

the **Us** The Peterborough Singers
In Conversation
newsletter

March 2013



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**Meet
Your
Board**

Colin the Great

You've seen him around, hovering over the bass section with his fulsome beard and benevolent smile. He pulls off the plaid-shirt-and-cardigan look like no other man possibly could – our very own gentle giant, Colin MacAdam.

Lumberjack or intellectual? Uncle-figure or cool-guy-in-wool? Bodyguard or hermit? Perhaps all of these, perhaps not. Whatever else he may be, Colin MacAdam is our esteemed Board Chair, ruling over us with a dignified and regal presence, yet stooping humbly to become one of us poor souls who gather at Murray Street every week to try and make a little music.

Colin, you see, is a striking enigma, despite his outwardly benign appearance. At his day job, he's an adjudicator with a provincial administrative tribunal, and no one knows exactly what that means. That's right – another chorister with a secret double life in an important-sounding, yet covert profession that smacks of governmental hierarchies and judiciousness. He explained his job to me over dinner one day, but then injected me with a two million dollar anti-remembrance serum for my own protection and that of my countrymen. And that is all I have to say about that; no doubt I am being watched.

Watched *over*, at least, by my good friend, Colin MacAdam, who took it upon himself to be one of my three bodyguards in England last summer, as I ventured home early from the pub each night to write embarrass-



Colin MacAdam

bass

ing stories about my choral adventures at York Minster. I knew my mother would be worried about me braving the notoriously seedy streets of York on my own after dark, so Colin MacAdam, Ray Dart, and John Earnshaw (gentlemen, all) took it upon themselves to escort me safely to my little

room at the “Uni” (where I became a writer-in-residence at last). Never once did these gentlemen complain about having to down their ale in a hurry and walk me home, leaving the raucous company of reveling choristers to carry on without us: what sacrifice.

Yes, Colin is a general, all-around, good guy. He lives in a very, very old house with his “pal,” Joy (a brilliantly curly-haired cellist, if I remember correctly), and the two of them plan to travel to Scotland and Eastern Europe someday to discover their roots. However, Colin is equally happy to enjoy his surroundings here at home and at his magnificently situated cottage. His ideal day? Hanging out with his wife and kids “among the rock sculptures I’ve made over the past 25 years, standing still among the trees without a breath of wind in silence where sound is the exception. I’m a morning person; a beer at noon is a treat. I like company for dinner and reading before bed. And a final walk with our dog before I get there.” Sounds idyllic, doesn’t it? I do believe Colin is a bit of a contented romantic: “Where ever I go, there I am,” he says. “I like dwelling on the notion that wherever I am is as strange, new, old, and interesting as most other places, except suburbs....”

Well said. Now, what can we reveal about Colin-the-musician? Well, he says he was born with a song in his head, secretly listening to Beatles records in the basement of his otherwise unmelodious childhood home. He joined his first choir when he was in his 40s, without any musical training whatsoever, and gets by with a bit of help from his friends. Colin joined the Peterborough Singers in 2007, and has been having transcendent musical experiences ever since, with whatever sort of repertoire we throw his way. One day he hopes to have sight-singing superpowers, which he will bestow on all of us for the sake of Syd and his “stuff.”

In the meantime, Colin claims to have a “well-developed, jaded dark side” that finds its expression in, of all things, modern dance. In his off-peak hours, he belongs to an esteemed company called “Old Men Dancing” (“*OMG, it’s OMD!*” shriek the young folk). His group has worked with some of

Canada’s most prominent choreographers, and performed recently in Kitchener to a sold-out house.

What else is there to say, other than that Colin is drawn to books and Frisbee games, he’s enamoured with Syd, Peg, and the rest of us, and he enjoys a hot bath after a long day of dancing with the dark side?

Well, he didn’t supply me with a stately photo of himself, so I’ll have to make do with the candid pics archived in the England folder of my Mac. Here we have Colin’s feet and my feet, exposing themselves to the elements on the shore of the North Sea, while we nibbled substandard fish and chips in chilly Scarborough (where there really is a fair, incidentally). I’ll leave you to deduce whose limbs are whose.



Newbie News

Any advice for newbies?

Colin: Be yourself, make an effort, trust everyone.

Rebecca: Note the tricky parts and just focus on those if you don't have much time to practice, and have fun! And this is advice I should take for myself, but if you get bored of a piece because it's all doo-dooos or wah-wah, there's always something else to work on, such as breathing, intonation, pitch, dynamics etc...

Meet The Newbie

Rebecca Lo

Meet Rebecca Lo, professing newbie and alto extraordinaire. Rebecca comes to us from magnificent, mountainous Vancouver, where she studied Occupational Therapy at UBC while ensnaring a talented metallurgist of a husband. Just this summer, SGS Lakefield wooed said metallurgist and his bride away from the tepid west and into a community populated with snow and songsters. Rebecca, now closer to her parents and grandparents in Kingston, is happily settled in her Peterborough home, which she and her husband share with a delicious grand piano and about a million wedding photos.

Rebecca is the sort of person you want sitting near you in a choir rehearsal littered with new repertoire, so you can leach off of her vocal prowess as Syd taunts the rest of us with impossible sight-singing feats. It's pretty sweet to hear her silky, unwavering voice wafting reliably into your own fallible ears and guiding them to solid ground as you attempt all manner of intervallic stunts.

To what does she ascribe this musical heroism? A lifetime of piano, violin, and theory lessons, to start, followed by daring forays into other instrumental worlds. In addition to her formal training, Rebecca has dabbled with the guitar, trombone and drums, and enjoys playing Broadway and worship tunes at the piano. She loves Palestrina and Christmas carols, and looks forward to one day performing Broadway music, Canadian repertoire, and the Brahms Requiem. Rebecca has particularly relished the "stimulation" of our weekly Bach feast this season; in fact, her diverse musical experiences prepared her admirably for the task of leading a dozen intrepid altos through Bach's crazy-difficult Credos in our recent sectional. Plus, she had wine and goodies, both necessary for the authentic alto experience.

Outside the rehearsal room, Rebecca the Foodie enjoys cooking, eating and skiing. She'd love to relive her wedding day in stress-free slow motion, and has a hankering to spend some time hanging out with Chris Hadfield at the international space station. Ideally, she'd enlist her superpowers and make her way into orbit Superman-style, and would never again have to endure the tedium of long, stuffy airplane flights to lesser destinations.

And that is Rebecca in a nutshell, on the home stretch of her first season with the Peterborough Singers. Welcome, Rebecca, and happy singing!



Rebecca Lo

alto

Section Wars

Which section is the best, and why?

Colin: Baritones are best: I was born to drone. I love to feel my bones rattle.

Rebecca: We do have a very strong alto section and we're the sexiest by far.

Kidspeak):

What I learned this week from my students:

The G Major scale contains an F-hashtag, and the bass clef is really just a fancy emoticon depicting sadness.

Twitter for Twits

Follow us!

I confess, though I am a Facebook junkie, I simply cannot get addicted to Twitter. Maybe you can't either. So, for those of us who prefer see the Peterborough Singers Twitterfeed in hard copy without the encumbrances of passwords or electronic devices, here are this month's tweets. And no, I don't know why every post is cut off mid-sentence by a suggestive little ellipsis. As I said, I'm a bit of a twit when it comes to these things.

Seriously, Though: Why We Sing

What makes the Peterborough Singers worth your time?

Colin: That gets into transcendence. I love the feel of being drawn out of myself into an asubjective moment (except for when I blow it). I like non-language-based communication. I like Syd a lot. And Peg and.... everyone...

Rebecca: It just makes me happy to sing amazing songs with a group of talented musicians.

Weigh In

Are you shocked, offended or inspired by these musical musings? Send your comments to singerstories@gmail.com, and make *your* voice heard.

Respectfully submitted by Natasha Regehr, with the kind endorsement of the interviewees and powers-that-be. Tune in next time for more pithy meetings and greetings.

Peterborough Singers @PtboSingers

Also up for live auction on March 23rd: a 14 ft Adirondack canoe from Adventure Outfitters! Gala tickets still available.....

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A beautiful sample of John Nelson conducting the next section of the Bach B minor Mass...

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Amazing auction item available for bidding at the gala: A six course gourmet dinner for 8, with wine pairing...

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US composer John Nelson explains the Kyrie Eleison opening piece of Bach B minor Mass because, as he points out,...

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And speaking of our anniversary gala--it's not too late to buy raffle tickets. Just \$5 for a chance to WIN the...

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Get Penny Lane in your ears and in your eyes with this video from our Beatles 2 concert!!...

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Did you miss Quartetto Gelato last time they were in town? Now's your big chance to see them and have a ball at...

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Peterborough Singers performing "Across the Universe" at Beatles 2!...

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Have you seen this new theatre collective in Peterborough? We "like" it and we think you will too!...

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Check our very own and very amazing Carl Christensen singing "In My Life" with the Peterborough Singers at the...

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What a show! Thanks to everyone in the packed audience who made it a day to remember. We can't wait to see you at...