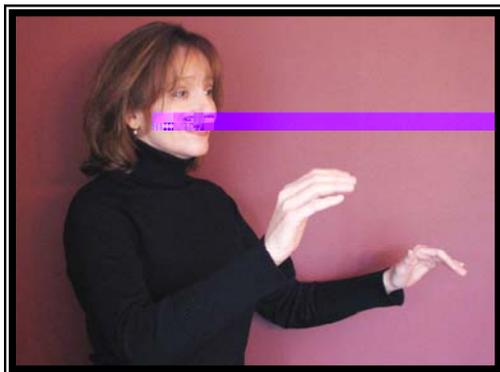


All Choristers Off And Running!



Conductors Allison Prowse and Robert Filion report a strong start for the choirs' 2006-07 season.

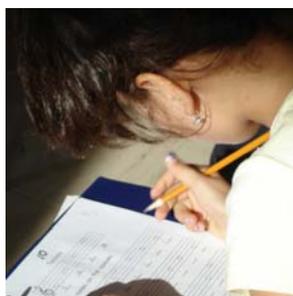
Allison told the Board's September meeting that the *Viva Choir* begins the year with 40 voices, who appear enthusiastic. The *Concert Choir* has 78 choristers, and upon hearing a three-part 'O Canada' at the first rehearsal, she is optimistic.

Robert reports that the *Chamber Choir* has 45 members, with good balance of sopranos and altos

Robert says he and Allison are introducing changes to "make better choristers, better choirs and better concerts."

"We are investigating a more formal approach to the sight-reading skills taught in rehearsals. We are also looking at our concert schedule to make it the most enjoyable and rewarding experience possible for the kids in all three choirs."

Much of the repertoire for the year has been chosen.



Viva Choir

In her 2005-06 year-end report to the Board, Allison said she was pleased with the *Viva Choir's* progress. "I was able to choose more challenging repertoire as the year progressed. The learning curve of initial choral education is steep for this group. In *Viva*, children learn the joy of singing and they broaden their exposure to a variety of types of music. They acquire stage presence from many performance venues. They learn group responsibility, perseverance and commitment. Vocal techniques, basics in rhythm and score reading are all covered throughout the year."

Allison says she tries to choose age-appropriate music for both choirs that she directs, with understandable lyrics, melodies that engage, all written within their vocal range, but with enough of a challenge to stretch them.

"We want to engage the children, catch their imagination and challenge them with rhythm and harmonies that work together. I look for music that provides concepts I want to teach. They sing in unison of course, but also a *cappella*, so that they

can hear themselves without accompaniment. We will also sing partner songs – two songs sung together – as a step toward harmony.”

Concert Choir

The Concert Choir’s mandate is slightly larger, building upon concepts introduced in the Viva Choir and providing a greater variety of performance opportunities. “We will sing festival and liturgical and ‘fun’ music. Sometimes children may not like a piece because it is serious or slow; but often these become choir favourites because they teach something new and they challenge the children. Never underestimate children and what they can do! One must choose repertoire carefully however as there is a fine line between what is a stretch and what is just frustrating because it is conceptually too big a leap, too fast.”

Viva members will be introduced gradually to public performance, singing in December at the Mayor’s Christmas party, at Battle of the Atlantic Commemorative Ceremony at the Cenotaph in May, and with Concert and Chamber at the Christmas and Spring concerts.

The Ottawa Children’s Choir has participated in the Remembrance Day ceremony at the Cenotaph continuously since 1972. It’s a nationally-televised event and always a highlight of the year for Concert and Chamber choristers.



“Music for the Remembrance Day program is prescribed by the Canadian Legion,” says Allison. “We will sing *Flanders Fields*, three hymns, *O Canada*, and *God Save the Queen*. We have received special permission to sing an arrangement of a French piece, *Ilssont nombreux les bien heureux*, with the Canadian Forces’ Central Band. I would like the children to understand the message of *Flanders Fields* and hope to bring someone in from the Legion to talk with the themabout the poetry. Singing at the Cenotaph for the National Remembrance Day

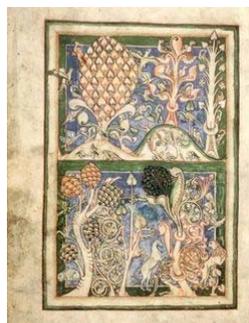
Service is a privilege and an act of service...a way also of thanking the men and women who have done, and who do so much, for us all.”

Canadian content is sought in choosing repertoire for both Viva and Concert Choirs, and they will sing a wider selection of smaller pieces than the Chamber Choir. Pieces in French, Latin, German and Hebrew will be introduced for Concert members. The Concert Choir will join the the Ottawa-Carleton Catholic District School Board Concert Choir to present a joint concert in the late winter/early spring. The joy and experience of singing with other choirs is memorable for everyone.

Chamber Choir

“We want an advanced repertoire for the Chamber Choir, sung mostly in three and four parts,” says Robert. “We will sing lots of contemporary Canadian music and I’m looking for folk music of the world – African, Russian, Australian, South American, Caribbean. The choir should be singing not only regular harmonic, but ‘stranger’ things characterized by chromatic harmonies, atonal harmonies, irregular rhythm patterns, jazz idioms, irregular time signatures -- new ways of writing music. Kids should see what’s going on in the world of music outside pop.”

“We will sing our French songs in accents that are true to francophone ears. This is not difficult for kids – they are fast at catching it.”



Carmina Burana, a collection of love and vagabond songs.

The Chamber Choir will tackle two major works this year. They will sing Benjamin Brittain’s *Ceremony of Carols* at the Christmas concert December 18, “difficult music of old English carols in 11 movements, something that should be done by choristers during their time in an advanced children’s choir,” says Robert. And they will be part of a massed choir of 200 to sing the 13th century songs of *Carmina Burana* on April 28-29 with the Central Band.

Ewashko: “You never stop learning.”

Singing in the Ottawa Children’s Choir was an early step for Laurence Ewashko on the road to an illustrious career in music.

Professor of Choral Studies at the University of Ottawa, Mr. Ewashko conducts the university’s three choirs. He is also Artistic Director of the Ewashko Singers, Artistic Director of the Outaouais Sacred Music Festival, Chorus Master of Opera Lyra Ottawa and former conductor of both the Vienna Boys’ Choir and the Cantata Singers of Ottawa.

As a youngster, Mr. Ewashko spent four years with the Ottawa Children’s Choir (then the Ottawa Board of Education Central Choir), an experience he says that “gave me a sense of the levels and standards to aim toward in my own development.”

“The children’s choir created a community for me, a group of people who came together to sing,” he said in an interview. “My network expanded. I made lasting friendships.”

“The choir teaches technical and vocal skills, the ability to perform in a variety of languages. You learn how to be and live in community, to listen to and for others, to take instruction and follow through, to contribute to the ensemble.

You acquire discipline from attending rehearsals

and memorizing music. These things are important in every art form that can be transferred to every aspect of daily life. I often speak of three D’s – desire, drive and discipline.”

Laurence Ewashko started in the children’s choir as a descant soprano and emerged as an alto. Today, in addition to his conducting, he is a baritone soloist who has been recorded by CBC, and is much in demand as a choral clinician, vocal coach, and adjudicator.



In June of this year Mr. Ewashko toured with the University of Ottawa Choir to Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kyiv. Both Joy Mayer of the OCC Board and Chamber choir conductor Robert Filion sang on tour with the University of Ottawa Choir and Robert was Mr. Ewashko’s Assistant Director for this tour.

Mr. Ewashko encourages choristers to spend a full term with the choir. He recognizes that it is tempting for older choristers to quit as life’s distractions multiply.

“Balance in life is important to everyone, but I would encourage these young singers to continue to making music a priority, to expand and develop their skills already learned. I believe musicians remain eternal students. That is what I love about this art form - You never stop learning.”

*Some faces from
the Viva Choir*



Dream Trip for Chamber Singers

In May, 39 members of the Ottawa Children's Chamber Choir were among choirs featured at the national ChorPodium 2006 conference. The biennial event provides a unique opportunity for members of the Association of Canadian Conductors (ACCC) to attend master classes, concerts and to share stories and techniques. For our choristers, the adventure began early on May 16 as they flew from Ottawa to Vancouver with seven adult chaperones in tow. Thanks to the difference in time zones, the group arrived in time to have lunch in Stanley Park and fit everyone in the famous hollow tree.



Over the next days, the choir performed concerts for students in two local schools. The students from one school were so impressed they asked choristers for their autographs! They also shared a large concert where they were able to hear local children's choirs and even sing a few songs all together.



While in Vancouver, the group also visited the Capilano Suspension Bridge. Taking courage from each other, each adventurer crossed the Capilano Canyon on a bridge as it swayed in the wind. After a short lesson on the coastal ecosystem, everyone got a view of the rainforest from smaller suspension bridge strung from tree to tree, sometimes as high as 100 feet above the forest floor.



After a bus ride, ferry ride and another bus ride, the choir arrived at the University of Victoria, site of the conference. They attended a concert by the National Youth Choir and enjoyed an enthusiastic reception at their own concert Saturday afternoon. They toured the destroyer HMCS Ottawa, dipped in the Pacific Ocean during a barbeque at the home of a former choir manager Jodi D'Amour, and dined at the Old Spaghetti Factory. A memorable trip.

The Gang



In trademark red T-shirts, 30 Ottawa choristers gather at Stanley Park's famed hollow tree.

Presenting ...

Hi jinx from the adults. Chamber Choir Director Robert Filion is introduced by, left to right, Martie Moolman, Choir Manager; Allison Prowse, Director of the Viva and Concert Choirs; Accompanist Sally Robinson, Choral Assistant Gabrielle Wilson, General Manager Andi Murphy and Board Member and tour planner Joy Mayer.



Swing Low



On the Capilano suspension bridge

left to right: Anna Manore, Sophie Laghi, Emma Roblin, Baily McCulloch, Mychèle Lebrun, Shannon Bedford, Rebecca Gray, Anika Mehta, Asha Webber-Juggoo, Evelyne Héroux-Fortier.

Celebrities!



The elementary students at Porter Street School in Coquitlam asked for autographs from the visiting Ottawa singers. Scott Stewart obliges.

When Children Join Hands and Sing



The May 10 spring concert presented the Viva, Concert and Chamber choristers with an opportunity to sing together. The massed choirs sang *I Like a Simple Song* written by Carl Stromen, and two songs by Canadian composers -- *When Children Join Hands and Sing* by Edward Rutherford, and the finale *United in Song* by Paul Halley.

Gabriel Award



CBC-TV's stunning production of the Chamber Choir's Christmas concert last year has won international attention with the Gabriel Award, given for "programming that uplifts the human spirit and recognizes and upholds human values such as community, creativity, compassion and the dedication to excellence."

"Evergreen Wishes" is a one-hour regional Christmas television special produced annually in Ottawa. The December 2005 show featured the Chamber Choir's songs from *Dancing Day*, a major work by British composer John Rutter, with harp soloist Caroline Leonardelli and the Senior Harp Ensemble of the Ottawa Youth Orchestra Academy. The program was recorded live at Knox Presbyterian Church, hosted by Rita Celli and produced by Adele Cardamone-Martel.

It's In the Handbook!

Just about all parents' questions are answered in the ***Handbook for Choristers and Parents***. You can't miss it. It has a bright yellow cover and is the first item in your child's music binder.

Besides complete background on the choir's history, structure and leadership, the *Handbook* explains:

- Fees, deposits and refunds
- Rehearsal and attendance requirements
- Uniforms
- Volunteer activities

If your question isn't answered there Choir Managers are available on a day-to-day basis to help out. They may be reached at:

Chamber Choir Manager	Martie Moolman	613-843-0176	m.moolman@sympatico.ca
Concert Choir Manager	Martie Moolman	613-843-0176	m.moolman@sympatico.ca
Viva Choir Managers	Kay Baggely	613-746-9707	rogerbis@rogers.com
	Yvonne Navratil	613-521-5434	mayvon@sympatico.ca

To Report Absences Call 233-4440

If for any reason you find yourself without your copy of the handbook contact Andi Murphy (General Manager) at 233-4440 or info@ottawachildrenschoir.ca

Tentative Schedule

Date	Event	Location	Choir
Sept 25, 2006	Canadian Council of Chief Executives	National Gallery	Chamber
Sept. 27, 2006 7:00pm	Parent's Meeting	McNabb	Parents
Oct. 27- 30	Hosting Boni Pueri Boys Choir Czech Republic		Chamber-Concert
Nov 5, 2006	Valiants Memorial Unveiling	Cenotaph	Chamber
Nov 11, 2006	Remembrance Day	Cenotaph	Chamber-Concert
Dec 16, 2006	Mayor's Christmas Party	Drill Hall	Concert-Viva
Dec 17, 2006 Afternoon	Christmas Concert Technical Rehearsal	Dominion Chalmers	All
Dec 18, 2006 4:00pm	Christmas Concert	Dominion Chalmers	All
Dec, 2006	Community Carol Sing	St. Barnabas	Chamber
Feb / Mar 2007	OCC & OCCDSB Choir		Concert
Mar 2007	Kingsway United	Kingsway	Concert
Mar / Apr 2007	School Visits		Chamber-Concert
April 2007	Kiwanis Music Festival		Chamber-Concert
April 28-29 2007	Carmina Burana – Chouer Classique	St. Francis Assisi	Chamber
May 2007	Battle of the Atlantic	Cenotaph	Concert-Viva
May 17 2007	Spring Concert		All
July 2007	Unisong	NAC	Chamber-Concert

Newsletter Team

September 2006 Issue

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	Martie Moolman	Dan Theriault	Gabrielle Wilson

and thanks to Allison Prowse, Robert Filion, Laurence Ewashko and Andi Murphy