



## MOUNT DESERT SUMMER CHORALE

Summer Newsletter August 1 2021

### *A Message from the Board President*

Dear Singers and Supporters,

We can safely say this has been a year like no other in the annals of MDSC. For one thing, we usually have had a newsletter in your hands long before August. This year we've had many delays because the Board and staff have all been hard at work trying to pin down, in the middle of a rather fluid situation, the details of our summer program. In addition, I am still sort of new at this President-of-The-Board thing. Thank you for your patience and understanding, and accept this newsletter as my "Board President's Report" for the Annual Meeting.

I am excited about this summer's program: "Old Favorites for New Beginnings." After the long drought

Yes, we are having some New Beginnings this summer! We are already enjoying:

- A new program, short, and easy to learn, of mostly old favorites (see page 2)
- A new combination of virtual and live rehearsals—see details on page 3.
- A new rehearsal space: The Congregational Church of Southwest Harbor.

- No programs or sponsor ads to sell!
- Air conditioning for the concerts!
- A new venue: The Criterion in Bar Harbor and a new Friday evening-Saturday Matinee schedule (see page 3).

During the time of the Covid19 pandemic, we were right to stop singing. Singing was—and may still be—a serious virus spreader. After over a year of disuse, our "Covid Voices" were a bit croaky, but working with Amy and David in our first rehearsals soon remedied that, bringing a smile to all faces. Both Amy and David marveled to be standing in front of singers again, waving their arms, something they had not been doing on zoom! As we carefully emerge from the time of Covid, we can sing Hallelujah, indeed!

All the Board's decisions this difficult year have been made with these things in mind:

- The health and safety of each singer
- The health and safety of the audience members
- The need for both singers and audiences to be uplifted by beautiful choral music

**How safe is it** to have a concert in August in Maine? At the end of May, Governor Janet Mills

lifted many restrictions on gatherings happening this summer. Maine continues to lead the nation in recovering from the pandemic. Last month in a conversation with faith leaders, Dr. Nirav Shah, the extremely competent head of the Maine CDC, gave his opinion that, as long as Maine keeps in its current trajectory of lower rates of infection and hospitalization, events where people sing can be fairly safe through the summer of 2021. Safety is greatly increased if audiences mask, if the venue is well ventilated, and if singers are fully vaccinated and are at a good distance from the audience.

As I write this, the Governor has advised that masks are to be worn inside in areas in which the Delta variant of the Covid19 pandemic is surging. This does not apply to us in Hancock county-yet. I think our concerts are perfectly timed!

To be able to assure potential audiences that they would be safe to come enjoy our program this year, we had to make sure all our singers would be symptom free and fully vaccinated. For those unwilling or unable to be vaccinated, other protocols could be followed so that they could still sing. Nobody has taken up this option, and so our forces are reduced this year. But we are making a beautiful sound. Next year we hope to be restored to full strength.

This year, we have tried to keep it simple—music that choir members could download and print themselves, a single hand-out as a program guide, snack-free rehearsals, ticket sales through the Criterion. In these ways our New Beginnings are proving both safe and enjoyable.

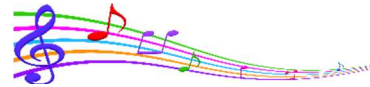
Our upcoming concerts of “Old Favorites for New Beginnings” provide both choir members and audiences many opportunities to rejoice in

coming together again, to mourn the losses we have suffered, and to be uplifted by a truly beautiful program of choral gems.

And I know you will all look forward this winter to our postponed Mozart Requiem which we will sing in August 2022 as a tribute to all those we have lost through the time of the pandemic.

Despite disease and death, we have also known a time of learning how to connect in new ways, (yay zoom!), of new opportunities to live and work not only for our own selves but for the good of all, and of new friendships as we forge a new beginning together. Many thanks to David, to Amy, to Clayton, to the Board Members, and to David and Marty Ward, and to each of you, for making this all possible.

–*Jenny Reece*, Board Chair, for the Board of the Mount Desert Summer Chorale.



**PARKING FOR THE CONCERTS!** We have secured a BUS to take Choir members and some audience members to the Criterion from the High School Parking Lot as follows:

**Friday, August 6:** Bus departs from MDI High School for **CHOIR MEMBERS at 3:30** p.m. (for 4 p.m. call); returns at approx.. 9:00 p.m. Bus departs from MDI High School for **AUDIENCE MEMBERS at 6:30** p.m. (for 7 p.m. concert); leaves from the Criterion at 8:15

**Saturday, August 7** Bus departs from MDI High School for **CHOIR MEMBERS at 12:30** p.m. (for 1 p.m. call); returns at 4 p.m. Bus departs for **AUDIENCE MEMBERS at 1:30** p.m. (for 2 p.m. concert) returns at 3:15 p



## TICKETS ON SALE AT THE CRITERION

Tickets for our concert are \$15 apiece and are available on the Criterion website.

### **PURCHASE FRIDAY TICKETS HERE:**

<https://ticketing.useast.veezi.com/purchase/47?siteToken=67qh4taxvaz0kwn2d8yyhapbg0>

### **PURCHASE SATURDAY TICKETS HERE:**

<https://ticketing.useast.veezi.com/purchase/48?siteToken=67qh4taxvaz0kwn2d8yyhapbg0>

Please do all you can to let people know about the concerts and encourage them to attend. The main reason people come to events is that they know someone involved! Please take an active role in ensuring that we have a large and enthusiastic audience

## **Notes on the Music**



### **By David Schildkret**

Way back in January, the MDSC board began conversations about the possibility of live rehearsals and performances this summer. We hoped it would be possible. We knew that something like the Mozart Requiem (the original plan) was unlikely to be feasible, so we went in a different direction: let's do something that will work under almost any conditions: no soloists, just piano, and mostly things we know.

That way, if there were only a few rehearsals, or if people had trouble getting to Maine, we

would still be able to give a respectable performance. And in all honesty, we believed that people would be so excited to SING again and to HEAR singing again that the actual music would matter less than the very act of being together.

So we assembled a program of short, mostly familiar choral pieces. Recalling our last live concerts, we'll do the dramatic opening of *Carmina Burana*, partly because that outcry of "O, Fortuna!" will feel *really* apt after all we've been through! And the Beethoven "Hallelujah" will certainly express our abundant joy at being reunited. From Mozart, the lovely "Ave verum corpus" and a movement from the originally planned Requiem will provide some nice lyrical moments. There are a number of pieces MDSC has done before: "For the Beauty of the Earth" was on our Acadia Centennial Concert (2016), and there are a couple of movements from *Elijah*, which we did so splendidly to honor our fiftieth anniversary (2018). We sang "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" on the Heart-Stopping Choruses program (2012). And of course, the Hallelujah Chorus has turned up a few times, including in our complete *Messiah* performances in 2007.

But there's some new material, too--or at least new to MDSC as a group. A lot of us in the choral music world have spent the last year thinking about the ways we have kept the repertory too narrow, and we're eager to change that. Reflecting that desire are "Ave Maria" by Nathaniel Dett, a major Black composer from Canada and the US, "Three Madrigals" by Emma Lou Diemer, a preeminent American woman composer, and "Keep Your Lamps," a powerful spiritual about perseverance (something we've all learned more about lately!) in a wonderful arrangement by André Thomas.

The program is short—under an hour—and not too taxing musically or vocally. We're all a bit

rusty! I hope I can keep my arms aloft that long! But the board and I hope that you will find it satisfying--even exhilarating--to sing. We'll keep rehearsals on the shorter side, and safety for all, singers and audience alike, is a paramount concern.

I am so excited by the prospect of hearing you sing this marvelous music--together and in person for the first time in many, many months! It will be unforgettable, I know.

## Notes from the Board



**Current Board Members** and their terms:  
Bob Simington, Treasurer, (Seasonal, 2021)  
Marsha Lyons, Secretary (Year Round, 2021)  
Jenny Reece, President (Year Round, 2022),  
Charles Hamlin, Vice President (Year Round, 2022)  
Ariane Wellin (Seasonal, 2022) Ephron Catlin (Seasonal, 2023) Kaveh Haghkerdar (Seasonal, 2023) In addition, Claire Daniel does invaluable work for the Board and Staff as Publicity Director.

Marsha Lyons and Bob Simington are due to retire from their duties this year. Please join us in thanking them heartily for their dedicated service. And Bob has agreed to re-up for another term as Treasurer! That's great news. We need one motion to set aside the rules, another to re-elect Bob for a one-year extension of term, to conclude in 2022

Our slate of Candidates to stand for a three-year term of Board membership is as follows:

- Susan Buell (MDI, Year Round)
- Beth Macus (Greenville Junction, Year Round)
- Larry Augsburger (Seasonal: Maryland and Lamoine)

Nominations from the floor will be accepted. If there are no other nominees the above slate of candidates will be voted on without opposition. The new Board members' terms start after this year's final concert and will end in 2024. Thank you all for serving MDSC!!!



# THANK YOU



To DAVE and MARTY WARD  
Our amazing, creative, and hard working administrators!

To DAVID SCHILDKRET, AMY WLODARSKI and CLAYTON SMITH for providing us with outstanding musical leadership and support

To all our DONORS and SPONSORS!

To CLAIRE DANIEL and the Publicity team

To the BOARD MEMBERS especially outgoing Members MARSHA LYONS AND BOB SIMINGTON, and most importantly, to YOU, the singers of Mount Desert Summer Chorale!

