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Chorus

Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

Spring 2003

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Crescendo!

The Newsletter of
the Buffalo Gay
Men's Chorus

Volume 1 • Issue 3
Spring 2003



On stage at the State Theatre in Ithaca, Music Director Barbara Wagner readied the BGMC for its first on-the-road appearance last March. Richard Herr accompanied the Chorus. Sharing the stage with the Ambassadors of the NYC Gay Men's Chorus, the Cayuga Chimes Women's Barbershop Chorus, and host Out Loud Chorus of Ithaca, the Buffalo men drew warm applause for their half-hour program and got valuable onstage and touring experience.

Photo: Mike Longo

BGMC to sing with BPO in March

History will be made next March when the BGMC joins the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra at Kleinhans Music Hall.

On March 13 and 14, 2004, the BGMC will sing Gabriel Faure's *Cantique de Jean Racine* as part of a program called "The French Connection" that will include Maurice Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, Mozart's *Symphony No. 31* (the Paris), and Francis Poulenc's *Gloria* with the Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus. Ron Spigelman will conduct.

The Chorus is bursting with pride at this extraordinary opportunity for our young organization to reach a larger audience. All friends and fans of the BGMC will want to mark their calendars now for March 13 and 14, 2004. The concert is part of the M & T Bank Classic Series. Since you love great music, why not consider taking in some other BPO concerts? For ticket and subscription information, call the BPO at (716) 885-5000 or visit their website at www.bpo.org.

BGMC plans trip to GALA Festival in Montreal

The Gay And Lesbian Association of Choruses (GALA) will hold its Seventh International Festival of Choruses in Montreal in July 2004. BGMC choristers are making plans to attend and perform! BGMC will represent the Buffalo and Western New York community at the week long Festival held every four years.

Founded in 1982, GALA Choruses is the world's only organization committed to serving the gay/lesbian choral movement. BGMC is proud to be a member of GALA. GALA fosters the artistic and professional development of member choruses through a wide variety of programs and services: production of choral festivals; educational conferences; advocacy; grants for commissioning of new choral works; a resource center for choruses

and individual members.

GALA has grown to over 200 member choruses representing more than 10,000 singers from all over the world. The GALA Festival in San Jose in 2000 attracted 110 choruses and 5,500 singers. The Montreal Festival promises to be the largest GLBT performing arts festival in history.

The BGMC choristers will have the opportunity to hear 150 men's, women's and mixed choruses from eleven countries perform in Montreal's magnificent Place des Arts, Wilfred-Pelletier Concert Hall Maisonneuve Theater. We are honored to have the opportunity to perform in this impressive concert space. BGMC also plans to take part in other concerts to be held in the Montreal vicinity throughout the week.

The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus, Inc. is a member of the **Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses, Inc.** (GALA Choruses). GALA Choruses fosters the artistic and organizational development of member choruses through a variety of programs and services.

For more information, visit www.galachoruses.org

Barb's Corner

by Barbara Wagner, BGMC Music Director

My dear Friends and singers of the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus,

The support and love you've given me in these past few weeks has been nothing short of miraculous. The comforting cards of sympathy, flowers, food, quiet conversations and sharing of memories with so many of you, your loving welcome to my daughter Molly, your beautiful faces and warm hugs at the Memorial Service, Jim Estep's heartfelt poem that touched my soul so deeply and then your gorgeous singing at the big Celebration and your serving and singing around the piano during the Party—it was all amazing. Molly laughingly spoke of a great big cloud of love that hovers over us at rehearsals. I know she's right because I feel it every week. You have my profound gratitude and love always.

The Board appointed me to the Strategic Planning Committee. I attended the first meeting in early May. As we began our work for the 2003-2004 season, we used the plan that had been implemented for the current season as a model. As I read down the long list of goals for this past year, it became increasingly clear that we had achieved every one of them. What a marvelous accomplishment. None of that would have happened without Jim Estep's leadership, the work of the Board and its committees, the work of the Friends of BGMC, the tireless efforts of our nonsinging members, the support of the larger gay community, and of course the singers who join together week after week, eager for the work and the challenges of each rehearsal and concert. I'm so proud to be part of this most special organization.

I look forward to the next few very busy weeks. I love the music for the *Songs of Freedom* concerts. Wait until you see the program cover! For me, it embodies everything we're trying to say with our music and then some. Debi Overton, our accompanist extraordinaire, has joined us for the remaining rehearsals. Leading up to the concerts, we're rehearsing for the Pride Celebration on June 8th and a return appearance at the HSBC Diversity Celebration on June 11th.

It feels good to be moving into those wonderfully intense rehearsals that herald much anticipated performances. Be sure to tell everyone you see about our concerts on June 13th and 14th!

With love,

Barb

We'd Like All the Friends of BGMC to Know . . .

. . . that our fundraising group, is not run by professional fundraisers. FOBGMC is put together, organized, structured and run completely by volunteers from the Chorus. Unpaid and uncompensated volunteers, we might add!

You may have seen recent news articles calling attention to the high percentage of charity funds raised that are diverted to professional fundraisers instead of the designated charity group. We want you to know that the BGMC does not employ other companies or organizations to solicit funds on our behalf. Every dollar given to the Friends of the

Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus goes directly to Chorus programs and not to fundraisers.

Monies derived from the sale of concert tickets couldn't possibly cover all the operating costs of a large choral ensemble. Volunteers from the Chorus generously donate their time and energy to minimize expenses. Your gifts to FOBGMC, and the enthusiasm of our volunteers, help us to fulfill our mission of producing vocal music of high quality in the rich tradition of men's choral singing. We are most grateful to you all!

Crescendo!

The Newsletter of the Buffalo

Gay Men's Chorus

Volume 1 • Issue 3

Spring 2003

Editor **Delwyn Milander**Designer **Max Phillips**

Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus, Inc.
Incorporated 2001 as a
501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation
in the State of New York.

Music Director **Barbara Wagner**

**Officers and Directors
2002-2003**

President **James A. Estep**
Vice-Pres. **Sherwood Sipprell**
Treasurer **R. Mark Meyer**
Secretary **Daniel Wasinger**
Directors: **William B. Gardner,**
John Herbert, Douglas Levy,
Roger Parris, and Max Phillips

The Board of Directors of the BGMC meets at 7 PM on the third Monday of every month (subject to change). Meetings are open to all members of the organization. Please check our website for updates.

President's Column

by **James Estep, BGMC President**

There are two items I want to bring to your attention. The first is about the invisible organization that makes it possible for Barbara Wagner to draw out the beautiful music for which the BGMC is known. The second is about the Board elections, to be held on June 17th at our annual business meeting.

We have two very important groups that work behind the scenes to make the Chorus run smoothly. These two groups make it possible for choristers to sing and for Barbara to focus on the music without expending time and energy on administrative details.

In appreciation of volunteers

Without our volunteers, Barbara's and the Board's work would be infinitely more difficult, perhaps even impossible. Without volunteers like Kevin Thompson to organize the Chorus' retreat; Dave Gannon to help pull the singers together for extra appearances; without Jamie Goldfuss, who coordinates our entrances and exits; without Glenn Einschlag playing the bassoon and working for us behind the scenes at the BPO; the men on Woody Sipprell's Production Committee; Dan Folwell as Librarian; Ramon Melendez on the Membership Committee; Del Milander as the editor of the newsletter; Max Phillips, newsletter designer and webmaster; the men on the Music Committee; Russ Link who coordinates the program ads and acts as mailman; Dennis Stuart, who started and runs the Friends of Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus; the section leaders who plan and lead extra rehearsals; Peter Smith with his talent on the harp; Courtney Rodriguez and his musical talent on the tuba; men from the Front Runners who usher for our concerts and the volunteers from Shea's who help John Herbert manage the house . . . without these volunteers,

the Chorus as we know it would not exist. All who volunteer are the power on which the Chorus runs; they make it possible for Barbara to work her magic. These volunteers have shown their willingness to participate at a level beyond singing. They are dedicated people whom voting members might consider for Board membership. Be sure to thank these fine people the next time that you see them for all they contribute toward making the BGMC a success.

Thanks to the BGMC Board

The second group is the Board of Directors, past and present, and the Steering Committee that spent time and money to launch the BGMC. With the president there are eight members of the Board who work to make the Chorus operate smoothly, effectively, and efficiently: Woody Sipprell, Roger Parris, Bill Gardner, Max Phillips, Dan Wasinger, Doug Levy, Mark Meyer, John Herbert. Former members are Bill Fay, Russ Link, and Jeff Wilson. These men and Mike Bardo formed the Steering Committee and, with Barbara's input, nurtured the BGMC into existence. All of these people came onto the Board expecting to work hard to make the Chorus a success. These with Music Director Barbara Wagner are the leadership of this organization.

Serving on the Board

We must replace three Board members each year for several reasons. We do not want to allow the Board to become an "Old Boys Club." We need new members to succeed those who have completed three years service (and frankly, three years is quite long enough). Perhaps most importantly, Chorus members should share the responsibility of leadership and determine the direction in which the Chorus is to grow.

If the level of shared responsibility in which you care to participate is singing, that is terrific. If you care to participate as a volunteer or as a member of the Board, these opportunities are open to you.

I have worked on several boards of directors, but never on a board as hard working, as collegial and as dedicated to the success of the organization as the present group of leaders. This group of individuals, supporting Barbara Wagner and the rest of the Chorus, has made the BGMC the significant community resource that it is. Speaking for the Board, we could not have accomplished so much in so little time without the superb musical leadership of Barbara Wagner, the dedication of our volunteers and the participation of the Board of Directors.

Running for the Board

Please familiarize yourselves with our Mission Statement. Then, review the duties and responsibilities of Board members. It is the Board's responsibility to ensure that the Music Director can focus on the making music. When that happens, we are working as a team: Music Director, Board and volunteers. That teamwork will continue to produce beautiful music in the rich tradition of male choral singing.

This year, three Board positions will be filled at our annual business meeting June 17th. Whether or not you choose to run for the Board, voting members should carefully consider who they want to represent them at this level of leadership. It is the Board and the Music Director that set the BGMC's policy. If you have ideas about the direction you want the Chorus to go in the future, Board service is your best opportunity to make these ideas known. The Board has an Election Committee to ensure that those who wish to place themselves in nomination for a Board position know the requirements.

SAVE THESE DATES!

- Sunday June 8 2003 • **Buffalo Pride Parade and Celebration** • 1:00pm
- Wednesday June 11 2003 • **BGMC at HSBC Diversity Celebration** • 5:30pm
- Friday June 13 2003 • Spring Concert, **Songs of Freedom** • 8:00pm at Unitarian-Universalist Church
- Saturday June 14 2003 • Spring Concert, **Songs of Freedom** • 8:00pm at Westminster Presbyterian Church
- Tuesday June 17 2003 • **Annual Meeting and Elections**, location TBA
- Tuesday September 9 2003 • **First rehearsal for 2003-2004 season**
- Saturday March 13 2004 • **BGMC sings with BPO** • 8:00pm at Kleinhans Music Hall
- Sunday March 14 2004 • **BGMC sings with BPO** • 2:30pm at Kleinhans Music Hall
- Saturday-Sunday July 17-24 2004 • **GALA Choruses Festival**, Montreal

BGMC • PO BOX 448 • Buffalo, NY 14207

TWO PERFORMANCES OF BGMC'S NEXT CONCERT!

Songs of Freedom

June 13 at 8 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo
 June 14 at 8 pm at Westminster Presbyterian Church
 for tickets, contact any BGMC member or send e-mail to
Tickets@BuffaloGayMensChorus.com

.....
 Cut along dotted line and mail in bottom portion with your donation today!

Yes, I'll join the Friends of the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus!

Thank you for helping the growth & success of BGMC. Your contribution is tax deductible.

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Composer \$2,500 +
<input type="checkbox"/> Maestro \$1,000 - \$2,499
<input type="checkbox"/> Virtuoso \$400 - \$999
<input type="checkbox"/> Conductor \$200 - 399
<input type="checkbox"/> Soloist \$80 - \$199
<input type="checkbox"/> Associate \$25 - \$79
<input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Memorial Donation \$ _____
In memory of _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Honorarium _____
In honor of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Would you like your name to appear in our next program? (Please PRINT exactly how you would like your name to appear.) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check here if you do NOT want your name to appear in our program. |
|--|---|---|

Friends who contribute at the \$200 "Conductor" level and above will receive two tickets to our next concert.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip +4 _____
 Home telephone _____ Business Phone _____
 E-Mail Address _____

- Please add me to the BGMC mailing list.
- I have time or services that may help the BGMC. Please contact me.