



BURLINGTON WELSH MALE CHORUS

PO Box 62058, Burlington Mall, Burlington, Ontario, Canada L7R 3N0

Information for Prospective Members

Thank you for showing interest in joining the Burlington Welsh Male Chorus. We hope that this package helps to explain who we are and outlines the process of becoming a member.

History of the Chorus

The BWMC was founded in June 2001. The first practice was on September 7, 2001, with an initial twenty-three choristers in attendance. Appropriately, the BWMC gave its first public performance on St. David's Day, on 1st March 2002. The current membership numbers are about 60. While several the choristers are of Welsh heritage, more than 50% of the Chorus are not. We do perform a few songs in the Welsh language, but we have resources in the Chorus to help non-Welsh speakers learn to pronounce the words.

The BWMC repertoire is in keeping with the tradition of Welsh four-part Male Choirs. It ranges from Welsh folk songs and hymns to opera choruses, spirituals, and musical numbers. The BWMC performs about 12 times a year in various venues throughout Ontario and has also undertaken tours in Canada and out of the country. Our first tour was to the Cayman Islands in 2003, followed by the Festival of Male Voices at the Royal Albert Hall in London in 2006. Then in September 2008 the BWMC travelled on a tour of New England, culminating in an invited performance at Carnegie Hall, in New York that featured world-renown Welsh Baritone, Bryn Terfel. There have been a few other tours to the USA, to Montreal and The Maritimes.

Since August 2002, the BWMC has been incorporated and registered as a charity with the following objectives.

"To educate, entertain and increase the public understanding and appreciation of choral singing, by providing performances of an artistic nature in public places, senior citizens homes, churches, community centres and educational institutions."

The BWMC contributes to various charitable causes.

The Process of Becoming a Member

Your first visit as a prospective new member is considered an introductory one. A member of the Chorus executive will welcome you, and you will be invited to sit and listen to a rehearsal. This information sheet and a binder containing the music currently being rehearsed will be provided for the duration of this visit. You will be asked to fill out a contact form and on leaving the first rehearsal, to return the Music Binder. On the next visit, it is assumed that you wish to join the Chorus, and a Music Binder containing the music being rehearsed will again be provided and is to be returned at the end of evening. You will sit in the section that you think will suit your voice range (top tenor, second tenor, baritone, or bass). You will become a full member after you have passed a voice test administered by the Chorus Music Director and paid your member donation. The voice test will be carried out after your 3rd rehearsal and will establish your voice range to ensure that you are in the correct section. Upon becoming a full member of the Chorus, you will be provided with a numbered set of the complete

Chorus' repertoire. When you are sufficiently proficient in your voice and the current repertoire, in coordination with Section Leader and Music Director, then you can appear on stage in concert.

Attendance Requirements

The Chorus seeks to put on professional and entertaining concerts to a high standard, and to improve on these standards of singing and presentation over time. This will only be achieved by regular attendance at rehearsals and, when possible, by practice at home between rehearsals. Rehearsals are held every Thursday at the Burlington Music Centre between 8 and 10 pm except on the statutory holidays. A summer break is usually taken from the last week of June to mid-August. Members are expected to attend as many rehearsals as possible and attendance is monitored on a continuous basis. Members are required to inform their Section Leaders promptly if they are unable to attend rehearsals or concerts for any reason.

Chorus Website

The chorus website can be found at: <http://www.burlingtonwelsh.com/>

The website is an excellent source of information about the Chorus. It includes a calendar that shows upcoming events, a list of members and staff with photos, the latest news and a member section with a password which will be provided on full membership. Amongst other things, this member section provides access to the Chorus By-laws and will allow you to download MP3 sound files of the parts for all the music the Chorus sings. This is an invaluable aid for practicing at home.

The Cost of Becoming a Member of the BWMC

Full Members of the Chorus are required to make an annual donation due on January 1st each year. Currently this donation is \$180 but this can change depending on the financial position of the Chorus. New members will pay a prorated donation from their time of formal acceptance as a full member to the end of the year.

A Chorus uniform will be required to perform on stage. The current full uniform is a black jacket, grey dress pants, white shirt, black shoes, and socks, with a tie provided by the Chorus once you passed your voice test and paid your dues. A uniform ordering information sheet is available on the Chorus website. This will provide the information about the suppliers and the process to obtain the full uniform. The cost is approximately \$330.

A second uniform for more informal occasions is black pants, shoes and socks and a red golf shirt with the Chorus logo (purchased through the Chorus)