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Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

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Sounds of Summer

Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

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Sounds of

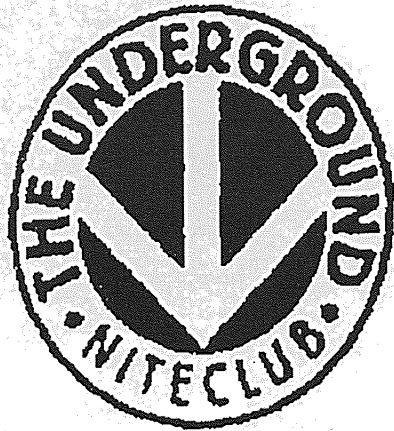


Summer



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BARBARA WAGNER, *MUSIC DIRECTOR &
CONDUCTOR*

presents

SOUNDS OF
SUMMER

8 o'clock

Friday, June 14, 2002

Saturday, June 15, 2002

Unitarian Universalist

Trinity Episcopal

Church of Buffalo

Church

To Our Audience:

None of us could have predicted the quite unbelievable response and support the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus received from the audience at the February concert. After two years of organization and rehearsals, we were still untried and all of us were anxious about opening night. But after we started singing, there was nothing to do but sing the way that Barbara Wagner, our Music Director, taught us to sing.

At odd moments during the concert, I still wondered what the response would be after we finished singing. But even before the last note had died away, the audience was on its feet cheering and clapping. And the energy? Why, you could feel the energy surging through the hall, and for all of us in the Chorus it was an electrifying moment.

That energy flow made all of the work more than just rewarding. That energy validated all of us as members of this Chorus. It validated our vision of a male chorus dedicated to creating beautiful music in the tradition of male choral singing. That energy made the Chorus a reality.

The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus has grown out of the community of gay men in Western New York, in which the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Communities can take pride, as I think all of our audience can take pride in a talented men's chorus in Buffalo. We sing for everyone; for everyone who loves to hear men sing. And we welcome all men into the Chorus who can and who want to sing.

Tonight we present a concert that is lighter in tone than the "Music from the Heart" concert in February. After all, Summer is finally here, isn't it? Tonight, for your enjoyment, we're performing the "Sounds of Summer," music that will melt the stars and your hearts.

Jim Estep,
President
Buffalo Gay Mens' Chorus

The Program

- Summer is A-Coming In Old English
- How Can I Keep From Singing..... Quaker song, arr. Ginger Littleton
- Summertime..... George Gershwin and DuBose Heyward
from *Porgy and Bess*
Guy Tomassi, *tenor*
- Summertime, Summertime..... Tom Jameson and Sherm Feller
arr. Glenn Hufnagel
- If I Had My Druthers Norman Panama and Melvin Frank
from *Li'l Abner*
Paul LaDuca, Max Phillips, Kevin Thompson, Dan Wasinger and The Chorus
- De Animals a-Coming..... Spiritual, arr. Marshall Bartholomew
- Two Tongue Twisters..... Noël Goemanne
"Swim Sam, Swim"
"A Flea and a Fly"
- Over the Sea to Skye Old Highland Rowing Song, arr. Michael Jochen
Peter Smith, *harp* and The Chorus
- The Pasture Randall Thompson
Poem by Robert Frost
J. Bud Roach, *oboe* and The Chorus

Intermission

Come Again, Sweet Love..... John Dowland
The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus Madrigal Singers

Sieh, wie ist die Welle klar..... Johannes Brahms
from the *Liebeslieder Waltzes*

Sieh, wie ist die Welle klar, blickt der Mond hernieder! Die du meine Liebe bist, liebe du mich wieder!	See how bright the fountain gleams From the moon above her! If my love can light your dreams, Love me, dear, forever!
--	--

The Breezes Blow Lightly..... by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
from *Così fan tutte*
Jennifer Grace Mernitz, Barbara Cooper and James Estep

Hymn to the Night.....Brent Pierce

Adagio.....Francis Poulenc
from *Sonata for Oboe and Bassoon*
Glenn Einschlag, *bassoon* and J. Bud Roach, *oboe*

Lullabye (Goodnight, My Angel)..... Billy Joel
FOR ALL THE FATHERS AMONG US

Secret Love..... Sammy Fain and Paul Francis Webster
from *Calamity Jane*
Rob Jackson, *tenor*

We Kiss in a Shadow..... Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II
from *The King and I*
Steve Young, *baritone* and Jeff Wilson, *tenor*

Somewhere..... Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim
from *West Side Story*
Jeff Wilson, *tenor*

Somewhere Over the Rainbow..... Harold Arlen and E.Y. Harburg,
arr. Glenn Hufnagel, from *The Wizard of Oz*

All for the Best..... Stephen Schwartz
from *Godspell*
Paul LaDuca and Guy Tomassi

Glitter and Be Gay..... Leonard Bernstein and Richard Wilbur
from *Candide*
Ms. Grace Mernitz

Our Love is Soaring Across the Land..... Jeff Langley and Holly Near
Brad Williams, Guy Tomassi, William Roof and The Chorus

Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

Barbara Wagner, *Music Director and Conductor*

Debi Overton, *Accompanist*

Tenor I	Tenor II	Bass I	Bass II
Dominic Cosmano	Michael R. Bardo	Dave Batt	Jamie De More
Robert C. Donner	Donald Behr	Bill Fay	Glenn Einschlag
Thomas E. Glead	James J. Coughlin	Dan Folwell	Jim Estep
Ronald Groth	Timothy Fox	Bill Gardner	Jaime S. Goldfuss
William Hoffman	Dave Gannon	Craig Klose	Paul LaDuca
Ron Houk	David Granville	Ramon A. Melendez	Timothy H. Mahiques
Eric Robert Jackson	William C. Hardy	Andy Newbert	Mark Meyer
John Marohn	David Hetherly	Aaron Olden	Ronald A. Pellnat
Peter A.T. Miller	Delwyn Milander	Murphy Palazzo	Todd B. Ruth
Max Phillips	Roger Parris	Martin Palcic	Martin W. Seneca
Kevin Thompson	Michael Styn	Marek Parker	Daniel Wasinger
Guy Tomassi	Jason Ward	Jim Rigo	Michael Westhoff
Brad Williams		William J. Roof	
Jeff Wilson		Robert Rose	
		Woody Sipprell	
		Peter C. Smith	
		Dennis Stuart	
		Bobby Suwala	
		Steven Young	

Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus is a member of the
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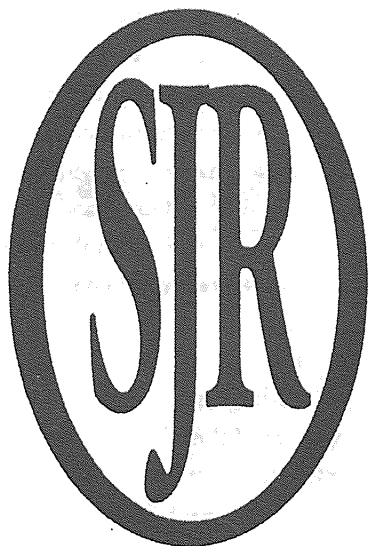
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About the Artists

The **Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus** was incorporated in 2001. Its mission is to produce high quality vocal music in the distinctive and rich tradition of men's choral singing. We seek to entertain a wide audience, and by doing so to enlighten by creating harmony and celebrating pride in ourselves and our community. The Buffalo Gay Men's gave its first concert in February, 2002 and recently performed at Buffalo Pride. Chorus membership is open to all men who pass a placement audition, pay semi-annual dues, and regularly attend rehearsals. We will audition new singers in September. For more information contact our Music Director, Barbara Wagner, at 668-1124, or visit our website, www.buffalogaymenschorus.com.

Barbara Wagner (Music Director) has served as Minister of Music at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo for 39 years, was Director of Vocal Activities at the Nichols School for more than 24 years and served the congregation of Temple Beth Am as its music director for 12 years. She is presently in charge of Vocal Activities at the Buffalo Seminary and the conductor of the brand new Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus. The Choir at the UU Church, in addition to its Sunday Morning responsibilities, has made two highly acclaimed European tours, the first to Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic and the second to Ireland, Wales, England and Scotland. The Choir, under Ms. Wagner's direction, has recorded for American Public Radio, performed locally with the Buffalo Philharmonic, Amherst Saxophone Quartet and the Ars Nova Chamber Orchestra. Ms. Wagner was the conductor for the Peace Odyssey Concert Tour of Hungary and the then Soviet Union. Choral singers from all over the US participated in this tour. She was also a member of the prestigious, seven member Hymnbook Resources Commission, which was responsible for the new denominational hymnbook. She ran a choral program at the Nichols High School that involved over 100 young singers, including a Concert Chorus, Women's Ensemble, Men's Ensemble and a Mixed Chamber Group. She was also guest conductor for the City of Good Neighbors Chorale. Barbara earned a BFA Degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo, where she studied organ with Squire Haskin, and has done graduate work at Westminster Choir College. She did advanced organ study with Karl Richter at the Munich Conservatory and has done advanced conducting study with Raymond Harvey, formerly Assistant conductor of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and



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presently Music Director of the Kalamazoo Symphony, among others. She is a member of the American Choral Director's Association, Erie County Music Educators Association, MENC, Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network (founding member, former vice president and board member) NYSSMA, American Guild of Organists (member of the board of the Buffalo Chapter) and Chromatic Club. She was recently presented with the Erie County Music Educator/Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Award for excellence in Choral Education.

Debi Overton (Accompanist), a North Carolina native, is the Organist and Choirmaster at Calvary Episcopal Church in Williamsville, N.Y. Miss Overton has held positions as coach/accompanist at the University of Texas at Austin, and served as director of the Chamber Music Program at the New School of Music in Philadelphia. From 1979 to 1986, she was active at the Summer Music Festival in Aspen, Colo., as coach/accompanist for the choral department. In this capacity, she served as assistant to the noted conductor Fiora Contino. She has assisted in preparing chorues and soloists for such conductors as Tamara Brooks, John Nelson, Robert Shaw, and Sergiu Comissiona, and has herself coached with coach/accompanist David Garvey, John Wustman, Brooks Smith and Dalton Baldwin. In addition to her duties at Calvary, Miss Overton is an active member of the Buffalo Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. She serves as chair of the Music Commission of the Western New York Episcopal Diocese, is the director of the chorus at the Nichols Upper School, and is active in this area teaching, accompanying and performing with singers and instrumentalists.

Since coming to Buffalo some ten years ago, mezzo-soprano **Barbara Cooper** continues to be a featured soloist with many of the community's most prestigious musical organizations. Ms. Cooper earned a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from SUNY/Fredonia and a Master of Music in Vocal Performance from SUNY/Buffalo. She sang, for over ten years, with the Tanglewood Festival Chorus of the Boston Symphony Orcherstra, the John Oliver Chorale, the New Boston Theatre, and the Russian Chamber Chorus of Boston. Her performance venues range from Carnegie Hall to Lincoln Center to the Tanglewood Music Festival. She has participated in numerous recordings, television events and film work. Since relocating to Buffalo, Ms. Cooper has performed with such organizations as the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Ars Nova Chamber Orchestra, Canisius College, Greater Buffalo Opera, North



CITY OF BUFFALO
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

ANTHONY M. MASIELLO
MAYOR

June 2002

Dear Members and Supporters of the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus:

As Mayor, and on behalf of the citizens of the City of Buffalo, it is with great pride that I once again greet you on the occasion of your Spring Concert "*Sounds of Summer*" to be held Friday and Saturday, June 14 and 15, 2002.

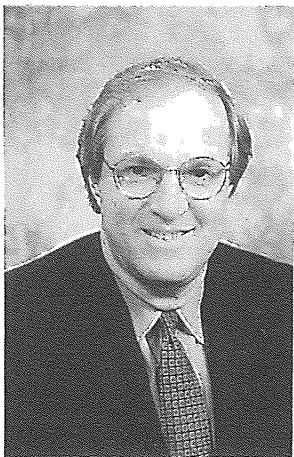
As anticipated, your winter concert "*Music from the Heart*" was a resounding success and your second concert I believe will further reinforce the BGMC as a cultural asset to our region.

Thank you for your dedication and hard work in making beautiful music for all of us to enjoy. We are all empowered due to your existence! It is truly inspiring.

With best wishes for your second concert.

Sincerely,

Anthony M. Masiello
Mayor



American New Music Festival, and June in Buffalo. Her primary vocal study was with John Oliver in Boston, and with Sylvia Dimiziani, in California. In addition to being an active performer, Ms. Cooper is on the voice faculty of the Community Music School, serves as soloist and section leader for the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo and teaches vocal music at the Buffalo Academy for Visual and Performing Arts.

Lyric soprano **Jennifer Grace Mernitz** appeared as a guest artist in the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus first concert in February, 2002. She is a graduate of Baldwin-Wallace College Conservatory of Music, with a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance, and holds a Master of Music in Vocal Performance from Boston University's School of Fine Arts. As soprano soloist and section leader for the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo Choir, Ms. Grace Mernitz has participated in numerous acclaimed local performances, most recently Fauré's *Requiem*, and has toured with the choir to Germany, Austria, Ireland, Wales, England and Scotland. She has appeared as a concert soloist with the Ars Nova Chamber Orchestra, and she made her opera debut in the Greater Buffalo Opera Company's production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. Ms. Grace Mernitz is currently pursuing New York State Teacher Certification in Music and teaches voice privately.

Originally from Morganville, N.J., **Glenn Einschlag** began his appointment as principal bassoon of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra with the 1999-2000 season. Prior to that, he was a member of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra and has performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Boston Symphony, and the Northern Kentucky Symphony. As a soloist, Mr. Einschlag has performed numerous solo recitals as well as concerti with the Ars Nova Chamber Orchestra, the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, and the New York String Orchestra. An avid chamber musician, Mr. Einschlag has participated in many music festivals including those of Aspen, Tanglewood, Spoleto, and Domaine Forget where he became heavily influenced by the noted bassoon pedagogue Norman Herzberg. He has also studied at the Juilliard School, the Curtis Institute of Music, and the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University, where he was awarded a Master of Music degree under the tutelage of Benjamin Kamins.

J. Bud Roach began playing the oboe at the age of sixteen after several years of instruction on piano and voice. Originally from Woodstock, Ontario, he earned

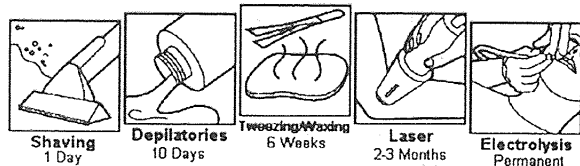
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degree in 1991, and in the same year was a finalist in the Fernand Gillet Oboe Competition in Baltimore. Upon completion of his formal education, Mr. Roach moved to the Toronto area where he began an active freelance career. He joined the Toledo Symphony in 1997 as Second Oboe and Utility English Horn, and was also awarded the same position with the Michigan Opera Theater in 2000. Aside from his responsibilities on stage, he was also active with the Symphony's Education Department, initiating two programs: a Symphony School program, in which children in after-school clubs participate in several classes before attending a concert; and the formation of a Choir at the Youth Treatment Center for young offenders which has performed widely around Toledo. In November of 2001, Mr. Roach was awarded the position of Second Oboe with the Buffalo Philharmonic, and began his responsibilities here in April. He would like to take this opportunity to thank the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus and friends for giving him such a warm welcome into the community.

Acknowledgments

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Notes on the Program

by
Timothy J. Fox

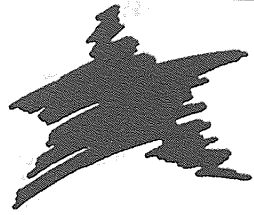
Sumer Is Icumen is one of the oldest written down melodies in the English language and originally was an Easter carol (Yes, there are carols for Easter, Lent, summer, harvest as well as Christmas). The original manuscript, now in the British museum, was transcribed by a Benedictine monk in 1226. The Easter words have long been forgotten, and the tune is now forever associated with summer. It is an ingenious bit of writing with an unmistakably English quality to it. Benjamin Britten incorporated it into the finale of his *Spring Symphony* where it makes a stunning conclusion to the work.

In 1954 director/choreographer Michael Kidd, composer Gene DePaul and lyricist Johnny Mercer had a rousing success with the film *Seven Brides For Seven Brothers*. They acquired the rights to Al Capp's cartoon *Li'l Abner* and adapted it for the stage. The results were a success, but not quite in the *My Fair Lady* or *Oklahoma!* vein. The show ran for 693 performances, was made into a movie and had a melodic score and witty lyrics that captured Capp's sense of satire.

De Animals a-Comin' is an unusual spiritual. It has a humorous text and has little concern with the social ills that are found in the text of most spirituals. It was collected in 1933.

The beautiful Scottish ballad *Over The Sea To Skye* points to the rather convoluted history of the British monarchy in the 17th and 18th centuries. In 1745, Charles Stuart, the Young Pretender, landed in Scotland and was received by the Scottish clans as Prince of Wales. Armies were formed and met on Culloden Moor, where the British, under the command of the Duke of Cumberland decimated the Scots and young Charles Stuart barely escaped with his life. The ballad is a lament for all the young men who perished on that day.

If an Anglican Cathedral tradition had existed in the United States on the scale that it did in England, then Randall Thompson (1899-1984) would probably be its foremost composer. Thompson produced a large body of choral composition in the mid 20th century. "The Pasture" is taken from Thompson's *Frostiana: Seven Country Songs* all with texts by the noted American poet, Robert Frost. The work was commissioned to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the town of Amherst, Massachusetts.



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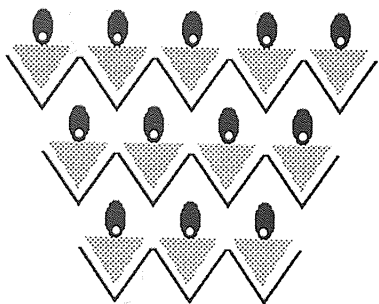
John Dowland (1563-1626) never quite achieved success in his lifetime. He applied for a court position towards the end of the reign of Elizabeth I, but due to tightening financial considerations, did not receive it. He migrated to Denmark and served at the court of Christian IV. He returned to England and played at the funeral service of King James I in 1625. Most of Dowland's pieces were set on secular texts and have a certain elegant, melancholy quality to them.

Hymn To The Night, by contemporary composer Brent Pierce, employs aleatory or "chance" methods (this is when the chorus speaks words that are not notated and are simply left to random choice). The chorus also speaks on pitch (much like Rex Harrison in *My Fair Lady*). Pierce is a professor of composition and theory at Fullerton College in California where he directs the choir and the jazz ensemble. He has also played trumpet with Sammy Davis, Jr. and Mel Tormé. Although he employs serial techniques, *Hymn To The Night* is firmly within the tonal tradition.

Over The Rainbow is so familiar to us that it is hard to believe that it almost wasn't written and that it then was almost cut from the motion picture. Harold Arlen and E. Y. Harburg who wrote the music and lyrics for "The Wizard of Oz", realized that the main character of Dorothy had no song of her own after they had completed the score. They were out to dinner one night when the idea came to Harburg. He chose simple, childlike imagery (lullabies, lemon drops, stars) that provided a contrast to the stark landscape of Kansas. He completed the lyrics and Arlen came up with the melody while riding in the car.

The sequence was filmed and put into the finished picture. Studio heads, upon previewing the film, insisted that the song be removed, claiming that it slowed down the action. When it was pointed out to them that Judy Garland had no major song of her own, they relented, but insisted that the verse be cut. Well, the song went on to immortality and forever became associated with Miss Garland.

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We Are One, We Are Many

by

John Marohn

Because we have personally experienced what it is to be gay, many of the men you see on stage tonight have internalized the struggle to be validated in this culture. We are aware that more and more television shows and movies are including us as major characters, even though we also know that that inclusion is often superficial and, more often than not, reduces us to comic and frivolous stereotypes. Others would have us disappear by universalizing our unique experiences as gay men by claiming that "deep down, all human beings are alike" – a tolerant, humanitarian statement that bleaches out our differences as gay men.

On the other hand, as one among many minorities in America, we often find ourselves experiencing the paradox of needing to be different, to have those differences recognized and yet still are entitled to full inclusion in the mainstream culture, validation as one among many humans who contribute to society, who have intimate relationships, and who, in the end, need to be able to fully pursue our own individual roads to happiness. Many of us have continued to be fiercely loyal to the faiths of our heritages in spite of the fact that the "official" positions of many of our churches remain tentative at best.

Our concert tonight in many ways reflects that paradox. As a performing group, we sing songs that have the potential to speak to all of humanity. We have made the conscious decision, for example, to include music from the mainstream classical tradition — a Brahms piece, a thirteenth century English canon, a Quaker hymn, and even a song based on a poem by Robert Frost. We are fully aware that the content of these songs, their narrative lines or their lyrical sentiments, were originally intended for a "straight" and more traditional audience. Their broad appeal, however, also means that they can be appreciated and viewed through the lens of our gay experiences.

As semiprofessional singers trying for a professional sound, we are not unique. However, as gays trying to reach out to a gay and gay-friendly audience, we would ask you tonight to listen closely to the words in at least two of the songs that reflect a very strong gay or gay-sympathetic content, *Over the Rainbow* and *Our Love is Soaring Across the Land*.

Although the lyrics of the famous Judy Garland classic, *Over the Rainbow* are literally generic, Garland, for better or for worse, has become a gay

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icon, personifying the dramatic struggle against so many of the odds many gays continue to struggle with — failed love relationships, addiction, the constant search for acceptance and validation. The words of her classic signature piece point to a safe, accepting, and serene place beyond the rain and over the rainbow, a place “above the chimney tops” where “little bluebirds fly,” a final resting place after the struggle. It is also the song of the eternal little child asking “Why, oh why can't I” go to that special place where all suffering ceases, where the threat of violence has been shelved for just a moment, where peace embraces us with all of its nurturing comfort. As gay men listening to these words, we hope that all of us can move gently into that safe psychological place of comfort where all prejudice against us ceases and where rejection and loss are only memories.

Our Love is Soaring Across the Land is our communal response to the world that our love, our self-worth, our own support system and bonding will be the ultimate ways that we will survive. The phrase, “If you fall, I will finish” resonates powerfully to many levels our gay experiences. It is a of battle cry: no matter what — AIDS, family rejection, the ostracism from churches, the condemnation of the religious right, judicial denials of our right to adopt children, corporate rejections of partnership benefits, or the tacit approval of violence against us — there will be another generation of us that will follow through, will demand acceptance, will win the world over by our “crystal rage,” that very lucid, energized, and powerful form of love that passes all understanding as we truly “raise our spirits high.”

OR

The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus is proud to be a member of the *Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses*, the world's only association committed to serving the lesbian and gay choral movement. Founded in 1982, GALA Choruses represents 180 choruses and 10,000 singers located throughout North America, Europe and Australia. GALA Choruses fosters the artistic and organizational 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; serving as a resource center for choruses and individual members. GALA Choruses can be reached at P.O. Box 6504, Washington, D.C. 20035 or online at www.galachoruses.org.

*May your singing tonight inspire us all to
raise our voices high in peace and love.*

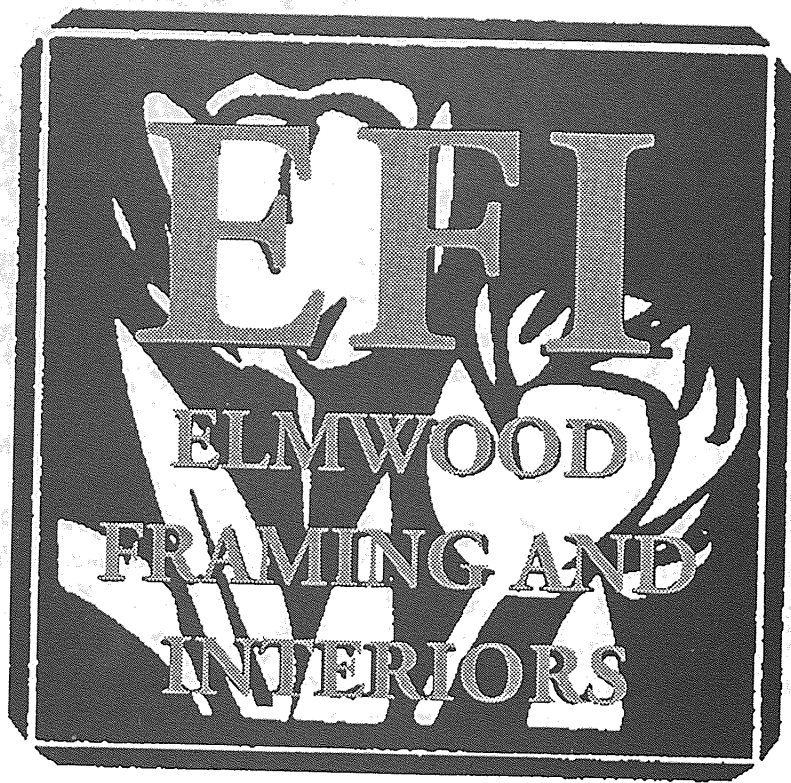
Congratulations to the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus.

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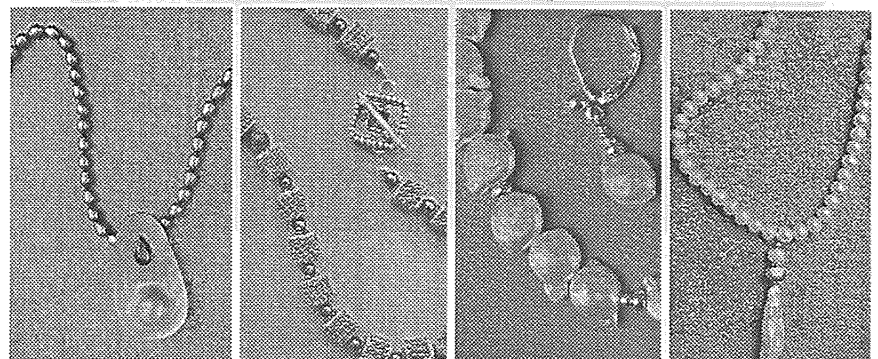
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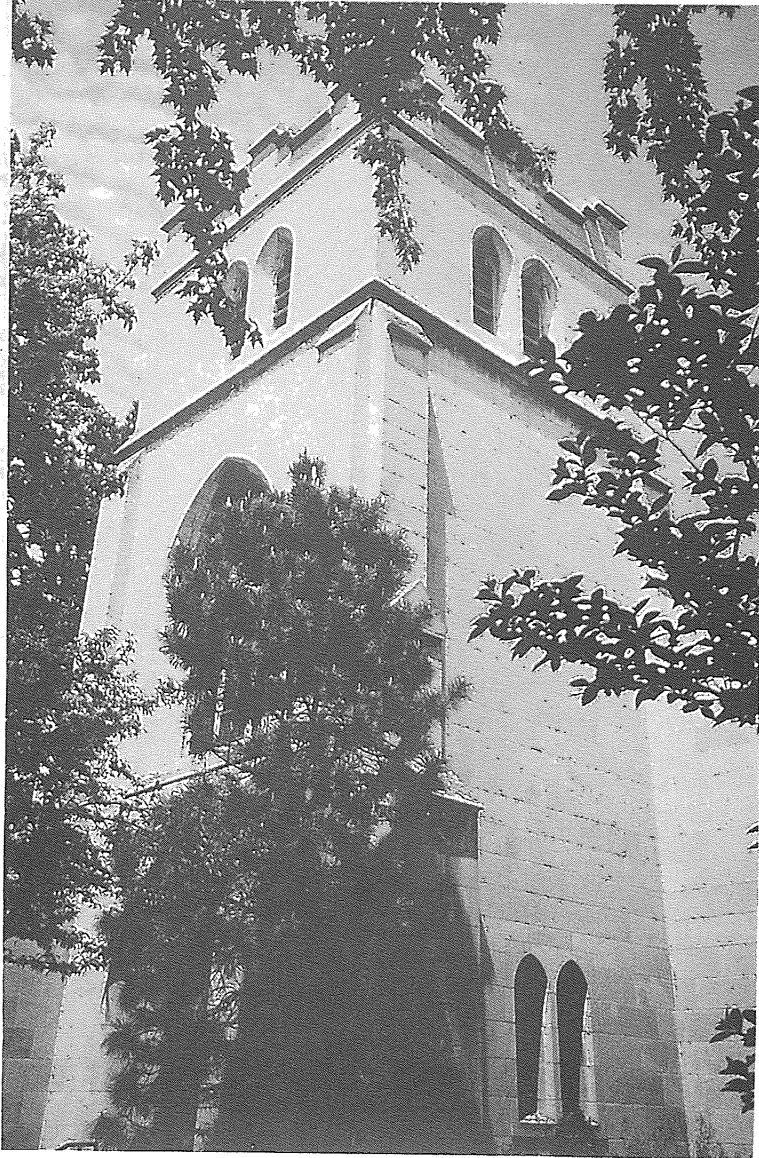
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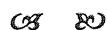
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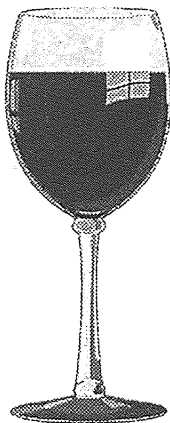
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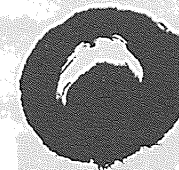
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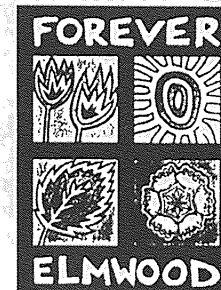
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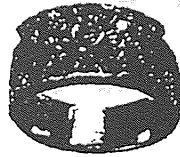
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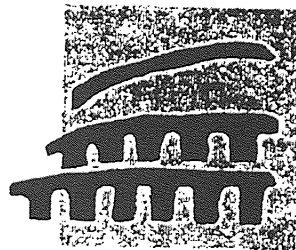
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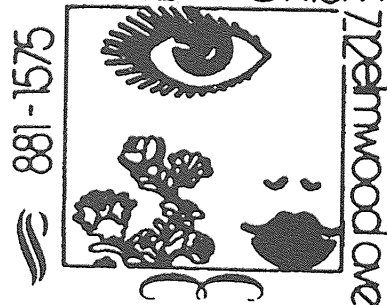
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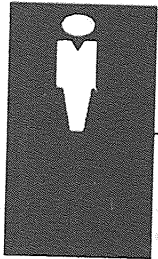
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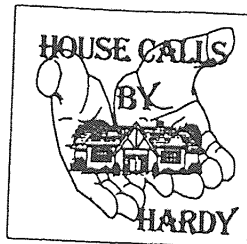
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