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PEMBROKE COMMUNITY CHOIR

www.pembrokecommunitychoir.org

MEDIA RELEASE

June 2021

VIRTUAL SPRING PERFORMANCE FOR PEMBROKE COMMUNITY CHOIR

The old saying--'you don't miss the water 'til the well runs dry'--certainly applies to every single thing we haven't been able to do for well over a year. In a positive way, this time has given us pause to reflect on things we might have taken for granted or not appreciated as fully as we should have.

For Pembroke Community Choir members, it's not just the singing that they miss, but the weekly social gathering to learn and practice new songs, the sense of community and friendships they have developed, and the anticipation of performing two annual concerts for local audiences.

Last year, when they had to suspend spring practices because of the pandemic, the 90 singers were very disappointed that their 'Music of the Sixties' concert wouldn't happen. As Christmas approached, they were still unable to gather so decided to form a small virtual choir by recording from their own homes. The voices and graphics were expertly blended and a video of the two seasonal songs was published on the choir's YouTube channel.



Ready for a Country Wedding: Getting prepared for a video recording are from the left, Bentley Horne, Nancy Horne, Lois Detlefson, Shelley Roberts, Carl Turner, Paula Lundrigan, and Jane Hebert.

In spring 2021, with no end to COVID restrictions in sight, the choir planned another virtual choir performance. Individual home recordings, studio sessions, and outdoor visuals were incorporated into a mini-concert of two songs to be released mid-June.

Choir Director Gerald LaRonde says: "After the interest in our first virtual performance, we were able to recruit 30 singers this spring and assemble some fine musicians to accompany us. We're

grateful to be able to offer a small slice of entertainment in these challenging times and look forward to when we can all gather together as a full choir once again."

On the old-time Gospel medley, the video features long-standing choir accompanist Darlene TerMarsch on both piano and organ, with Bill Pinkerton on drums, and Mike Britton on bass guitar. For the Celtic song, multi-instrumentalist Paul McClelland plays bodhran (Irish drum), pennywhistle and Scottish smallpipes.

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One of the more challenging parts of the Celtic song included a four-part clapping pattern that was filmed outside in a park with appropriate social distancing. At one point during the recording, there was a brief downpour that sent the singers running off in all directions to take cover in their vehicles and a nearby gazebo. It did not dampen their spirits, however, and they enthusiastically resumed once the clouds had dispersed.



Mairi's Wedding: Part of this Celtic song includes a complicated four-part clapping pattern that was performed here by, from the left, Anna Grace Wilson, Lois Detlefsen, Shelley Roberts, Paula Lundrigan, Gerald LaRonde, Jane Hebert, Carl Turner, and Jill Renault.

Director LaRonde also wanted to acknowledge the major contributions of choir member Jill Renault who, along with her son Didier and husband Christian, organized, filmed, and edited the entire video production. The free performance will be premiered on their YouTube channel on Sunday, June 13th at 7 p.m. and may be viewed online at www.pembrokecommunitychoir.org any time from that date on.



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.