



PEMBROKE COMMUNITY CHOIR

www.pembrokecommunitychoir.org

MEDIA RELEASE

December 2020

VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS PERFORMANCE FOR PEMBROKE COMMUNITY CHOIR

In a normal year, hundreds of people would have been sitting shoulder to shoulder, listening to beautiful Christmas music performed by the Pembroke Community Choir (PCC).

But 2020 isn't a normal year. Almost everyone has had to curtail activities, change social habits with friends and family, rearrange work and school routines, reduce operations, isolate, or close businesses. It's been a very tough year around the whole world.

For many people in the community, the Pembroke Community Choir's annual Christmas concert kicks off their holiday season and sets the mood for the hectic weeks ahead. In late March, however, when Covid-19 was affecting so many people, the choir suspended practices for their 'Music of the Sixties' spring concert. There were 90 very disappointed choristers.

Remaining positive, they decided to explore ideas about what they could do during this unusual year. Choir member Jill Renault suggested forming a virtual choir, and she and her son Didier organized the many creative and technical logistics necessary to combine individual choir members' videos into one performance.



So, on a hot July evening, choir director Gerald LaRonde and accompanist Darlene TerMarsch donned formal concert dress and recorded the musical accompaniment and direction that choir members would sing to. Practicing again and again, 27 enthusiastic singers set up their home computers in front of a white background in living rooms, basements, bedrooms, and even a laundry room. The results are two professionally produced performances of *Frosty the Snowman* and *Listen to the Silence of Night*.

The short performance premiered on YouTube on Sunday, December 6th, when the choir normally would have held their concert. It is dedicated to choir member Deborah Doran who passed away in early December. The video can be viewed by going directly to their website at pembrokecommunitychoir.org, or by searching Pembroke Community Choir on YouTube. Previous Christmas and spring concerts may also be viewed anytime on their YouTube channel.



Christmas carolling during the COVID-19 pandemic brought some Christmas cheer to neighbourhoods and choir members alike.

In addition to the virtual choir, they decided that since people couldn't come to them for Christmas music, they would bring the music to the people. On Monday and Tuesday, December 7th and 8th, a dozen singers walked through neighbourhoods off Bell Street and Angus Campbell Drive, then stood under street lights to serenade whomever was interested in hearing a carol or two. It brought some much-needed Christmas cheer to both audience and choir members alike.

For over 60 years, the Pembroke Community Choir has performed two concerts each year and sings in the community at seniors' homes, the Parade of Lights, and special fundraising events. They recruit new members each September and January and look forward to singing together again when it is safe to do so.

For more information, visit our website:

www.pembrokecommunitychoir.org.