

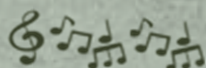
MEET SOME MEMBERS OF THE PEMBROKE COMMUNITY CHOIR!

In 2018, the Pembroke Community Choir celebrated its Diamond Jubilee--60 years since our formation in 1958. We have approximately 60 to 80 members each session, divided into Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass parts.

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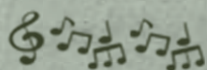


JOAN BOUCHER, SOPRANO

Singing with the Pembroke Community Choir simply makes me feel good in every way. It's fun and relaxing and I forget about what might be on my mind for those two hours. I

have sung with choirs for the past 30 years and I look forward to meeting every Monday night.

When I first joined a choir, I couldn't read music at all, but now I feel I'm pretty accomplished at reading music. I was a bit apprehensive about joining a new choir because I didn't know anyone, but now I have friendships that I cherish. Now I'm very fortunate to have my daughter-in-law Anusha singing as well and I look forward to every practice because I get to see her.



ANUSHA ARULNANTHI, SOPRANO

I moved to Canada in June 2017. As a newcomer who didn't know very many people in Pembroke, being part of the Pembroke Community Choir gave me the opportunity to meet new people and socialize. It also helps me to

keep up with the musical training that I received during my university years, and allows me to maintain my singing skills, as singing has always been a part of my life. The best part of it all is that I get to sing alongside my mother-in-law! It gives us the opportunity to bond and share our passion for music.

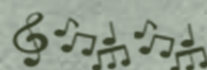
CAROL RIPLEY, SOPRANO & GEOFF MIDDLETON, TENOR

For us, joining the choir came from our discovery of each other's love for just singing before we got married in 2017.



It seemed our only real opportunity to sing was either at church or in the car where Geoff keeps the 60's tunes coming. When I discovered Geoff's love for classical music, we considered joining the choir together. Although we were concerned about not being able to read music, we were happy when we saw that the choir's website indicated that there were no auditions and an ability to read music was not necessary--so we decided to go for it.

We love it...we are learning a lot about music. We enjoy the practices every week, but after our first concert we couldn't believe how accomplished and wonderful we felt about performing with the choir. We are meeting new people and find ourselves becoming quite engaged with the group and its fantastic director Gerald LaRonde.



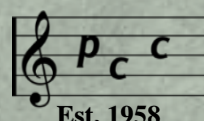
LOUISE DORAN, SOPRANO & JEFFREY DORAN, TENOR

We have attended several Pembroke Community Choir concerts and have always enjoyed the music. We also noted that the choir members seemed to be having a great time.



When we saw a notice looking for new members for a Celtic Christmas performance, we--having Irish roots--were excited to try out the experience. We were not disappointed as the music was wonderful and the members were helpful and welcoming.

Director Gerald LaRonde and accompanist Darlene TerMarsch, as well as the excellent guest musicians, were so talented and professional. We were hooked!



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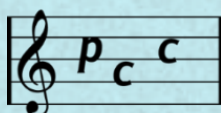
CATHERINE PEGG, ALTO

I joined the Pembroke Community Choir after COVID and have sung in four concerts—two Christmas ones, the *Sounds of the Sixties*, and Brahms' *Requiem*.

I was never involved in music before although I did learn some trumpet in music class in the early 1970s. I was nervous at first because I had never belonged to any club, choir, or group but everyone was welcoming and helpful. The camaraderie and friendships I have built or renewed are wonderful and I love to see all the smiling faces each week.

I find the choir both challenging and very rewarding and can really see the improvements I have made with each new concert. I could not read music, nor did I understand what the notes and notations meant. After taking the online tutorials offered when I joined the choir and being diligent about doing my homework practice, I found that choir rehearsals were fun, enjoyable, and relaxing.

I get much more out of the experience and feel confident when I have made the effort to learn my part. An added benefit is that my interest in all music has been enhanced and I am now looking forward to future challenges in the years to come. I feel privileged and honoured to be a part of the Pembroke Community Choir.



Est. 1958

ERIC JUNOP, TENOR

Music that I like and that is played well has always had a soothing effect on me. I got hooked by *The Sound of Music* movie, so when I heard that the Pembroke Musical Society was performing it, I joined their chorus and subsequently enjoyed many productions with them over the years.



Wanting to continue being part of music, I joined the Pembroke Community Choir when I heard they were performing songs from the Oscars. It was very rewarding being in the middle of such great sounding voices, singing songs from years ago and modern ones too.

I especially enjoyed singing Canadian songs for the special Canada's 150th concert.



JENNY DUMAS, ALTO

I love, love belonging to the Pembroke Community Choir. I have made many fine friends there and every practice we learn and laugh a lot while working on a common purpose which is to share music with the community at Christmas and springtime.



When I joined, I thought I didn't have a voice and I knew I couldn't read music, but I went anyway just to be a part of something so positive. I have never regretted it!



SHELLEY ROBERTS, ALTO

When I joined the Pembroke Community Choir in January 2015, I was delighted by how instantly welcoming it was and how I was made to feel at home.



It is a fun environment, filled with people who share a common ideology--'singing makes us feel good'.

Our concerts are always a wonderful show that the whole community enjoys. It's a fantastic way to meet great people and make lasting friendships.

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CATHY KENNEDY, SOPRANO

Singing was always a great passion of mine and, upon retirement, I felt that the Pembroke Community Choir might be a great experience for me.



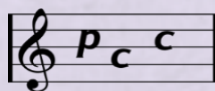
The only other time I had been in choirs was through elementary school. Over the years, I have had several opportunities to sing with my husband in the many bands he has played bass with. I also won first prize in a local contest years ago, for singing a Barbra Streisand song--"Evergreen"--from the movie *A Star is Born* (the 1976 version).

When I joined the choir this past September 2018, I really didn't know what to expect. I felt a little nervous at first but learned to relax because the members were friendly and very helpful.

I now feel I'm part of a great choir and look forward to Monday night practices and experiencing how it all comes together so beautifully for the concerts.

"Music was missing from my life, and I needed to find it again. I have found it very challenging and rewarding and have learned so much. I look forward to coming every week and find singing very cathartic."

Lani Graham, Soprano



Est. 1958

HENRI PICARD, TENOR

I was born and raised in Montreal and lived there until 2007, when my wife Sandra and I moved to Waltham after we retired.

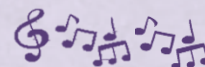


In high school I was involved in all of the plays, sang in the school choir, and played trombone in the school band.

At 15 years old, I was playing trombone and singing in a big band dance ensemble and at 17, I began singing and playing keyboards in local rock bands, which I did off and on, until I was 27 years old.

I had given up on the dream of being a rock star, but on my bucket list at retirement was the desire to sing in a choir again. In 2008 I discovered the Pembroke Community Choir and was amazed by how many good singers there were in a small town like Pembroke, and by the quality and diversity of the performances. The musical direction and leadership was also of top quality.

One of the things that touches my heart is that this choir is a *community* choir--we do not decide who can or cannot sing with us, and there are no auditions. Anyone interested, but wondering if they would be able to sing in our choir, is encouraged to try. If a new member finds it a bit difficult at first, there are always others willing to help until they feel comfortable. Our choir feels like being part of a big family.



LANI GRAHAM, SOPRANO

I joined the PCC in September 2018 and had considered joining for years but worked and lived a distance away. I had attended one concert before, when my grandmother was a member, years ago.



I was actively involved with music when I was younger and in school and really loved it. I have always enjoyed singing, but the prospect of performing in front of audiences was quite daunting and not my strong suit. Singing in a choir, however, is like being on a team. I feel comfortable, as no one can hear me! I have been in choirs before, played in instrumental bands, and been in local musical productions such as *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The King and I*, and *Anne of Green Gables*, both on stage and in orchestra pits.

I have really enjoyed my time in the choir so far. Music was missing from my life, and I needed to find it again. I have found it very challenging and rewarding and have learned so much. I look forward to coming every week and find singing very cathartic. I would highly recommend joining this fine group of people!

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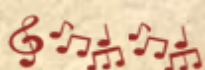


SUZANNE CUYPERS, ALTO

I can't imagine life without music. Singing was encouraged in our large family in the Netherlands where I was born. While hunkered down in the cellar during WW2, we sang! I have never stopped singing since then.

After spending many "musical years" in the Niagara area, I sought out more singing opportunities when I moved to the area 12 years ago. I was invited to join the Red Hot Mamas a week after I arrived in Petawawa. Our group of about 24 retired women, provides weekly entertainment to residents of nursing and retirement homes, locally and throughout the Ottawa Valley. Our schedule runs from September to May. Our programs include songs that are familiar to the residents, and they eagerly look forward to our visits! Cindy Wheeler, a Pembroke Community Choir member, prepares the program.

I also joined the Pembroke Community Choir upon arriving here and have been a member ever since! It is not just a choir; it is a family. I look forward to joining 60 to 80 other enthusiastic singers, learning new songs, and rehearsing for, and performing in, our two annual concerts. There is a German saying (loosely translated) - where you hear singing, join them because angry people don't sing!



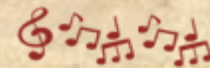
JENNIFER HUMPHRIES, SOPRANO

I joined the Pembroke community choir in 2022 when my husband and I retired back to the valley.

Growing up in a large family, music was an intricate part of our lives. Whether it was playing records and dancing, or all of us singing together, music was always heard in our home. I sang in musicals, the church choir, and competitions when I was younger.

While living in Calgary, I was a member of two different choirs over the course of my 41 years there. My sister-in-law Cindy has been involved with Pembroke Community Choir for a number of years and encouraged me to join when we returned back home. I now have the pleasure of singing with her every week. I, in turn, encouraged a sister and brother to join, and being able to sing with them again was a fantastic experience.

I didn't let my lack of formal musical training or inability to read music stop me from joining this wonderful choir. I love it!!! The camaraderie, the hard work, the constant challenge to learn new material, the voices blended in beautiful harmonies. This is my happy place.



HEATHER ELLIOTT, SOPRANO

I originally joined Pembroke Community Choir for several seasons when it was under the direction of Kevin Neiman. It certainly helped me with my many stage performances with the *Pembroke Musical Society* and *Streetlight Theatre Company* where I performed in a number of lead and minor roles over the past three decades.



I enjoy challenging myself to different music styles and the fellowship with the other choir members is uplifting. I have enjoyed returning to singing under the direction of Gerald LaRonde and, now that I have retired as a School Counsellor these past 32 years, I look forward to singing first soprano for many years to come.

I certainly understand the effort that goes into learning new music and appreciate seeing how our performances are so well-attended and well-received by our audiences!

It's show time again...let's sing!

