



## **WELCOME TO CHORUS NORTH SHORE!**

Welcome to Chorus North Shore, the premiere choral group on the North Shore.

If you are new to the Chorus, we're happy to have you join us, and we look forward to meeting you.

If you are a returning member, welcome back!

We all share a love of music and enjoy the fellowship of ensemble singing.

This booklet has been prepared to help acquaint you with Chorus North Shore. Whether you are new to the chorus or have sung with us for years, you will find it a useful source of information.

## **A BRIEF HISTORY OF CHORUS NORTH SHORE**

Marking its 80th year in the 2011/2012 season, Chorus North Shore is the premiere choral group north of Boston. Under the direction of Sonja Dahlgren Pryor, the Chorus has grown in size and range of repertoire to be recognized as a leading performing arts organization on the North Shore.

The Chorus originated in 1931 when the Sandy Bay Historical Society sponsored a concert of Christmas carols at the First Congregational Church. Members of four choral groups --the Community Carol Choir, the Finnish Choir, the Rockport High School French Club and the Swedish Glee Club – joined in a community concert that was hailed as “a pronounced success” by the *Gloucester Daily Times* of December 21, 1931. From this simple beginning, the Community Carol Choir was formed with 32 singers. Soon after, the choir reorganized as the Rockport Community Chorus. After 64 years of growth drawing singers from every community on the North Shore and as far away as New Hampshire and Maine, the chorus again changed its name in 1995 to Chorus North Shore to reflect the broad scope of its members and audience.

The Chorus has also grown in its musical skills, now presenting two or three major performances a year with a broad repertoire ranging from the great classical masterworks to the best choral works of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Members of the chorus also have traveled abroad extensively, performing in England, France, the Czech Republic, Ireland and Italy, including a performance at the Vatican, which was broadcast on Vatican radio. In 1997 Chorus members performed to enthusiastic audiences in Luquillo and Ponce, Puerto Rico.

In 2004, 37 singers toured Eastern Europe performing in Venice, Italy, Ljubljana, Slovenia, Graz and Salzburg, Austria. Most recently chorus members performed in The Netherlands, Belgium, and France.

Despite its growth in size and musical expertise, the Chorus remains a community chorus in spirit, open to all who wish to join in our commitment to presenting choral music of the highest caliber.

## **SONJA DAHLGREN PRYOR, DIRECTOR**

Since Sonja “Sunny” Pryor started as Director in 1962, she has developed a chorus that performs master choral works with internationally known soloists. She has conducted in nine foreign countries and led choral tours throughout Europe and the Caribbean. Her training began as a voice major, and she received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Gordon College and Master of Sciences in Music Education from the University of New Hampshire. She has studied conducting under Robert Shaw, Frank Battisti and Margaret Hillis of the Chicago Symphony Chorus.

A former director of choral music at Boston’s Park Street Church, Sunny has been interim conductor of the Cape Ann Symphony and guest conductor of the New England Women’s Symphony. She has attended the Aspen Music Festival and the Adirondack Festival of Music and workshops in Massachusetts, Maine, Connecticut, New Hampshire, New York and Michigan.

Associated with music education for over 30 years, Sunny has conducted and taught music students from kindergarten through college, including guest lecturer appearances at several colleges in the region. She has been recognized by the Commonwealth as Outstanding Massachusetts Arts Educator. She is an active member of Chorus America, and the American Choral Directors Association. In October 1999 Sunny received the Walker Hancock Award for lifetime achievement in the arts and humanities.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Our concert repertoire is always exciting and challenging. Performing members of the Chorus and our audience have come to expect concerts of outstanding musical quality. To maintain this level of excellence, we ask that all members **make a commitment to attend all rehearsals and concert dates.**

Our season is divided into two “semesters.” Members may join in September to sing in the December concert and in January to sing in the May concert. Members are expected to attend all rehearsals, held at Ipswich High School in the Choral Room from 7:30 to 9:30 pm on Monday nights. **As the High School follows a holiday calendar, alternative rehearsal locations will be announced in advance.** Plan to arrive in time to sign in, be seated and ready to sing promptly at 7:30 and always plan to stay for the *entire rehearsal* as all the music that we go over is important to our programs. Additional Saturday rehearsals might be called. We will give you as much notice as possible to include these important rehearsals on

your schedule.

To perform at your best, plan to attend all rehearsals. Attendance is taken each week via the sign-in sheets. Please make sure to sign in every week! **If you miss more than three rehearsals for any one concert or if you miss a dress rehearsal, you will need permission from the conductor to perform in that concert.**

## **MEMBERSHIP DUES**

Chorus North Shore, like all other non-profit cultural organizations, relies on the financial support of its members and friends to sustain it. Production costs, salaries for our director and accompanist, fees for professional orchestra and soloists, rehearsal and concert hall rental, music scores and many other costs, are covered in part by dues paid by performing members. Annual dues of \$60 per “semester” (\$120 for the 2-concert year) are payable in full at the beginning of the semester. For new members, there is a three-week grace period for joining and paying dues. All dues for all members are due on or before the fourth rehearsal of the semester. After this date, no refunds will be given.

**Reminder: Dues are tax-deductible.**

Dues relief can be arranged for anyone needing financial assistance. Please speak with the president on a strictly confidential basis.  
([president@chorusnorthshore.org](mailto:president@chorusnorthshore.org)).

## **MUSIC**

We expect that you buy your music so that you can highlight your part and mark it permanently in any way that’s helpful to you. If buying your music is impossible because of a financial burden, please see the Chorus Librarian, or one of her Music Committee members. If you will be borrowing music, please make notations in **pencil only**. Also, remember to return borrowed music to the Librarian at the end of the concert or when you leave, if you decide not to continue attending rehearsals.

## **SECTION LEADERS**

Each voice part has a Section Leader whose most important duty is keeping the masterscore for that section. If you miss a rehearsal or have **questions about the musical notations, or Sunny’s requirements for that part**, see your Section Leader upon your return.

If you do not have Internet access, your Section Leader will call if a rehearsal is cancelled due to weather.

Section Leaders and their contact information is in the Membership area of the website, [www.chorusnorthshore.org](http://www.chorusnorthshore.org) – the password is sunny.

### **WEATHER CANCELLATIONS**

An email will be issued to the chorus as a whole in the event of a cancellation, usually by 4pm of the day in question. Please make sure we have your most current email information on file. If you do not have email, your Section Leader will contact you. Be sure to give your contact information to your section leader. If there is any question, please contact [president@chorusnorthshore.org](mailto:president@chorusnorthshore.org)

### **NAME TAGS**

Order your name tag on the registration form. Please wear your name tag to rehearsals. There are a lot of us to get to know!

### **PARKING**

Parking for rehearsals at the High School is the school parking lot. **At concerts, parking is at a premium. We ask that you carpool and please park in outlying spaces, leaving closer spaces for our audiences.**

### **SIGN-IN**

Please sign the attendance sheets when you arrive for rehearsals. We keep track of your attendance asking that you try to miss no more than three rehearsals in a semester. **Special notices and updates will be distributed there.**

### **PENCILS**

Always bring a pencil with you to rehearsals in order to record our conductor's notes in your score. Pencil is always recommended since the conductor may change directions from one rehearsal to another.

## **REHEARSAL BREAKS & REST ROOMS**

We take a brief break about halfway through our rehearsals. Rest rooms are located in the main hallway area. Please do not leave the rehearsal at the break!

## **SET UP and CLEAN UP**

Your help with setting up before rehearsal and cleaning up the rehearsal room after rehearsals is greatly appreciated. We want to remain respectful of the space we use. Your help setting up risers and chairs for our concerts is also important!

## **FRAGRANCES**

With a large chorus, we rehearse and perform in close quarters. Please be considerate of your fellow singers by using ONLY fragrance-free cosmetics, lotions, hairspray, etc.

## **WEBSITE**

We keep the website updated with notices, rehearsal and performance dates and other information. It is a good idea to check it before leaving for rehearsals. In addition, you can pay dues, register, purchase tickets, and merchandise through the site, and find member contact information in the Members area (password: sunny). Explore the site – it's a great resource!

## **GOVERNANCE**

Chorus North Shore is managed by a Board of Trustees that is elected annually by the membership at an Annual Meeting. Officers of the Board are elected by the Board at the first board meeting after the Annual meeting.

## **COMMITTEES**

Although the elected Board of Trustees is responsible for policy decisions and dedicates many hours keeping our organization running smoothly, all members are encouraged to volunteer to help on a committee. It's a great way to get to know other singers and to offer your time and talents to accomplish the many tasks required to run our organization. Consider offering your help on any of the following committees:

**LIBRARIAN:** Our librarian is responsible for ordering, cataloging, filing, distributing and collecting music from our extensive library.

**PRODUCTION:** Many hands are needed to transport, set up, and take down risers and chairs for our concerts.

**MAILINGS:** The Chorus sends out several bulk mailings during the year. Your help with stuffing and sorting is greatly appreciated. Also, we need everyone's help in keeping our mailing list up-to-date.

**PUBLICITY:** Working with our Publicity Committee to distribute posters, flyers, and press releases is a great help in advertising our concerts.

**FUNDRAISING / GRANT WRITING:** All members of the Chorus are on this committee since everyone is encouraged to support the Chorus financially by selling program advertising, concert tickets, adding names to our fundraising list, and participating in other fundraising events. If you have experience in grant writing or would like to help research and respond to grants, we'd love to hear from you!

**SCHOLARSHIP/OUTREACH:** An important part of our mission statement is to encourage an interest in and knowledge of music in our community. We actively recruit students as singers, and each year we are pleased to present scholarships to students who are furthering their education in music.

### **CONCERT ATTIRE**

Stage presence is an important aspect of any performance. Our standardized concert attire presents a uniform appearance that complements our ensemble performances.

#### **Women:**

- Long (to the ankle) solid black skirt (purchased on your own)
- Black Tank and Jacket, purchased through the Chorus
- Black shoes and black opaque stockings
- Pearl necklace, purchased through the Chorus
- Small pearl stud earrings – no hoop or drop style earrings

Women's black jacket, tank top and pearls are ordered through the chorus. You will need to purchase a long black skirt on your own (the skirt must be ankle

length). Please see the Wardrobe Mistress to order your tank, pearls and jacket. She will have sample jackets and tank tops that may be tried on before or after the first rehearsals. You will be notified at rehearsal about scheduled “try on” times and dates. Once you have selected your size you may fill out an order form then, OR you may fill out an order form on our website at [www.chorusnorthshore.org](http://www.chorusnorthshore.org). These forms are forwarded to the Wardrobe Mistress (not to the wardrobe company!). She will also collect your wardrobe payment and distribute your wardrobe to you when the orders arrive from the manufacturer. Small pearl stud earrings – no hoop, drop style or sparkled earrings

### **Men:**

- Black tuxedo
- Long-sleeved white shirt
- Black cummerbund
- Black shoes and socks

Men are requested to purchase their own tuxedos. There are a number of excellent local shops that are very reasonable and resale shops that offer special bargains.

### **FINALLY**

Please feel free to ask any questions! You’ll find members who have sung with us over 50 years sitting next to someone who has joined. Whatever your experience, we welcome you and hope you will enjoy singing with us!