

Men and Boys' Choir Reunion

ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH, SEPT. 21-23, 2007

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

FIND OUT:

- Where are the past Directors of Music today?
- What happened to the former choristers?
- Who married whom?
- Who still sings?
- Who'd rather not?

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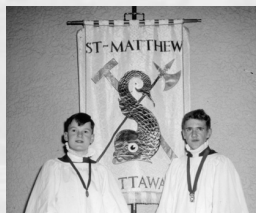
WELCOME BACK!

Dear Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all back to St. Matthew's for the 50th anniversary of the founding of our Men and Boys' choir. As the current Director of Music, I am honoured to be associated with such a wonderful cultural institution and to continue the work of my distinguished predecessors.

As we come together this weekend to celebrate this cherished tradition of male singing, let us remember the importance and impact it has had on our lives. With few choirs of this kind left in North America, it is important we advocate for its existence and continuation.

Since my arrival in Ottawa, I am very pleased to have a supportive team of parents, choristers, clergy and staff.



Andrew Johnson (left) and Tim Wynne-Jones (right) at St. Matthew's in the early 1960s.

work with these young people and to see them develop an emotional attachment and a passion for church music.

I hope this weekend brings you much enjoyment as you re-acquaint with old friends and colleagues, share stories from years past, and come together in music to worship God.

Congratulations on the first 50 years!

Sincerely,

Stephen Candow

*Director of Music and
Organist of St. Matthew's
Church*

Through our hard work and efforts we have been able to triple the size of boys' choir, such that we are, once again, on a healthy path. It is very rewarding for me, indeed, to

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF MUSIC

St. Matthew's Anglican Church in the Glebe has been the home to the Men and Boys' Choir since 1956, when then-rector Archdeacon Eric Os-

borne brought Gerald Wheeler from England to launch the choir.

Over the last 50 years, the music at St. Matthew's has

been embraced and supported by the parish and beyond. Through the tireless efforts of dedicated parishioners, St. Matthew's has

attracted talented and enthusiastic organists and choir directors from England and Canada. St. Matthew's has also attracted choristers from the parish as well as the Ottawa Carleton region.

A word must be said about the choristers' parents. Working behind-the-scenes, these parents dropped off their sons, waited for them and then picked them up from rehearsals, services and concerts. And trying to get 20 boys looking presentable on a Sunday morning is only a job for a choir mother. Mrs. Lillian Hartley was the choir mother during Gerald Wheeler's time and many choristers' parents have followed her.

After their voices changed, some of the boys continued as men in the choir. Many of them pursued their education or careers in other cities or countries, but continued singing for pleasure or professionally.

We are thrilled that many choir members and alumni provided memories and personal profiles for this reunion booklet. These reflections – ranging from hilarious to sombre – capture 50 years of music making at St. Matthews, connecting past and present.

The Reunion Committee would like to thank the Reverend Canon Pat Johnston, the Corporation and Parish of St. Matthew's for their continued support of the important musical ministry of the Men and Boys' Choir.

Best wishes,

The Reunion Committee:

John Proudfoot – *Coordinator*

Ken Fisher – *1950s and 1960s*

George Old – *1950s and 1960s*

Robert MacDermid – *1960s and 1970s*

Kevin Reeves – *1970s and 1980s*

Ed McDonald – *1970s and 1980s*

John Lindsay – *1980s and 1990s*

Chris Goddard – *1990s and 2000s*

Bruce Nicol – *1990s and 2000s*

Peggy Nankivell – *Honourary Member*

Lucianne Poole – *Editor*

THE DIRECTORS OF MUSIC AND ORGANISTS OF ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH

1956 to 1965	Gerald Wheeler <i>Founding Director of Music and Organist</i>
1965 to 1979	Brian Law <i>Director of Music and Organist</i>
1977 to 1978	Jonathan Rennert <i>Director of Music and Organist</i>
1979 to 1987	Richard Dacey <i>Director of Music and Organist</i>
1987 to 1989	Jeffrey Campbell <i>Director of Music and Organist</i>
1989	Desmond Hassell <i>Interim Director of Music and Organist</i>
1990 to 1994	Andrew Teague <i>Director of Music and Organist</i>
1994 to 1995	Kevin Reeves <i>Interim Director of Music</i> Dermot Muir, <i>Interim Organist</i>
1995 to 2002:	Matthew Larkin <i>Director of Music and Organist</i>
2002 to 2003	Bruce Nicol <i>Interim Director of Music</i> Teresa van den Boogaard

Interim Organist

2003 to 2004 Chris Argent
Director of Music and Organist

2004 to 2005 Kevin Reeves
Interim Director of Music
Jennifer Loveless
Interim Organist

2005 to present Stephen Candow
Director of Music and Organist

In Beijing, China, he accompanied countertenor Daniel Taylor. Wheeler has also played venues such as Places des Arts in Montreal and Carnegie Hall in New York City.

BRIAN LAW was Director of Music and Organist from 1965 to 1979.

Brian is now Director of Music of the Choir of Christ Church Cathedral, New Zealand. He is a fellow of the Royal College of Organists with Distinction in Choir Training, and is a licentiate of the Royal Academy of Music.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

GERALD WHEELER was founding Director of Music and Organist of the Men and Boys' choir from 1956 to 1965.

Gerald was born in England and received his musical training at the Royal College of Music, London. He is a fellow of the Royal College of Organists.

In 1953, Gerald became sub-organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, and in 1956 he became Organist at St Matthew's. Ten years later, he became Director of Music at Christ Church Anglican Cathedral in Montreal, Quebec, a post he held for 31 years. In 1996, Gerald became Director of Music at the church of St. Francis by the Sea in Blue Hill, Maine. He retired from St. Francis in 2004. In 2006, he accepted the post of Music Director at the First Congregational Church in Blue Hill, Maine.

Gerald still teaches piano, organ and harpsichord in Blue Hill. And he still has a full recital schedule.

Brian immigrated to Canada in 1965, when he became Director of Music at St Matthew's. He moved to New Zealand in 1991 as Music Director for the Christchurch City Choir, a position he still holds.

"The 'filtering' of information from Ottawa to Christchurch was unfortunately too slow to permit me to attend [the reunion], which disappoints me enormously," says Brian. "I have a major concert scheduled that very weekend."

He adds: "St. Matthew's and its choir was the focus of my life for 15 years and I would wish very much wish to be there to see all my old choristers again, but it is not to be."

JONATHAN RENNERT was Director of Music and Organist for 18 months during Brian Law's sabbatical 30 years ago.

"I have fond memories of the very generous welcome I received from the choir families, of the many friendships made and of fine musical experiences not only with the choir, but also with the NAC Orchestra and Ottawa Choral Society,"

says Jonathan. "The choir's trip to Washington D.C. was a particular highlight."

Since 1979, Jonathan has been Director of Music at St. Michael's Cornhill, London (England), where he directs a choir and has given over 375 lunch-time organ recitals.

"One of my first student basses was one Gerald Finley, when he first left Canada," recalls Jonathan, a well-known organ recitalist who once played for a boxing match at London's Royal Albert Hall.

Jonathan holds a number of posts, including senior moderating examiner for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music.

He is married to Sheralyn. Their 11-year-old daughter, Imogen, plays the violin.

Jonathan welcomes hearing from his former choristers (jonathanrennert@hotmail.com). He is still the proud owner of a T-shirt bearing Kevin Reeves's caricature of him conducting!

RICHARD DACEY was Director of Music and Organist from 1979 to 1987.

Born in Cardiff, Richard studied at the Royal College of Music and University of London. After a brief but enjoyable time as Organist and Choir-master at Great Malvern Priory, Richard moved to Canada to succeed Brian Law at St. Matthew's.

"The choir at my first Friday rehearsal was pretty impressive," recalls Richard. "Stanford in A with three big anthems for All Saints evensong and recital. Afterwards, I was chauffeured down town

in a leather-upholstered Oldsmobile for jugs of beers with the men. I realized the job was going to be demanding, but great fun too."

Under Richard's direction, the choir appeared on CBC TV and radio, at the National Arts Centre and on Parliament Hill. The choir also made its first commercial recording.

Richard returned to England in 1987 to teach at Shrewsbury School. In 1994, he was appointed Director of Music at Repton School and in 2006 Richard became Head of Performing Arts at Guthlaxton School in Leicester. Richard is also chorus master of the Leicester Philharmonic Choir and Musical Director of the Derby Choral Union.

JEFFREY CAMPBELL was Music Director and Organist from 1987 to 1989.

Jeffrey is a distinguished organist, recitalist and clinician. He has served Anglican and Episcopal churches in Canada, and the U.S. He is Associate Director of Music and Organist of St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church in Tucson, Arizona. Jeffrey completed a doctoral degree in Church Music and Organ at Northwestern University in Chicago.

As an organist, Jeffrey has given recitals in Tucson, Phoenix (all-Bach programs) Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Las Vegas.

"I shall not be able to attend in person, but will think of you all as you have a tremendous celebration weekend!" says Jeffrey. "I hope that

Gerald Wheeler, Brian Law, and others will be able to attend and be a part of this great event!"

DESMOND HASSELL was Interim Director of Music and Organist in 1989.

Desmond started taking organ lessons in 1944, having been strongly encouraged by a girlfriend's father, a flying ace in the First World War. Desmond's mother was also an organist to the age of 90.

Desmond took lessons from an organist of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, where he practiced during lunch breaks. He was working in the city and studying accounting. "I was not allowed to use the famous three-manual Willis organ in the loft, but I practiced on the tracker organ in the Lady Chapel," Desmond says. "When I lifted my hands from the keys I was rewarded with a seven-second reverberation."

Desmond came to Canada in 1956. He now keeps St. Matthew's supplied with choristers: Kevin Hassell (chorister from 1965 to 1975) Hassell and Ian Hassell (chorister from 1965 to 1972) in Brian Law's time; Brett Weddle (a grandson) in Matthew Larkin's; and a whole crowd today – Morgan, Aidan, Tarryn and their mother, Pam. Luke Geeves and Gavin Hassell are waiting in the wings.

ANDREW TEAGUE was Director of Music and Organist from 1990 to 1994.

Andrew is Director of Music at Bradford Anglican Cathedral, England. His son

Timothy, 23, started singing at six years old in the boys' choir and sang for four years. Timothy is now in his final year at Durham University, where he also sings as a counter-tenor choral scholar in Durham Cathedral Choir.

Andrew's daughter, Amelia, 21, was a founding member of the Women and Girls Choir in 1991. She is now in her second year of music at York University.

"September should be a fine occasion, though I doubt I will be able to come with it being in term time," Andrew says. "Please remember us to everyone."

KEVIN REEVES served twice as Interim Director of Music from 1994 to 1995 and 2004 to 2005. He also sang treble in the boys' choir and tenor in the men's choir from 1967 to 1982.

Kevin is founder and musical director of Ottawa-based Seventeen Voyces, a superb chamber choir celebrating its 10th anniversary. He is also an award-winning television drama and documentary producer and skillful caricaturist. Kevin has written two children's operas and is writing another based on the story of Grey Owl.

He remembers singing a solo from Fauré's Requiem with the National Arts Centre Orchestra. "Sir William McKie, a former organist from Westminster Abbey, played the organ," Kevin recalls. "My whole body turned into pins and needles, but when I sang I went into another world."

"Being in the choir was the greatest influence in my life and a few others would say the same thing," says the Ottawa resident. "Brian Law had a personality you wanted to sing for. He wasn't completely a tyrant. He was hilarious in his British way. We became a musical army."

MATTHEW LARKIN was Director of Music and Organist from 1995 to 2002.

Matthew is now Organist and Director of Music at Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa and Music

Director of the Ottawa Choral Society.

"I made up my mind almost from my first week as a boy chorister that I wanted to be an organist and choir director," says Matthew. "As my first church experience was as a treble in an Anglican choir of men and boys, it seemed only natural that I would come eventually to serve God in just such an environment."

Matthew says his years at St. Matthew's – where as a boy he played the organ in public for the first time – were among his most memorable. "I will never forget the wonder of those days and the people with whom I was honoured to be associated – Lydon, Janet, Bill, Alex, Désirée and Andrea; my head choristers Sean, Mark, Leo, Chris C., Nick S., Chris G., Kacpar, Nick C., Andrew, Thierry and Peter," recalls Matthew. "Time passes, but the beauty of the tradition and the quality of the experience remain steadfast."

BRUCE NICOL was Interim Director of Music from 2002 to 2003. He also sang tenor from 2000 to 2005.

Bruce and his wife Hildegard moved to Ottawa in 2000, and since then every member of their family has been a member of St. Matthew's choirs: Alex Nicol, treble from 2000 to 2004; Oliver Nicol, treble from 2001 to 2004; Hildegard Nicol, soprano from 2003 to present; Rosanna Nicol, soprano from 2000 to 2004; and Marielle Nicol, girls choir from 2003 to present.

Bruce enjoyed his year as Interim Director very much. "The sense of community that surrounds the choir is special, and continues to enrich lives of all the Nicols," says Bruce.

Bruce, currently producing his opera *The Christmas Rose*, particularly remembers the all-Howells service during which then Interim Organist Teresa

van den Boogaard played a postlude. "The music went well but within four seconds of the postlude's conclusion, I had a clergyperson and a parishioner telling me to cease and desist with the obscure hymn tunes."

CHRIS ARGENT was Director of Music and Organist from 2003 to 2004.

"The first thing that comes to mind when I think of Chris Argent is his marvelous smile – he had the sparkliest eyes!" recalls Kathy Dobbin, a founding member of the women's choir. Kathy and her son Michael befriended Chris when he first came to St. Matthew's in 1991 on a choir exchange with Jesus College, Cambridge. "Chris was the organ scholar at Jesus College and we were all impressed with his splendid playing."

"Only a few months after his arrival from Britain, Chris made his debut conducting an orchestra, soloists and a choir of 100 choristers in Handel's *Messiah*," remembers Kathy. "The musical contributions to the services of worship were always beautiful and the concerts (including his beloved Fauré and Duruflé Requiems) were resounding successes."

Chris was a demanding conductor, but he was kind, considerate and had a gentle sense of humour. "His choirs were very fond of him," says Kathy. "We were blessed to have him with us for those few years."

Chris was diagnosed with cancer in August 2004. He died at 40 years of age on October 10, 2004.

THE CHOIR MEN AND BOYS: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

1950s

THE REVEREND JAMES BEALL sang in the boys' choir as a treble from 1956 to 1960, rising to head chorister. He sung tenor then bass in the men's choir from 1960 to 1977.

Jim is now chaplain at Ottawa's Saint-Vincent Hospital and Elizabeth Bruyere Health Centre. From 1980 to 2005, he was Anglican minister in Richmond, Aylmer, and then at St. Bartholemew's, Ottawa. He taught English at Lisgar High School before entering the ministry.

Jim's best memories of the choir includes singing a solo: "I remember the thrill of singing a solo in *Once in Royal David's City* in the balcony at the back of the church. I was scared stiff of course." He proudly notes that he never threw up or fainted at midnight services "like some of the other kids."

Jim says the choir influenced his ability to read scriptures. "Doing solos made public performances easier. It also introduced me to the liturgy of the church and beauty of worship."

ANDY BILLINGSLEY sang in the choir from 1949 to 1957 and from 1961 to 1964. Andy has sung in church choirs for about 50 years. "The highlight of all those years was participating in the first national Anglican choir ever assembled in Canada at the Anglican Congress in Toronto in 1963," says Andy.

"My years as a boy chorister at St. Matthew's date back to 1949, when Dr. John Bearder was

the organist," recalls Andy. "Leaving for university in 1957, my St. Matthew's experience encouraged me to join cathedral choirs in each city in which I chose to study: Montreal, London (Ontario) and Kingston.

My return to Ottawa in 1961 found me back at St. Matthew's singing tenor under the direction of Gerald Wheeler. Forty-two years later, I was a choir member at the centennial service of a Laurentian church, with Gerald as guest organist!"

Andy is a member of Ottawa's St. Matthias choir and the Ottawa Choral Society, which Brian Law conducted one year.

BRIAN FISHER joined the boys' choir over 50 years ago at eight years of age.

Brian continues to sing in choirs, including le Choeur de Pom, la Chorale du Conservatoire de Musique de Gatineau, L'Ensemble Cantabile and anywhere else there is music. He has sung secular, religious, folk, country, blues, jazz and classical. From India to Quebec, Brian has absorbed music as he moved from place to place.

Since 1987, he has lived in Ripon, Quebec with his wife Marguerite Lepage and his two children, Mira and Charles, who now live in Montreal.

KEN FISHER joined the choir in 1950 and was Head Boy for 20 months.

Ken was eight years old when his mother, Pearl Fisher, signed him up for the choir.

"Change came with the leadership of Archdeacon Osborne," Ken recalls. "The chancel ceiling turned robin's egg blue and, with the arrival of Gerald Wheeler, we became a choir of men and boys. Gerald brought artistry, enthusiasm and the standards of the Royal School of Church Music.

With him, we entered both the 20th and 16th centuries, while still retaining some of the 19th. We practiced on Thursdays, Fridays and before Sunday service. It was my first experience with the evocation of awe.”

Fisher is now an agent for social change on four continents and recently the host of a rural retreat on the Ottawa River. “But in my heart, my wonder and companionship with choral music, which began in St. Matthews, has been my life-long friend,” says Ken.

GEORGE OLD joined the choir as a boy in 1949. He became the first Head Chorister under Gerald Wheeler and was the alto soloist from 1957 to 1970.

George went to Ottawa Teacher's College in 1960, and he taught music in Ottawa schools for many years. He retired from teaching in 1995. George has played in The Maple Leaf Brass Band and The Nepean Concert Band, and he sang in the Ottawa Choral Society and the Nepean Community Choir.

George first sang at St. Matthew's under the English organist Alanson Brown. “The choir was mixed but had a segment of 12 boys,” recalls Old. “Before my voice changed another English organist succeeded Mr. Brown, his name was Gerald Wheeler.”

George and his wife Wendy have three grown children – Christopher, Andrea and Matthew – and four grandchildren.

DAVID SINCLAIR sang in the choir from 1956 to 1964, first as a treble and then bass.

David is now one of Canada's leading particle physicists. He is director of the Sudbury Neutrino Observatory Laboratory and professor of particle physics at Carleton University in Ottawa.

David, who loves to canoe in the North, enjoyed making friends in the choir. “The choir was a social event and helped me socialize,” he says. But he admits he wasn't a very good singer. “No one suggested that I should pursue a career in music,” confesses David, whose father was a paleontologist and president of the Ottawa Choral Society.

David says the choir helped develop his self-confidence and performance skills: “I am in a position where I get up and teach students.”

ARCHDEACON GORD WORDEN sang in the boys' choir from 1956 to 1958.

“It was one of those formative experiences for me in my calling as a priest,” says Gord, now retired. “At the early age of 10, I learned a lot about Christian community and church worship through the choir and Gerald Wheeler's instruction.”

“I was in Sunday school one Sunday and this man kept walking around the room as we children sang the opening hymn (which always seemed to be When he cometh),” recalls Gord. “After we broke to go to our separate rooms in Lauder Hall for our classes, this man approached me and said he'd like me to sing in the boys choir and told me when practice was. I didn't know who he was, but I felt important being asked to join the choir. The man was Gerald Wheeler. It was one of my first experiences of being chosen to do a ministry in the Church.”

TIM WYNNE-JONES sang in the boys' choir as a treble from 1959 to 1963 and became Head Boy.

Tim is a two-time winner of the Governor General's Award for children's literature as well as many other national and international awards. His books include *Rex Zero*, the *End of the World*,

The Maestro and Some of the Kinder Planets. Tim, who lives in Perth, Ontario, still sings jazz and rock.

His best memory of the choir included singing a service during the Stanley Cup final. "My ruff hid the chord from my transistor radio quite nicely," admits Tim. "We had a way to pass information about the game. Raising the red anthem book meant that Montreal had scored and the psalter represented Toronto. The prayer book meant a penalty. Osborne [the rector] knew something was up but he couldn't figure it out."

JOHN RAYNER was the treble soloist in the boys' choir and sang tenor in the men's choir from 1951 to 1956.

An economist, John is treasurer of the Canadian Association of Rhodes Scholars, chairman of the board for Tradex Mutual Funds (a not-for-profit fund for the public sector), and he was assistant deputy minister of Indian and Northern Affairs (1984 to 1997).

The Rhodes Scholar's best memories include being paid 50 cents a service and \$1.50 for weddings. He also remembers the unfinished church basement. "We used to go into a dark, dusty cave-like space below the basement," John recalls. "I managed to stab my arm on a piece of board. It got infected and I had to confess what I had done to my mother. I still have a puncture scar."

John's brother Mike was head boy. Mike became president of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants and Comptroller General of Canada. Mike died in 2004.

1960s

DAVID BARBER sang in the choir from 1965 to 1976. He was Head Chorister in 1972.

Barber is the internationally best-selling author of more than a dozen books of musical history and literature, including *Bach, Beethoven and the Boys, When the Fat Lady Sings, If It Ain't Baroque and Tutus, Tights and Tiptoes*. He is also a composer and arranger of various choral and instrumental works.

He lives in Toronto, where he is a copy editor at the *National Post*. He sings with the Toronto Chamber Choir, Cantores Fabularum, and with various church choirs.

DON BARBER sang treble in the boys' choir from about 1960 to 1970.

"Ever since I was abducted by Anglicans at the age of eight and forced to sing wonderful creations by Bach and so many others, music has always been central to my life," says Don, who works in sound design in Toronto. Don has worked with musicians and theatre professionals on tours and productions.

"I was a treble from age eight to age 15, although it may have been 16, because I took two weeks off and came back as a bass with a solid bottom C," says Don. "I can still scrape together a D if there's drinking involved."

"I was a Senior Prefect when Paul Halley was Head Boy. I was Head Boy for a day, at which point I processed into the wrong row and got kicked back to the bass section. I mostly sang next to Bruce Ubukata. I was there until I went to Queen's in 1970, although I came back a few

times over Christmas.”

JONATHAN BEDDOES joined the choir in 1965 and was Head Chorister from 1970 to 1971.

Jonathan received a PhD in mechanical engineering. He worked in Canadian industry for 10 years, becoming engineering manager of Alcan Ingot Alloys Inc., prior to joining the faculty of Carleton University. He is currently chair of mechanical and aerospace engineering at Carleton.

Jonathan married Judy Matheson 27 years ago, and they are the proud parents of two sons. Arden, 25, graduated from Brown University in economics and political science, and Paul, 23, has a degree in biology and is currently studying earth sciences at Carleton University.

JOHN BYERS sang in the boys' choir from about 1960 to 1962, when he was 10 to 12 years old.

“As I recall, we practiced every Thursday night and, of course, sang Sunday,” says John. “I’ll never forget Mrs. Hartley. She was the “behind-the-scenes” choir organizer. [She was] very dedicated, loyal, efficient and effective. She kept us all in line, which was not an easy thing to do.”

John worked as an IT consultant for Accenture for 18 years. He’s presently an IT leader and application service manager with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. He lives on Otty Lake, near Perth.

MICHAEL DALE sang in the choir from about 1963 to 1967.

“My worst confession was that, in the face of constant criticism from Brian Law that I was out of harmony, I mouthed the words for a good part of year,” confesses Michael, whose brother was also a chorister (and is now an architect in Pasadena). “He complimented me on how hard I was trying to

blend in, and of course, I drew the choir pay. Thus I became a professional actor at an early age.”

“I have not been a member of a choir for decades, but I benefited from the work ethic, professionalism and team work that Gerald Wheeler and Brian Law instilled (drilled) into us,” recalls Michael, who worked as a Crown Prosecutor in the Arctic for several years.

He now lives in Ottawa and works for the Federal Department of Justice at CSIS. He married late in life and is blessed with a loving wife, Julia, and ten-month-old twins, Lauren and Michael.

Michael admits to singing in the shower words and music he remembers, notably: “Let all mortal flesh keep silent and stand with fear and trembling!”

PAUL HALLEY sang treble in the boys' choir from 1961 to 1966. He was assistant organist in his teenage years.

He is a Grammy-Award-winning composer, conductor, pianist, harpsichordist, and organist. Paul moved to Halifax this summer as Director of Music at St. George's Anglican Church and King's College Chapel.

Paul remembers a “life-defining” two-week canoe trip to Algonquin Park with fellow choristers Kim Muma, John Proudfoot, Chris Johnstone, Michael Walley, and Don Barber, led by the men's choir baritone, Michel Landry. Muma injured his back and Landry and Johnstone carried him on a makeshift stretcher and flagged down a train. A thunderstorm came up as the three remaining 13-year-olds solo-canoeed across a lake, and they saw a mystical glow in the distance caused by the emergency braking of the train.

“I can't think of anything that had an equivalent impact [as the choir] and not a day goes by when I don't reflect on the quality of education under St. Matthew's musical directors Gerald Wheeler

and Brian Law,” says Paul. “It was far deeper than my education at Cambridge.”

DAVE HALPENNY sang in the choir from 1961 to 1972.

“Forty-five years ago it never occurred to me that this choir was younger than me,” says Dave. “I started out with Gerald Wheeler about 1961. Paul Halley was his special project and he sent him across the pond when he got old enough (He always liked Paul better).”

Dave now sings in St. Helen’s choir in Orleans, Ontario. “My wife rates me as the second best male voice,” he confides. “That’s pretty good since there are usually only four of us. All that training finally paid off.”

PETER MANSBRIDGE sang in the boys’ choir in 1963. The Toronto resident is now chief correspondent of *CBC News*, anchor of CBC’s flagship news program, *The National*, and host of CBC Newsworld’s *Mansbridge: One on One*.

“The sound of singing within the choir used to amaze me,” recalls Peter. “Some of the boys were truly outstanding. I was this little English boy with long hair – one of those rare moments with hair – so I looked the part of a chorister more than I sounded it. The choir director should have had me mouth the words.”

Married to actress Cynthia Dale, Peter confesses his singing career was short-lived: “Even my seven-year-old son runs from me when he hears me sing. But it probably enhanced my appreciation of music and I enjoy listening to a good choir in church.”

BOB MACDERMID sang in the choir from 1963 first as a treble and continued as a “gentleman” until 1978.

“For those years, my life and my family’s revolved

around the choir with twice weekly practices and morning and evening Sunday services plus choir camp in the summers,” recalls Bob, now a political science professor at York University. “Singing was my first job, even though the dollar a month was never enough to compensate for the prickly ruffs. The music and ritual were not always understandable, but maybe by osmosis I got the life-long pleasure of singing in choirs, a never-exhausted fascination of music, and an appreciation of the beautiful poetry of the *Book of Common Prayer* and the *King James Bible*. I also learned the discipline of performing music to the highest standards and for that I am grateful to Gerald Wheeler, Brian Law and later conductors who were exacting teachers.”

IAN WIGGINS sang as a counter-tenor from about 1965 to 1975.

Ian worked as a researcher with various government departments and then in marketing until 1993, when he started his own company Wiggins Consulting Inc. He is now building a business with two others.

Ian was married to his wife Ailsa, now a lawyer, in 1971 at St. Matthew’s with the full choir. They have two grown sons, who both sang in choirs.

Ian left St. Matthew’s and the Cantata Singers when Ailsa was offered an articling position with a Toronto law firm. In Toronto, Ian met one of Brian Law’s professors, Derek Holman. “I sang for him at Grace Church on the Hill and St. Simon’s,” says Ian. “Throughout those years, Bruce Ubukata was the assistant organist. There were always one or two ex-St. Matthew choristers in the choir.”

1970s

GERALD FINLEY sang treble in the boys' choir from 1970 to 1975 before moving to bass in the men's choir until 1979.

Gerald planned to be a veterinarian but working on the Experimental Farm made him realize the work was dirtier than he'd thought. So he turned down a science scholarship to the University of Toronto.

Now based in England, the world-famous bass-baritone has sung in the world's great opera houses including the Metropolitan Opera in New York, Royal Opera Covent Garden in London and the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris.

"In February, 1975, while singing a soprano solo in Fauré's Requiem, my voice suddenly stopped," he recalls. "No sound came out. It was pretty traumatic. Within six months I was in the bass section."

Happier memories include the choir's annual sleigh ride. "It was the most wonderful opportunity to throw your fellow choristers off and get them soaking wet in the snow."

Gerald says singing in the choir instilled a sense of professionalism, teamwork and discipline. "I liked the drama of the church services – full of ceremony and orderliness. It was like joining a big club – and we got paid of course."

TIM MCCOY sang treble in the boys' choir and then bass in the men's choir from 1975 to 1979. His brothers Jeremy and Matthew also sang in the choir.

Tim is a cellist in the National Arts Centre Orches-

tra, Ottawa. (Jeremy is a much-recorded double bass for the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, New York. Matthew is an organic farmer whose wife owns a restaurant and pub in Berwick, Nova Scotia that showcases East Coast musicians.)

Tim's best memories include choir trips to Camp Buck-Eye near Parry Sound. He adds: "Cabins were inspected daily to ensure nothing was growing."

One day he got lost at camp after he ran into the woods while playing Capture the Flag. "I started to panic until I stumbled across train tracks that led to a road," he recalls. "When I ran back to camp with the flag, they didn't even know I was missing."

Tim says he tells his cello students to sing. "I always felt transformed by choral evensong. It enriched me in a musical way that I didn't realize at the time."

DANIEL MCSWEENEY sang in the choir from about 1971 to 1977.

Since graduating with degrees in political science and social work, Daniel has worked in health promotion in Toronto. He has worked to improve health and social services, especially those targeting marginalized communities.

From 2002 to 2006, Daniel managed a practice specializing in strategic and program planning and evaluation. As part of his consulting practice, he helped to enhance prenatal and early child development and parenting support services across the Greater Toronto Area. In 2006, Daniel was appointed as a Member of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada.

PETER NAGY sang in the boys' choir from 1968 to 1976, becoming Head Boy, then tenor in the men's choir from 1976 to 1978.

The Montreal-based lawyer speaks eight languages. He is now learning Korean.

Peter's best memories include finding out he was chosen as Head Boy. "Brian Law [then music director] was a great disciplinarian and favoured the stick not the carrot so it was an incredibly thrilling moment."

Peter also remembers scoldings from Brian Law. "[Brian Law] was extremely intimidating and, as a result, I was petrified of adults until my early 20s," he recalls.

Peter planned to be a singer and supported himself by singing in professional choruses while at university in Helsinki and Gothenburg as well as during law school at McGill University.

"Most boys who studied with Brian could have become professional singers," says Peter who still sings with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra chorus. "It really was a music factory."

ALEC SAUNDERS sang treble and alto in choir from 1972 to 1982.

Alec went to Waterloo to study computers and math. He was in several jobs including some of his own making. He also did nine years in Redmond, Washington with Microsoft.

Alec's father Peter says Alec may be the only person in history who has sighed with deep content and said, "Oh Dad, I just love marketing!"

Alec now lives with Janice and his five boys in Manotick and is CEO of Iotum, a software company which makes use of the telephone much cheaper and better for those who understand what he is up to. He is a traveler, wine and food connoisseur, photographer, gardener, and scuba diver.

MATTHEW SAUNDERS sang treble and alto in the choir from 1976 to 1985.

Matthew took a degree at Bishop's University in art and theatre, and later studied arts administration at Carleton University and Virginia Tech. He was technical director at WESTAF for some years and recently went to work for a company, which sets up computer sites.

Matthew and Paula live in Denver, Colorado, with three dogs and their adopted daughter, Alexis. Matthew went through a nasty bout with cancer, but "the markers" say it has been beaten.

PETER SAUNDERS sang alto in the choir from 1972 to 1985.

Peter taught English and drama in Ottawa before retiring in 1995. He and his wife, Karen, now live in Esquimalt, B.C., where they are active parishioners of St. Paul's church, the old naval and garrison church.

"I'm not officially a member of the choir, but sing in it most of the time as there is no tenor," says Peter. "There is one bass and the rector helps out, but other than that, all members are old ladies." Peter also sings in St. Christopher's Singers (who sing evensong) and Victoria Philharmonic Choir, a choral society. He and Karen regularly go to the opera, and Peter has acted in many plays – mostly Shakespearian.

SEAN SAUNDERS sang treble and bass in the choir from 1973 to 1983.

Sean is on the verge of earning a PhD or he would come to Ottawa for the reunion. When Sean worked as a civil servant in Ottawa, Sean reportedly said the job "makes me picky and brings out the worst in me". According to his father Peter, Sean is the author of a document for the Government of Canada, *On the History and*

Correct Use of the Semicolon.

Sean also worked in the beer and wine department of Spagnolls for some years and makes some of the best brews there are. Sean is married to Tasha Carrothers, also of St. Matthew's. Sean and Tash have two children. Anna is the first girl born in this Saunders family in 40 years. Peter says that Sean was born eccentric and continues in same vein.

NEIL STRICKLAND sang as a treble in the choir from 1979 to 1981.

Neil also sang in the Nepean Youth Choir. After leaving both choirs, he joined the Ottawa Regional Youth Choir and stayed until 1987, then left for a year and a half to study in Peterborough, Ontario.

Neil sang tenor in the Canadian Centennial Choir until 1994 when James Caswell, took over. "[James] re-auditioned me and told me that I was actually a bass-baritone. I've been a baritone ever since!" exclaims Neil. In 2003, he became a founding member of the Harmonia Choir of Ottawa (he sings baritone).

Neil works for Public Works and Government Services Canada in Hull, Quebec.

HAROLD SWAFFIELD sang in the choir until 1980.

Harold is an IT professional for Perotsystems Corporation and has his own business, Barrhaven Computer Advisor. A volunteer leader with Scouts Canada, Swaffield sang with the Stairway Carolers as a tenor and then with the Capital City Chorus, "for some much needed sight reading and some Barbershop." In 2003, he joined the Nepean Choir as a soloist and performer. He married in 1993 and has three children.

DANIEL TAYLOR sang in the boys' choir and then sang baritone and counter-tenor in the men's choir from 1975 to 1986.

Based in Montreal, the internationally-renowned counter-tenor recently returned from touring Asia and the U.S. His 50 recordings include Baroque and Renaissance music and Bach Cantatas.

Daniel founded Montreal's Theatre of Early Music and is visiting professor at McGill University and patron of the Ottawa Bach Choir.

"There were some wonderful moments at the [St. Matthew's Choir] summer camp including the highly competitive soccer and "crocker" games (I still hear the chant of the first team that I coached); a trip to St. John the Divine in New York; and the television recording I took part in with (then St. Matthew's music director) Richard Dacey directing the music," says Daniel.

Daniel's worst memory of the choir was when Dacey announced he was leaving with his family to return to England.

FATHER WILLIAM WATSON sang in the choir as a bass from 1970 to 1971.

Bill is now the precentor of the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity and the chaplain of the Port of Gibraltar.

"How time doth flee!" says Bill. "In those days, Brian Law was the conductor. I recall that on my very first Sunday in the choir John Proudfoot stood beside me. It was his first Sunday as a bass!"

"During the time of Richard Dacey and that of Matthew Larkin, I accompanied the choir on many trips, including Toronto, Montreal, New York and Boston," Bill recalls. "During the time of both

Andrew Teague and Matthew Larkin, both of St. Matthew's choirs sang for us at St James', Hull, many times while I was the rector. On one of these occasions, a Solemn Ecumenical Even-song, the congregation numbered 187 and on another, the eve of the 1995 Quebec referendum, 287."

ANDY XHIGNESE sang in the choir until 1972.

"It's difficult to summarize the approximately 35 years between being a chorister at St. Matthew's and today," says Andy. "Only two things have changed to the best of my knowledge, my voice and my marital status!"

"One of my reasons for leaving [the choir] was my passion for freestyle skiing, which carried me to the Canadian National Championships in 1977," recalls Andy. "It also took me to the promised land, Whistler Mountain, from 1978 to 1983."

In 1987, Andy founded Appleseed Organic Lawn Care, Canada's oldest exclusively organic lawn care service company and also Ottawa's largest residential snow clearing company.

Andy is married to Mary Jo (MJ) and has two sons Matthew (a thespian) and Michael (an athlete). They live in the Gatineau Hills.

"I still very much enjoy music and I now sing again with some friends. We call ourselves, only when necessary, 'Four Hoarse Men!'"

1980s

DOUGLAS BIEHLER went to rehearsal on Friday night before Palm Sunday of 1982 and continued until 2003.

"While teaching in the public schools in Ottawa, two of my students kept begging me to join the choir," recalls Douglas. "Finally, Richard Dacey called me and said the choir boys had been asking him to call me."

"To have sung with Richard Dacey and Matthew Larkin was an experience never to be missed," says Douglas. "One of my fondest memories was giving Matthew Larkin a drive after rehearsal on Friday night. As he got in the car the seatbelt sounder played a short five-note tune, which Matthew sang and then proceeded to compose on the spot a complete Sanctus, Benedictus and Agnus Dei based on this tune."

Douglas also recalls dealing with a group who wanted to close down St Matthew's Church. "May it always be 'the Church in the Glebe' and a home church for me," he says.

DAVID GAULT sang in the choir from 1987 to 1994.

David graduated with a degree in international criminal justice from University of Nottingham in 2006. He interned at the Coalition for the International Criminal Court, The Second Trial Chamber

of the UN's International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). David currently works for a defence team at the ICTY in The Hague.

David has traveled much and has lived in Sweden, France, England and the Netherlands.

"Some of my fondest memories of St. Matthew's are of playing harrowing, carnage-filled games of dodge ball in the now obsolete Jefferson Hall," says David. "Fonder still are my recollections of the intensive and thoroughly rewarding musical experience that I was so fortunate to receive from St. Matthew's."

JOHN LINDSAY joined the choir in 1985 when he was eight years old. He still sings with the choir.

John, who also sings with the Ottawa Bach Choir, works as a project manager at CGI, a high tech consulting company.

"The earlier years [at choir] are a bit of a blur with memories of hiding in the library, tape ball, murder in the dark and 'boxing' coming to mind as well as general torment by the older boys," recalls John.

John says that as he grew, so did his love of singing. "St Matthew's was a gateway choir to many other choirs and musical ensembles," he recalls. "I have been fortunate enough to have remained in Ottawa and to have remained with the choir to the present day. It is still a joy to sing with this wonderful institution, and it has been his pleas-

ure to help with the reunion committee and to learn about the legacy that I'm participating in."

PETER MCLEAN sang in the choir some time in the 1980s and 1990s.

He also served as Interim Director of the Women and Girls' Choir.

"To me, the Choir of Men and Boys was about the balance between very serious musical and liturgical intent and a real enjoyment of camaraderie and carousing – always completely confusing to outsiders," says Peter.

"Long may the choir enjoy the praises of the Lord and (the men, at least) the thirst after righteousness!"

NICK MILLER sang in the choir from 1983 to 1986.

Nick decided to join the choir in Grade 4 when his friend Julian told him they would play hockey before each rehearsal. The hockey career went nowhere, but since then, Nick has continued to use his voice. He has performed coast to coast, including Festival Antigonish in Nova Scotia and Kaleidoscope Theatre in B.C. Between theatre gigs, he performs his juggling act locally and around the world. He is very proud to work at the Ottawa School of Speech and Drama as an instructor.

Nick lives in Ottawa with his wife, Laura, their

little boy Seamus and baby-to-be.

JASON REEVES sang in the choir from 1982 to 1985.

In 1985, Jason moved from Ottawa to North Bay, Ontario, where he completed his education. At Canadore College, he took a cartooning course with Lynn Johnston, cartoonist of *For Better or Worse*. For the last 17 years, he has worked for K Bros. Art Shop and Gallery.

“I assisted my uncle, Kevin Reeves with the filming of *The Spirit of Grey Owl*, which recently won best environmental film award in western Canada,” Jason says. “Because of my friendship with Albert Lalonde (grandson of Grey Owl). I was invited to the set of the filming of the movie *Grey Owl* starring Pierce Brosnan.”

STEVEN SHAW sang in the boys' choir from 1982 to 1986. He was Deputy Head-Boy in 1985 and sang in the men's choir as an alto from 1986 to 1987.

After studying computer science at Carleton University, Steven worked in the Ottawa high tech industry. He now works as a software architect at IBM.

The Old Ottawa South resident met his wife Angela at university and they have two daughters, Robyn, 7, and Rachel, 9.

“My current singing exploits mostly include joining

in with camp songs they have learned on trips in the car,” confesses Steven, an avid runner and tennis player.

MATTHEW WHITE sang in the boys' choir from 1981 to 1987 as a treble before joining the men's choir as a counter-tenor until 1991.

Now an internationally acclaimed counter-tenor, Matthew recalls some growing pains during his years at St. Matthew's. “When I first joined the choir, I didn't enjoy it when the Head Boy flipped lit matches into my hair after lighting his cigarettes,” says the Montreal resident. He also got suspended from the choir for a couple of months for swearing.

But he has fond memories of joining the men for beer after practice on Friday nights. “Being included in the adult ritual seemed, at the time, to mean that I was finally there – a full-fledged adult. In reality, it was probably a way of making myself feel a little better about not being invited to cool parties.”

MATTHEW WILSON sang in the boys' choir from 1982 to 1990.

After leaving the choir in 1990, Matt took every opportunity to travel, especially to Mexico. Following his travels, he completed the cabinetmaking program at Algonquin College, where he also taught. Matt currently works as a professional cabinetmaker in Ottawa.

Matt, his wife Nancy and their three-year-old son Liam live in Old Ottawa South. The Wilson family is thrilled to be expecting a new addition in February 2008.

STEVE WILSON sang bass in the choir from 1982 to 2006.

Steve recently retired as a professor of humanities and religious studies from Carleton University. He is currently working on a recalcitrant golf swing.

"[I have] countless good memories of musical highs and fine friendships," remembers Steve. "[Singing in the choir] was an experience not to be missed.

1990s

CHRISTOPHER GODDARD sang treble in the boys' choir from 1995 to 2000. He became Head Chorister and later tenor in the men's choir.

Christopher is composer in residence for the McGill University choir. The 20-year-old pianist is in the third year of a combined major in composition and music. Recently, the McGill choir performed Christopher's *Three Psalms*, an eight-part choral work which he describes as "a tip of my hat to church choir days."

Christopher's best memories include playing ball hockey before practice and traveling to New York City to sing in Central Park and at St. John the

Divine Cathedral. "I'd never been to a city that big, although we were held on a pretty short leash," he recalls. "I was excited because I bought a fake Rolex on the street for \$10. It died a couple of months later."

BLAKE HARGREAVES sang in the choir and was a junior organ scholar from 1992 to 1996, from age 12 to 16.

Blake participated in the choir's two trips to England under director Andrew Teague. Unfortunately, he suffered an ear infection on the first trip, and, unable to sing, he turned pages at the organ.

"There I discovered a passion for organ music that has never abated," says Blake. Since then, he has studied music in the independent studies program at the University of Waterloo. He also studied journalism at Concordia University in Montreal.

Blake found a love of improvisation at the console at St. Matthew's. This led him to create analog electronic instruments on which he improvises in performances in Canada and the U.S., and on many recordings.

KAI MILLER joined the boys' choir in September 1997.

"I was soon deposited where I belonged, at the back end of the second trebles," says Kai.

"There, I sang and aged for several years until, as a Deputy Head and still a head shorter than the boy in front of me, my voice changed."

Kai has sung every part in *The Messiah* with St. Matthews, as well as *Solomon*, a couple Passions, and more Mozart than he would care to list. He has also sung with the Arts Canterbury Concert Choir, the Montreal Boys' Choir Course, and is currently singing under Paul Halley in the University of King's College Chapel Choir and the choir of St. George's Anglican Church in Halifax.

According to Kai's father, Bruce Miller, Kai's participation in the choir profoundly affected the family. "Despite no previous involvement in Church, [Kai's] then teenaged brothers sought baptism, and the Church now plays a central role in the life of his entire family," says Bruce.

DAVID MOWAT and his son, Peter, sang in the choir from 1998 to 2007.

At that time David, Sandra, Peter and Alison had moved to Ottawa after spending a year in Toronto. David's singing career had started before this time, however, as both he and Peter had sung at St. George's Cathedral in Kingston under the direction of Mark Sirett. They had also sung at St. Simon the Apostle church in Toronto during the tenure of Derek Holman.

PETER MOWAT sang in the choir with his father, David, from 1998 to 2007.

He began singing at St. George's Cathedral in Kingston at the age of seven. Before joining St. Matthew's, he sang for a year at St. Simon the

Apostle in Toronto. Peter greatly enjoyed and benefited from the teaching of all the choirmasters under whose direction he sang. These have included Robert Bell, Mark Sirett, Derek Holman and Matthew Larkin.

After leaving home to attend Queen's University, Peter was delighted to sing at the Christmas and Easter services at St. Matthew's. Peter is entering his fourth year at Queen's and hopes to study law. He won't be able to attend the reunion because he will be writing the LSATs.

Peter is principal clarinet with the Queen's Orchestra and also plays on occasion for the Kingston Symphony Orchestra.

LEO TROTTIER sang treble in the boys' choir and counter-tenor in the men's choir from 1990 to 2001.

Leo is now a doctoral student in cognitive science at the University of California at San Diego. The computer whiz helped develop the cognitive science undergraduate program at the University of Toronto.

"I don't think I realized that [choir] was fun at the time – not in the social construct of being fun like 'cheering for your sports-team' sort of fun," says Leo. "But part of me realized that I was having a great time. I really enjoyed being Head Chorister and some of the concerts were tons of fun. And I remember, when I was just starting, the sweet calmness and simplicity of waking up on Sunday mornings and walking reflectively to choir with my

younger brother Giacomo.”

Leo says the choir gave him the confidence he needed to get where he is now. “I always advocate early childhood music training for the development of other skills.”

2000 - PRESENT

LAUHLAN GALE joined the boys' choir in 1999 and retired as Head Chorister in 2005. He is entering his last year of high school at Lisgar Collegiate.

“The St. Matt's experience has really helped me become involved in the school music department and also the school musicals,” says Lauchlan. His favorite memories of the choir include ball hockey, *The Messiah* and the trips to New York and Boston.

PHILIPPE SLY sang in the boys' choir from 2002 to 2003.

Philippe is now studying music (voice) at McGill University. A Schulich Scholar, he is studying under Sanford Sylvan in vocal performance. In addition to active choral and band participation at Ashbury College, Philippe has been a member of the Opera Lyra Chorus and for the past two sum-

mers has attended under scholarship, the Opera As Theatre Program at the Banff Centre. He hopes to pursue a career in opera.

MATHIEU SLY sang in the boy's choir from 2002 to 2003.

Mathieu is a Grade 12 Ashbury College prefect who has been an active participant in the school choirs, bands and musical theatre playing the roles of Karouni in *Tin Pan Alley* and Ludlow Lowell in *Pal Joey*.

Mathieu has been a member of the Ontario Senior Youth Choir for two years under the directorship of Gerald Fagan and Robert Cooper. He participated in the *Lord of the Rings Symphony* with the Festival Chorus Ottawa in 2004.

Matthieu also enjoys trombone and guitar playing.

THE END!