

## Ottawa Children's Choir - Educational Outreach Program Choral Technique workshop

On Saturday October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008 the Ottawa Children's Choir held its first Educational Outreach Program (EOP) for teachers and new choral conductors. The day involved 17 participants with varying degrees of choral experience from a variety of schools. The Chamber Choir and Senior Concert Choir members were also involved in the afternoon session.

The morning session revolved around the basics of healthy singing: posture, breathing, mouth shape and tone quality and then moved on to basic conducting gestures and technique as well as a discussion on repertoire. The participants were enthusiastic and open minded and they willingly tried the exercises that were being demonstrated. It was a relaxed atmosphere with a feeling of collegial support and acceptance. Everyone present was there because of a belief that children should sing and my goal was to help them to do this with as much success and satisfaction as possible for their situation.

The afternoon involved a demonstration of a 20 minute rehearsal (which is often all a teacher will get with a school choir!) with a warm up and introduction of a new piece. It was my goal to show what can be done in a short time when efficient warm ups are used and appropriate repertoire is carefully chosen to fit the situation. Of course, this was not a complete "real life" school situation because the OCC choristers are much more experienced than most of the students that sing in school choirs. However, the process was useful and the new piece, "Freedom is Coming" was learned by the participants and can easily be used with school choirs.

Following the demonstration, participants were offered the chance to conduct the OCC choristers in a master class setting. Participants were sent the music for In Flanders Fields and Al Shlosa D'varim a few weeks prior to the workshop in order to study the scores and have a chance to conduct the choir and receive feedback about their conducting. These pieces offered two degrees of difficulty which allowed beginners or more experienced conductors a chance to challenge themselves. Our OCC choristers were an ideal practice choir. Their ability to

respond to different conductors made it possible for the guest conductors to hear what they were doing and how their gestures affected the sound of the choir. The choristers' respect for the learning situation and for the vulnerability of the participants was admirable. The singers were kind, supportive and patient for each and every conductor that had the courage to stand up and learn. I was proud to be associated with this wonderful group of musicians.

The day was very satisfying and successful. There were many positive comments from participants and most indicated that they are looking forward to participating in our next workshop on Saturday February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009. Here are a couple of quotes from comments received from the participants:

*"Thank you again for the AMAZING workshop on Saturday. I'm very excited to put the learning to good use! You really did a fantastic job - informative and entertaining!"*

*"Having the real kids' choir there was a thrill, and a perfect way to end the day. Wow. I have already ordered Al Shlosa, and will do it with at least two choirs at Christmas."*

My thanks for the success of the day go out to Andi, Laura, Allison, Saye, Merle, Wanda, and *especially* the choristers for giving your time and talents to support music education and encourage others in their learning. As we head into our next 50 years of singing, it is one of my goals that the Ottawa Children's Choir becomes an organization known for its educational outreach and willingness to support others in their desire to sing. We all must sing!



*Jackie Hawley*

Artistic Director: Ottawa Children's Choir  
 Music Director: Chamber Choir

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# Chamber and Senior Concert Choir Participate in the Education Outreach Program

## *“from the chorister’s perspective”*

### Reaching out to the Teachers



Working - and singing - in the Ottawa Children’s Choir can prove to be a challenge. The Educational Outreach program on Saturday, October 18 was no different. The start of the workshop was like any other rehearsal we would do during the week, except it was only 20 minutes long. During that “rehearsal”, the choristers did

various warm-ups that the teachers attending the workshop had done earlier that day. We sang four songs: Al Shlosha D’Varim, In Flanders Fields, O Canada!, and a totally new song, Freedom is Coming.



After that we came to the hardest part of the workshop, in my opinion; we allowed the teachers who were brave enough to conduct us through one of the songs mentioned. This was the hardest part because some of the teachers just learned to conduct that day so they were still “shaky” on the movements which gave us a challenge. The challenge was to follow what the conductor was doing even if you thought it was wrong. All in all it was a fabulous day for learning, teaching adults, and doing what choirs love to do - sing.

*Karen Clement*

Chamber Choir

### Ottawa Children's Choir Participates in Education Workshop



Saturday, October 18th, 2008, the Senior Concert and Chamber Choirs had a wonderful opportunity to work with aspiring school choir directors. I thought that we choir members did a fantastic job - being patient and sitting down, then standing up, then sitting down, etc. for two hours and 45 minutes! We first showed the

teachers some breathing exercises, some tonality exercises and what it would be like for a choir to learn a brand new song.

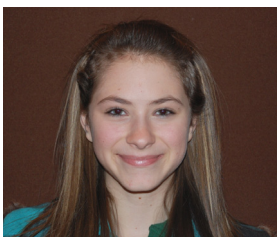


Finally, I was very excited to see how many people were to conduct a song with us! Several people took a “whack” at it. It was a challenge for the choir to follow exactly what each specific conductor was doing when we are so used to a trained conductor. I thought that it was very brave of them to try. If I were in that position, I doubt that I would have done so well. I probably wouldn’t have even tried! I think that we had a very successful and joyful afternoon.

*Emma Makin*

Chamber Choir

## Ma Journée à l'atelier de Chant



Samedi après midi, le 18 octobre, je me suis rendue à l'église «Trinity» pour assister à un atelier de direction de chorale tenu par Mme Hawley. Elle avait besoin d'une chorale. Puisque nous sommes la meilleure chorale d'Ottawa (peut-être même au Canada) elle nous a invité. J'ai trouvé cette expérience très amusante. Nous avons pu aidé les gens qui font partie d'un petit nombre de personnes qui appliquent la musique dans les écoles. Je trouve même qu'elles aussi nous ont beaucoup aidé.

Nous avons appris à suivre un peu mieux les différents directeurs de chorale puisqu'elles avaient toutes un style différent. Ainsi, nous les avons aidées à devenir des meilleurs directeurs et elles nous ont aidés à devenir des meilleurs choristes. Il y a toujours de la place pour s'améliorer et même, en certains cas, pour apprendre quelque chose de nouveau.

J'admire beaucoup ces femmes. Cela prend beaucoup de courage de se placer devant un groupe d'enfants qu'on ne connaît pas et les diriger. Pour être honnête, je ne suis pas certaine d'être capable de le faire. Je suis certaine qu'il y en a plusieurs autres qui se sentent de la même façon.

Pour terminer, cette expérience était définitivement très bonne et je le ferais encore n'importe quand.

*Josée Laberge*

Chamber Choir



*Chamber and Senior Concert Choir members at the Education Outreach Program - Choral Technique Workshop*

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# Remembrance Day

## A Special Message from one of Canada's Veterans

As a front line Korea War Veteran with the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, I wish to express my congratulations to the choir master, choir and band for your outstanding performance at the National War Memorial during the remembrance day service today. As I am unable to attend services at my local cenotaph I rely on the service via TV from Ottawa.

Your contribution at this time is of comfort to me as I remember those of my comrades who did not return. Also knowing that you will carry the remembrance torch for us. It is in good hands.

Remember always that it is up to you to make the choice to do good in the world and to enjoy life's bounties.

May you always remember your blessings,

Ed Oram,  
Barrie Ontario



### Remembrance Day - by Olivia Hall, Concert Choir

What is Remembrance Day? For some people it is just another day, but for so many others, it is one of the most important days, to honour the people who have died to give us freedom, and to give freedom to people in other countries.

Remembrance Day to me represents so many different things. I like how I have the honour representing the Youth of Canada and singing at the Cenotaph. I like how everyone works together, to use our voices to sing for everyone. On Remembrance Day everyone in the choir shows up in red and there is a tidal wave of emotions--excitement, nervousness, pure joy, and pride. When everyone is getting ready I think to myself how lucky we are to live in Canada--where we live in peace and without war.

Everyone has a favourite part of the ceremony. Mine is when I see the Veterans start to cry when we sing "O Valiant Hearts". It really reminds me how important this is, and why we're here. Most of all it reminds me of the meaning of the lyrics, and how emotional people feel when they listen to us sing.

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# Remembrance Day



## **A Day to Remember** - by *Jennie Owens, Concert Choir*

Standing at the cenotaph waiting for the Remembrance Day ceremony to begin, and feeling the cold air blowing as the Veterans all gathered. It was a cold November 11 but with all the excitement going on I don't think anyone really noticed. As we huddled together on the bleachers I felt a sudden thrill run through me. "It's the first concert of the year!" I thought to myself. We had a great time preparing and practicing to get ready for this huge event. As we stood for O Canada I took a deep breath and hoped for the best. Listening to the others around me as I sang made all the difference. I could hear all the different voices blending together to make what sounded like one of the best choirs in Canada. We sang through all the songs and had a great time doing it. We even got to be on TV!! For some it was a brand new experience to learn from and to others a past experience made better. But for everyone that was there, you did an awesome job and I hope you do it again next year. It was a great day, we all had fun, and we made the Veterans very happy - that's the main part.



## **Remembrance Day** - by *Brittany Dugan, Concert Choir*

To some people Remembrance Day is a waste of time. For some it's more important than Christmas! Whatever the case, Remembrance Day should be a day where everyone shows they care. I showed I care along with my fellow concert choir members by singing. On the cold morning of November 11th we headed to the Cenotaph to sing for the Veterans who did and did not lose their lives.

I think the whole experience was amazing because these Veterans sacrificed their lives for our well being! It was an honour and privilege to be chosen to sing there. Sadly, the microphones went out so no one at the ceremony heard us, but thankfully the radio and television audience did. The least we could do was say thank you through our songs.



## **My Reflections on Remembrance Day** - by *Daniel Smith, Concert Choir*

I was happy to participate in the Ottawa Children's Choir at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Day. It was a special experience. I will always remember the marching of the soldiers and the music played by the military bands. It was also exciting to watch the planes fly over. I found the soldiers, canons, and planes mostly represent the war. My favourite part was singing the Remembrance Day songs like "In Flanders Fields". I was proud to represent Canada as a member of the Ottawa Children's Choir on Remembrance Day.

# Remembrance Day

**Remembrance Day**  
*by Rebecca Prowse, Concert Choir*



This was the second time that I participated in the National Remembrance Day Ceremony, and I think this time was even more exciting than last year. I was so relieved that there wasn't any snow or rain, for the Veterans, and for us. However, we definitely needed those layers! I also liked this year because I got to lay a wreath for the Ottawa Children's Choir with Geoffrey in the Chamber Choir. That was certainly a highlight of the day for me. A couple neat things happened during the service: 1. It was surprising that while we sang "The larks still bravely singing fly" from 'In Flanders Fields' there was a gunshot and all the birds started flying everywhere. 2. It was so perfect when the one Snowbird left the others, and just disappeared into the clouds... a lost pilot of the war. There were only four Snowbirds because one lost his life in a flying accident this year. I wrote this poem from the perspective of a soldier fighting for us, and of a Veteran.

**La Guerre**  
*par Rebecca Prowse*

*Un soldat:*

*Je vais toujours entendre des cris  
De tous les soldats qui perdent leur vie  
Je pense au jour  
Avant la guerre  
Avec espoir de revoir ma famille*

*Un vétéran:*

*Le jour de Souvenir  
Je me souviens  
De ces jours de guerre  
Je ne sais si c'est bien*



*Un soldat:*

*Je m'ennuie de mes amis  
De ma famille aussi  
Toutes les personnes  
ont besoin le courage  
Pendant la guerre*

*Un vétéran:*

*Je me souviens de la tristesse  
Quand on se bat pour la liberté  
Quand on te donne la paix  
Et maintenant tout est bien  
Pour les Canadiens*

I think all of the Veterans must feel very proud during the service, especially in the Veterans' Parade. My favourite song would have to be "I Vow To Thee My Country" because I just really like the tune and I also like slower songs. Overall, Remembrance Day was a memorable day!

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## SING 'N SOCIAL SUCCESS !

A friendly face, a kindness and some fun, someone to connect with. All important facets in creating community. Singing together provides a unique connection in our world. One that elicits qualities and emotions that can potentially transform a person. It can be a daunting experience to come into a new setting, and thus the notion of a 'Sing 'N Social' was born. The idea to gather together for song and fun was also created in response to requests for and from the children to meet each other in a social setting.

In spending some time talking with choristers, it appears that our first ever 'Sing 'N Social' was a success in their minds and hearts! As a firm believer in creating community, I was heartened by the enthusiastic response from the children as they began their choral year together as one group. It was wonderful to see everyone working and playing together regardless of experience or age. Many returning choristers were seen helping new choristers, and were excitedly engaging them in the activities! The Concert Choir children provided their music to share with the Viva and Chamber Choir for the choral component. The three songs that were chosen for the rehearsal times were enjoyed by all!

Our Choir Managers led three games to encourage the children to get to know each other. The enthusiasm, laughter, and the noise level were infectious...for the parent volunteers as well! They easily jumped in to facilitate the games and conversations. Many thanks to Kay Baggley (Viva manager), Wanda Manning (Concert manger) and Merle Haltrecht (Chamber manager) who aptly led the games. Also, thanks to the parent volunteers and the snack providers. And of course, to Jackie Hawley...a pleasure to work with! And to the Board of Directors...thank you for your support.

Creating beautiful and life-affirming music demands an incredible amount of work, energy and focus. The opportunity to sing together was enhanced with the joy of getting to know each other. Time and effort invested in our children is always fruitful. On a personal note, I am thankful that our children are a part of the vibrant arts life in the Nation's Capital...and also, in my life. They have inspired me and have provided great joy and meaning to my life's work. Thank you first and foremost to the children. You are truly an awesome gift!!! And to you, the parents, thank you for lending us your most cherished to help create music to enhance all of our lives!



*Allison Prowse*

Associate Artistic Director, Ottawa Children's Choir  
Music Director, Viva and Concert Choirs

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## Sing 'n Social - Our choristers get to know each other

### Maggie Campbell - Viva Choir



I want to tell you about the Sing 'n Social. The point of the Sing 'n Social is for all of the different choirs to talk to friends and meet new friends. When you're at choir, you don't have time to socialize because you're singing.

At the Sing 'n Social, we did vocal chord warm ups to get our voices ready to sing. We learned a few new songs. We played three games and they were all about finding things out about others. After an hour we had snack of cheese, grapes and cookies. This was fun. I can't wait until the next Sing 'n Social.

### Madeline Abbott - Viva Choir



I thought the Sing 'n Social was great. I got to meet people I know and different people there from all the choirs. I really liked the game "S-I-N-G-O" because I had a reason to talk to people. It was hard to find people with watches for the rest of the group but I was one of them. It was fun! I also liked the treats afterwards. I also liked the song we learned at the end. It was nice to have the other conductor and mine together. I am looking forward to the next one!

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## Concert Choir - "practice makes perfect!"



*Concert Choir prepares for their upcoming performance*

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## The Viva Choir Experience

*by Dmitry Prokoptsov*

It is really fun to go to choir, participating and practicing. The songs are pretty interesting and I like them. For example, "Minka" and "Winter fantasy" are really good. I made 3 new friends. I have known a lot of new people. I wait for each and every Thursday, when I have to come to practice. I am waiting for when it is going to be a performance and we will show our songs. I like the new backpacks where I can carry my stuff. I like it when Sally plays the piano.



# Talking to Viva

We were interested in what our youngest choir members had to say, so we contacted the Viva choir. We have a very dedicated group of young (average age nine!) choristers who very willingly filled out a survey for us! Our sincere thanks to each and every one of the choristers - they all replied!

## What is your favourite song that you have sung so far, and why?

"Minka" was the overwhelming choice - here are some of the reasons why:

- I like the tune (several choristers gave this as their reason!)
- It has a fast beat and an interesting tune
- I like the rhythm of it
- The lyrics really wake me up
- It has lots of words that are kind of mixed up and that's why I like it
- It's interesting and sounds brisk and cold
- It's easy to remember and fun!
- It makes me feel better
- I know it well and the pianist part is good.
- It gets higher and faster as it goes

and just so we don't leave people out...here's what some of you said about your choice, Winter Fantasy:

- The Choir gets to be split up into 2 groups and sings different songs at the same time
- It's a Christmas song and I LOVE Christmas!
- It makes me happy!

## What's the best thing about singing in a choir?

- Singing with other people!
- You get to sing and do performances
- When we all sing together we sound like angels
- It spreads your feelings to other people
- The sound of the songs

- You get to hear other people sound beautiful
- You get to sing nice songs and your voice for singing gets better
- All the lovely songs, friend and teachers
- There are great songs and you meet new people
- Meeting friends and learning new songs
- Learning new things, making friends and having fun
- It's not just one small voice, but a bunch of kids
- Performing in front of a lot of people
- I love to hear other people's voices while I am singing
- In this choir you get to learn things like how to read notes and different tricks to help you sing
- Meeting new people and learning new songs from different countries

## Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

- Yes - I like singing!!!!
- Singing is my favourite thing to do!
- I love to sing, even alone sometimes
- I want to thank Mrs Prowse for what she has done so far
- Yes, that I'm having a wonderful time so far, and hope to work hard enough to advance to Concert next year.
- When I was one and a half, I started singing. I make up my own songs. I never really like singing songs that are already made, but I always forget what song I make, but I love singing.
- Viva choir is the best choir I've ever sung in!
- I'm tired when I arrive, but once I'm there I don't want to leave!!
- No - I think everything is fine in the Viva choir

**Thanks Choristers - we'll talk to you soon!!**

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## Important E-mails

**Chamber Choir Manager** - Merle Haltrecht-Matte  
Merle.Haltrecht@opera.ncf.ca

**Concert Choir Manager** - Wanda Manning  
concertmanager@sympatico.ca

**Viva Choir Manager** - Kay Baggley  
kaybaggley@rogers.com

**OCC General Manager** - Andi Murphy  
info@ottawachildrenschoir.ca

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## Some upcoming events...

Sun. Dec 21st	Christmas Concert Dominion Chalmers Church - 4pm
February 2009	2nd Outreach program for teachers (Chamber & Senior Concert Choir members)
April 2009	Beethoven Project at the NAC (Chamber & Concert Choirs)
April 2009	Kiwanis Music Festival
Sun. May 3rd	Battle of the Atlantic (Concert & Viva Choirs)
Sat. May 23rd	50th Anniversary Gala Concert <i>(Each of the choirs will be working on new pieces that were commissioned for the 50th. The composers will be in attendance at the Gala to accompany their pieces)</i>
July 1st	Unison (Chamber and Concert Choir)
July 2009	Festival 500 (Chamber Choir sings in Newfoundland)

Check the web site for the most up to date schedule information

[www.ottawachildrenschoir.ca](http://www.ottawachildrenschoir.ca)