

University of Victoria Chamber Singers Alumni Newsletter

Number 15 February, 2015



2015 Thetis
retreat →
See page 3

On the Ferry to Thetis - 1998

Alumni Updates:

I love hearing from you! Drop me a note; tell how you hated my book (or loved it), but mostly, let me know of pending lawsuits, so I can leave town!

Jamie Henigman '08 is active as a singer, songwriter and performer with The Love Orchestra in Toronto.

Robin Mitchell '79 (Powell) continues in her struggle with Alzheimer's. She is in care in Vancouver with her loving family. Her husband Jory "visits Robin twice a day...once in the morning for a long walk and coffee at Granville Island and then a walk and coffee on the Yaletown side of False Creek each evening. She has 'adjusted' pretty well, but she experiences bouts of sadness fairly frequently".

Andrew and Sarah Scambler '08 & '10 (Helgeson) are expecting their 2nd child at the end of February. Due to Sarah's specialized obstetric needs they are in Seattle this month in happy anticipation.

Charles Barber '84 (Charles the infatigable) is involved in creating a new recording series on Naxos, 'Canadian Classics', a survey of Canadian art music from 1800 to the present.

Taylor Bone '04 (Colishaw) continues the trend of Chamber Singers graduates to conduct U.B.C choral ensembles (previously Carrie Tennant)- Taylor is doing graduate work in Choral Conducting and has the U.B.C. Women's Chorus this year.

In this Issue

- Page 1. - Alumni Updates
- Page 2 - Remember when - photos
- The Chamber Singers' logos
- Page 3 - On the homeless
- July 2015 retreat invitation

Shannon Tyrrell '97 is Music Director at Shawnigan Lake School. She has three choirs including a large Concert Choir of 40-50 kids, and a Chamber Choir which is auditioned and consists of 9-12 students. Last year they won the provincials in their category, and were runners-up in May. She spent three weeks up in Courtenay this past summer music directing the show at the CYMC music theatre camp.

Benjamin Pease (tour) '87 continues in his fascinating career as map-maker in California and many parts of the U.S.

Contact with Conductors from past tours

In October, Connie and I had the pleasure of visiting both **Carol Young** (Berkeley - now living in State College, PA) and **Doug Amman** (Indiana - now living in Muncie.), with whom we sang with on many occasions in the 80s including our first overseas tour to Europe in '87.

Dean Cole, our bus driver on the legendary 1991 tour to California, is retired & now living in the Parksville area. I'm still in touch with **Johann VanderSandt** in South Africa, also **Karen Grylls** and **Gary Bowler**, who are still active conductors in Auckland & Napier New Zealand.



with Doug Amman



The Chamber Singers in Nelson, BC - February, 1984

Remember when....



We went 431 km per hour on the Malev in Shanghai



We swam with the sharks in Belize



We had a mountain cabin seance in Transylvania



We indulged in symmetry in Korea



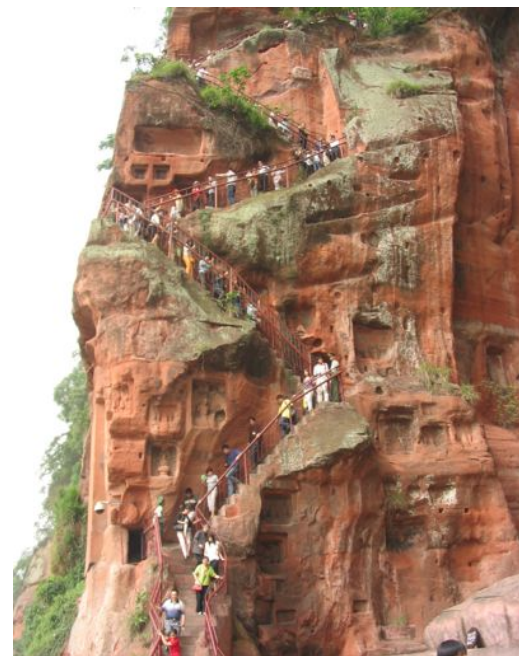
We had a toga party in a Chongqing hotel room



used to be Rice Paddy



Bruce had a bad rehearsal



We climbed the giant buddha in Chengdu



80s

The



90s

Logos



Carey Newman's Logo - '95

On the Homeless

As most of you know, either from your volunteering to help with homeless concerts, our dinners for the Homeless or my more than a decade of involvement with street people at "Ourplace", I have a strong commitment to working with Victoria's indigent people. Recently, it has become increasingly critical due to growing numbers of these unfortunates. During this past year I have become aware of at least three Chamber Singers alumni who have experienced homelessness. At the beginning of the year, I decided to join up with the Dandelion Society, Reverend Al Tysick's new endeavour in the streets of Victoria. The following are my first impressions of Tuesday mornings at 5 am with him "doing the rounds".

The first thing that strikes me upon my arrival at Victoria Cool-Aid's Ellice St. building is that there are several people "up and about," both in the lobby and on the street, this early in the morning. Al's response to my question about this is, "There are two reasons: 1. They know I'll be here with coffee and donuts at this time & place, and 2. Another hour and they get a boot from a policeman."

Our route using the Dandelion Society van includes stops in parking lots or curb-side locations in downtown Victoria. (Apparently, there is an agreement with the city that there will be no dispensing of food in front of the street shelters.) At each stop, we offer 20 to 30 homeless people hot coffee from an industrial size dispenser and donuts from a large box which Al has picked up from Tim Horton's on his drive into town from Sooke. (He calls TH each morning at 2:30 am to confirm). Where necessary, he stops in at 7/11 to buy a litre of milk or some more coffee. In addition to the refreshments, the van also has socks, gloves, coats and sleeping bags for those who need them. On this trip we gave out 2 winter coats, 2 or 3 sleeping bags, and lots of socks. One guy wanted a ball-cap, so I gave him mine (this stuff is great for the soul!). It seems to be part of the hard core reality that cigarettes are an essential "handout" at these stops. I gave out 7 packs, one cigarette at a time. Al is frequently in deep discussion with at least one person about one problem or another: someone wants to enter a detox programme; another needs money (Al never hands out cash). This particular man needs money for a new pair of pants, so Al suggests that they meet at 9am to go to Value Village - the man declines, saying he has a doctor's appointment at 9. Al suggests "well, maybe another time". If someone needs to go to hospital, Al will drop everything to get it done.

Summer Retreat 2015 Morehaven, Thetis Island, July 3-5

Re-connect this year!

FRIDAY - JULY 3:

Afternoon - retreat begins
7pm: dinner & socializing

SATURDAY, JULY 4

Morning: Breakfast & socializing
11am - Singing
1pm - Lunch
Afternoon: socializing,
hiking, sports, swimming etc.
7pm: Focus dinner
8pm - Best Chamber Singers
stories, games, more singing.

SUNDAY, JULY 5

8:30 am Breakfast
9 and 10:55 departures.

Thetis Island Ferry Schedule

[HTTP://WWW.BCFERRIES.COM/
SCHEDULES/SOUTHERN/CHTI-
CURRENT.PHP](http://www.bcferrries.com/schedules/southern/CHTI-CURRENT.PHP)

Today there are no more supplies after the 4th stop, but typically if he has any more supplies, he goes to the usual doorways and stairwells to search out needy homeless. This morning "coffee route" is just the tip of the iceberg. Al has done much more than to just dispense things - these stops are his office hours. What he does for the rest of his day is largely determined by the people he encounters. At 4pm he returns to Sooke, tries to get to bed by 8pm and starts all over again at 2:30am.

Here are some people impressions. My 13 years working with the homeless - serving coffee at a counter, maintaining a fiction library and delivering bread - were all an excellent preparation, but those experiences were like seeing a movie. This morning I felt like I was right there on the front line with real men and women. There were rare signs of substance abuse, but mostly hard-core homeless, shivering in the cold, nevertheless still enjoying each other's company. It felt like an underground community which comes out between 5 and 7am. All of them showed their appreciation to "Reverend Al", who has been doing this for so many years - he is their true "Man of the Street".



The stained glass window above was created by Al Tysick for the new OurPlace building. Connie and I purchased it as a memorial to my mom and dad: Bill and Elsie More.