



Under the Direction of Christine Chepyha & Gordon Miller

SingYourJoy Young Adult Chorus

had a game-changing sixth year ending June 30, 2017. Not just new or fresh or creative or interesting, but a collection of seminal events that could profoundly affect the direction and the future of the chorus. It is with a great deal of gratitude that we submit this **Annual Co-Directors Report** to the SingYourJoy Young Adult Chorus Society Board of Directors,

without whom these accomplishments, milestones and accolades would not have been possible.



With respect,

Christine Y. Chepyha
Gordon C. Miller
Co-Founders and Directors,
SingYourJoy Young Adult Chorus
Annual Report: Submitted June 2017

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SingYourJoy's NEW FACES

As we entered our 6th full year we realized that most of our longstanding members/singers had either aged out, or graduated from post-secondary programs or had moved to another life stage with work and family. The new faces in the choir presented a great opportunity to focus on our culture and build for the future.

SingYourJoy May 2011



We celebrate our one remaining singer from this original cast: Soprano, Michelle Lavigne.

SingYourJoy April 2017

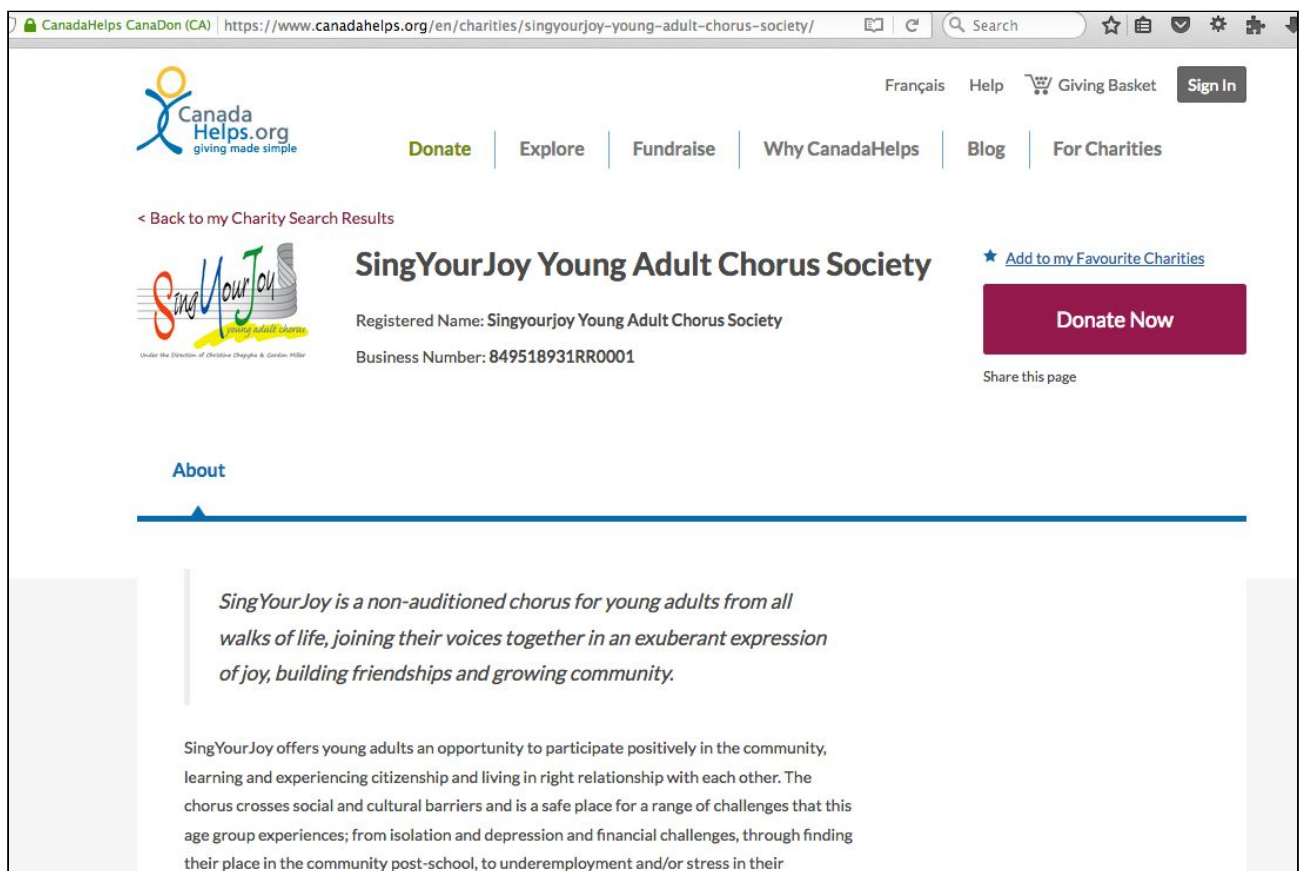


SingYourJoy numbers are staying fairly consistent now (60 to 70 during intake - 50 at concert) and the chorus continues to make new friends through our networks, which helps replenish the natural attrition that we have come to expect with this cohort. The chorus has a reputation as a fun safe place of respect for all. As a result SYJ serves a diverse group of young adults including - students in secondary and post-secondary studies, some with mental health challenges, people starting their careers, the borderline homeless, the LGBTQIP2SAA, people with physical challenges and varying abilities, people from stable and not-so-stable backgrounds.

Singers come because they love to sing. They stay and engage - in part - because they enjoy being an active part of the SingYourJoy community.

Charitable Status achieved March 2017

In March of this year, the SingYourJoy Young Adult Chorus Society was granted charitable status by the Canada Revenue Agency. Our gratitude to Treasurer Maja Kaffanke in 'stick-handling' the application once it was received by the CRA. The support of the entire Board in attending the extraordinary meeting on March 13 to approve the change in Purpose of the Society was greatly appreciated. The granting of Business Number: 849518931RR0001 will allow the Society to receive donations and issue tax receipts without involving Victoria Presbytery. This status also provides the Society the opportunity to apply for funding grants from various organizations, including the Capital Regional District (CRD), the Victoria Foundation, and others who only give consideration to groups with charitable status.




The screenshot shows the CanadaHelps website interface. At the top, the CanadaHelps logo is on the left, and navigation links for 'Français', 'Help', 'Giving Basket', and 'Sign In' are on the right. Below the logo, there are links for 'Donate', 'Explore', 'Fundraise', 'Why CanadaHelps', 'Blog', and 'For Charities'. The main content area displays the profile for 'SingYourJoy Young Adult Chorus Society'. It includes a link to 'Back to my Charity Search Results', the society's logo, and a 'Donate Now' button. The registered name and business number (849518931RR0001) are listed. A section titled 'About' contains a quote: 'SingYourJoy is a non-auditioned chorus for young adults from all walks of life, joining their voices together in an exuberant expression of joy, building friendships and growing community.' Below this, a paragraph describes the society's mission: 'SingYourJoy offers young adults an opportunity to participate positively in the community, learning and experiencing citizenship and living in right relationship with each other. The chorus crosses social and cultural barriers and is a safe place for a range of challenges that this age group experiences; from isolation and depression and financial challenges, through finding their place in the community post-school, to underemployment and/or stress in their'.

SingYourJoy is now a searchable item on the Canada Helps website!

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/singyourjoy-young-adult-chorus-society/>


New shift in community action focus

This past year chorus members were asked to come up with initiative(s) that could become singer-driven community service. At table discussion they imagined and planned their #MentalHealthMatters awareness campaign. At the April 2017 concerts, singers shared their own stories of mental health and mental illness challenges. Other singers offered personal artwork and poetry which was made available on professionally produced "art cards", each displaying contact information for local mental health resources. These art cards were available on both concert nights, and gross donations exceeded \$400. It is our hope to encourage and grow this initiative in the coming season.

 **SingYourJoy Young Adult Chorus** added 2 new photos. 4 April 2017 at 14:00 • 🌐

A recurring theme in our chorus discussions has been mental health and mental illness. At our concerts this weekend these beautiful art cards (featuring works from SingYourJoy singers) will be available for purchase, with all proceeds going towards Island Community Mental Health. 'We wanted to share with you, some stories from the people in this choir about their experiences with mental illness, to further distance ourselves from stigma.'

[#MentalHealthMatters](#)



The image shows a collection of art cards. One card prominently displays the text: "Get over it". It's not that... SingYourJoy Young Adult Chorus recognizes that mental health challenges affect us all. We want to be a voice to help alleviate the stigma and shame that so often blocks the way to wellness. SingYourJoy is a non-auditioned chorus for young adults from all walks of life, joining their voices together in an exuberant expression of joy, building friendships and growing community. <http://singyourjoy.ca/> If you or someone you know needs to talk to someone: Vancouver Island Crisis Lines: Crisis line at 1-888-494-3888, Crisis Chat: www.vicrisis.ca, Crisis Text: 250-800-3806, BC Crisis Center: 1-800-784-2433, where in BC: 1-800-784-2433, YouthlineBC.com, youthlinebc.com.

A day trip to Chemainus

On Saturday, March 25 SingYourJoy boarded a Wilson's highway coach and travelled to Chemainus for its first out-of-town ROAD TRIP! This one day excursion provided an opportunity for group bonding on the bus as well as a performance at the local United Church with proceeds going to three local charities. This also allowed the singers and directors the time to hone our songs for our April concerts. Chemainus United served as host for lunch, as well as local liaison to the charities: Rasta Animal Sanctuary; Harvest House Food Bank; Chemainus Community Refugee Sponsorship Team. We even managed a short walk-about through town to view the world famous murals, guided by Cim MacDonald the local artist now charged with restoring and maintaining the artworks.



Unified Year-Long Themes:

Connections December 2016 / Relations April 2017

Building upon the starting theme of 'Connections' (our December concert at St. Aidan's United Church), our April 2017 concerts (2, in our rehearsal home of Oak Bay United), focused on 'Relations'. Our guest artists, the Coastline Fiddlers, were a wonderful match in age, energy and enthusiasm with our own singers, and the resulting concerts were a well-balanced blend, not only of music and energy, but also of cohesion with excellent scripting to continue the theme throughout the concert. Kudos to Gordon Miller for his work on the script, and to Dylyn Wilkinson for wonderful interpretations as Master of the Concert (MC).

Ivonne Hernandez, music director of Coastline, created 4 ensemble accompaniments to SingYourJoy's repertoire, and the result was a new level of music and fun for both performers and audience.



Singing in the community:

Christmas Lights Across Canada, Cridge Centre & Highgate Lodge

SingYourJoy was thrilled to participate once more at the annual Christmas Lights Across Canada event at the BC Legislature in December. The light-up happened after the December Connections concert, and included an audience carol sing-along, arranged by Gordon and Christine, and lead jointly with Daniel Lapp and the Joy of Life Choir. Due to inclement weather, the light-up happened inside the Legislature building, and was a success for all involved.

In a move away from meal preparation and serving at Our Place Society, the chorus chose to entertain at two local seniors' homes as our community service. On a Monday evening in December the chorus shared their song with residents at the Cridge Centre, delighting them with some youthful energy. In April, the chorus performed at Highgate Lodge and ended the evening with a wrap-up celebration at the nearby 1550's Restaurant. Our gratitude to Lori Downey for her work in coordinating these performances, including researching residences that would be able to accommodate 50-75% of our singers.



*SingYourJoy performs at Christmas Lights Across Canada
in the BC Legislature Rotunda, December 8, 2016*

BCCF Chorfest 2017 participation

A major project for the co-directors since 2016 had been the creation of a new Young Adult Choir within the BC Choral Federation's annual provincial choral festival **Chorfest**. Hosted in Victoria on the 2017 May long weekend, four choirs of singers from across the province gathered to work with esteemed choral conductors, celebrating choral singing as a life-long avocation.

Ten SingYourJoy singers joined the inaugural non-auditioned BCCF Chorfest 2017 Young Adult Choir, while 2 participated in the auditioned BC Youth Choir. The weekend was a fabulous experience for all involved! The gala concert on Sunday, May 21 at University Centre Farquhar Auditorium hosted a massed choir of almost 400 singers, together with the Victoria Symphony. SingYourJoy gained provincial attention by encouraging 'our brand' of barrier-free choral singing.



The massed choirs of BCCF Chorfest 2017 in performance with the Victoria Symphony, conducted by Kathleen Allan at the University Centre Farquhar Auditorium May 21, 2017



BCCF Chorfest 2017 Young Adult Choir on the Farquhar stage, with conductor Scott Leithead.



BC Youth Choir 2017 performs with conductor Kathleen Allan and members of the Victoria Symphony.

Our Thanks!

We cannot exist without the help of many people and our heartfelt thanks goes out to:

Oak Bay United Church who generously gifts us with a warm and joy-filled rehearsal space each Monday evening and provides a community of supporters at our concerts.

Victoria Presbytery of the United Church of Canada who continues to offer financial support to the vision they helped start in 2011.

Ted and Helen Hughes, our Honourary Patrons

Patrons:

Anonymous

Robin and Paul Fraser

Maja and Richard Sloan

Mary Sloan

Helen and Harvey Waddell

Our 2016/2017 ***Season Sponsor***, Brian Ritchie of Top Shelf Bookkeeping Ltd.

Our growing list of faithful annual private ***donors***.

Our ***audiences***, those who return every season and those just discovering us.

SingYourJoy Young Adult Chorus Society ***Board of Directors***

Our Alumni AND Our Singers

