and mellow quality while there was a very commendable degree of shading and expression in their singing and unity and precision in their response to the successive directors."

It is interesting to note the florid phraseology in some of the descriptions, although in some cases, it may be more accurate and pleasing than some of what we see today. It was noted that about half of the men attended a "Super Smoker" afterward, as the predecessor of our "Afterglow" was called.

I trust this item will bring some feedback relating to the history and heritage of our association, what you thought of the column, and suggestions as to other items you might like to see in this column.

(Robert Woodland) woodland@amcofa.org

NEW YORK – PENNSYLVANIA DISTRICT SING

The Singing Dutchmen will host the Big Sing, for the year 2002. A mass chorus selection of "Just A Closer Walk With Thee" by Ed Lojeski and published by Hal Leonard (TTBB) will be replacing "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring". All choruses are to purchase this selection if they do not have it in their library. According to NY/Penn District policy, each chorus will be reimbursed by the District for the number of

copies purchased according to the number of dues paying members within that chorus. An invoice must be submitted to the district treasurer before payment is made.

An additional number will be added to the Big Sing mass numbers and that will be "God Bless America." Everyone including the audience will be asked to sing along to the melody.

Material retrieved from the [NYP District Minutes Fall 01](#)

FROM LINDSAY TO LANSING

All Ontario choruses will be attending the Ontario District Sing on October 19, 2002 in Lindsay, Ontario. The event will be hosted by the Kawartha Male Chorus and will take place at the beautiful and historic Academy Theatre in Lindsay, Ontario.

performing the massed choir numbers to be sung at the Big Sing in Michigan. AMCO has also commissioned a piece for the Ontario choruses to sing in Lansing and this will be performed as well.

To show their commitment to the International Sing in Lansing, Michigan in 2003, the Ontario choruses will be

More information is available from Bill Bates at Telephone: (705) 793-2379 Email: wbates@peterboro.net



Associated Male Choruses of America

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WHAT'S THE QUESTION?

Dan Plunkett

John Senn from my chorus is an engineer with General Motors in St. Catharines and he asked me the following question: "Is the glass half empty or half full?"

full. The pessimist would say that the glass was half-empty.

The engineer would say that the glass was twice as big as it needed to be.

He then went on to explain to me that the optimist would say that the glass was half-

Thanks John.

HOW OLD IS GRANDPA?

Bill Clark (Niagara Men's Chorus)

One evening, a grandson was talking to his grandfather about current events. He asked what he thought about the shootings at schools, the computer age, and just things in general.

The granddad replied, "Well, let me think a minute ... I was born before television, penicillin, polio shots, frozen foods, Xerox, contact lenses, Frisbees and the pill. There was no radar, credit cards, laser beams or ball - point pens. Man had not invented pantyhose, air conditioners, dishwashers, clothes dryers, well the clothes were hung out to dry in the fresh air and man hadn't yet walked on the moon.

Your grandmother and I got married first, and then lived together. Every family had a father and a mother, and every boy over 14 had a rifle that his dad taught him how to use and respect. And they went hunting and fishing together. Until I was 25, I called every man older than I, 'Sir'-and after I turned 25, I still called policemen and every man with a title, 'Sir.'

Sundays were set aside for going to church as a family, helping those in need, and visiting with family or neighbors. We were before gay-rights, computer dating, dual careers, daycare centers, and group therapy.

We governed our lives by the Ten Commandments, good judgment, and common sense. We were taught to know the difference between right and wrong and to stand up and take responsibility for our actions.

Serving your country was a privilege; living here was a bigger privilege. We thought fast food was what people ate during Lent. Having a meaningful relationship meant getting along with your cousins. Draft dodgers were people who closed their front doors when the evening breeze started. Time-sharing meant time the family spent

together in the evenings and weekends-not purchasing condominiums. We never heard of FM radios, tape decks, CDs, electric typewriters, yogurt, or guys wearing earrings.

We listened to the Big Bands, Jack Benny, and the President's speeches on our radios.

And I don't ever remember any kid blowing his brains out listening to Tommy Dorsey.

If you saw anything with 'Made in Japan' on it, it was junk. The term 'making out' referred to how you did on your school exam.

Pizza Hut, McDonald's, and instant coffee were unheard of. We had 5 & 10-cent stores where you could actually buy things for 5 and 10 cents. Ice cream cones, phone calls, rides on a streetcar, and a Pepsi each cost a nickel. And if you didn't want to splurge, you could spend your nickel on enough stamps to mail 1 letter and 2 postcards. You could buy a new Chevy Coupe for \$600, but who could afford one? That's too bad, because gas was 11 cents per gallon.

In my day, "grass" was mowed, "coke" was a cold drink, "pot" was something your mother cooked in, and "rock music" was your grandmother's lullaby.

"Aids" were helpers in the Principal's office, "chip" meant a piece of wood, "hardware" was found in a hardware store, and "software" wasn't even a word.

And we were the last generation to actually believe that a lady needed a husband to have a baby.

No wonder people call us "old and confused" and say there is a generation gap; how old do YOU think I am?

This man would be only 59 years old.

SOME DEFINITIONS

Dan Plunkett

Many of our choristers are quite good at sight - reading music; they understand the language and their vocal chords do what their brains tell them to do. Some of us have a little trouble with this and need a bit of education. I am constantly asking our director and accompanist what some of the words and squiggles mean. I have often said, "It's all Greek to me!" Actually it's Italian.

Here is the first instalment of some definitions.

Allegretto is an indication of tempo in music. It is a diminutive of *allegro* and signifies a slower movement than *allegro* but not as slow as *andante*.

Attacca is a direction at the end of a movement to show that the next is to follow immediately without any pause.

Canto fermo is the plain ecclesiastical chant in cathedral service; the plain song.

Chromatic means proceeding by the smaller intervals (half steps or semi-tones) of the scale, instead of the regular intervals of the *diatonic* scale.

Coda is a few measures added beyond the natural termination of a composition.

Dacapo means from the beginning. It is a direction to return to, and end with, the first strain and is indicated by the letters *D.C.*

Dotted note is a note followed by a dot to indicate an increase of length to one half of its simple value.

Ligature is a curve or line connecting notes, thereby forming a slur.

Got any questions about those words or symbols? Why not ask me at dplunkett4@cogeo.ca



FOR THE TEACHERS IN OUR MIDST

The following are a couple of entries in *Non Campus Mentis* (actual university students' submissions) by Anders Henriksson:

Actually, the fall of empires has been a good thing, because it gives more people a chance to exploit their own people without outside interferences

Workers voted for conservatives, because they believed in unemployment.



Don Crouch
Music Reviewer

The following are some reviews pulled off the web site.

SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL - Charles Calhoun / arr. Kirby Shaw

TTB Hal Leonard #08201245 (2000)
\$1.50 also ShowTrax
Use: Pop, Afterglow

Positive:

- Strong audience appeal
- Easy parts to learn
- Baritone can sing the Tenor II part, and they will like it because they have the melody most of the time
- Simple accompaniment

- Has a taped accompaniment

Not so positive:

- Range is high: originally for a younger group: tenor part is fine, bass is high, and no baritone
- Only three parts, and two of them are tenor (Baritone sing Tenor II)
- Accompaniment does not help support the voice line (although they may not need it with this tune!)

WHEN I WAS A LAD (*H.M.S. Pinafore*) - W. S. Gilbert & Arthur Sullivan / arr. by John Leavitt

TTB Shawnee Press #C 0306 (2000) \$1.40
Use: Afterglow, pop

Positive:

- Familiar melody with a great arranger
- Passes the melody around
- Fun (corny)
- Has optional marching
- Has whistling

- Optional solo part
- Accompaniment not too difficult (especially coming from John Leavitt)

Not so positive:

- TTB (split tenor)
- High bass part: meant for a younger voice