



# **Membership Booklet**

Updated September 9, 2018

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## INTRODUCTION

The Maple Leaf Singers was established in 1968 by George and Marie Gillis, who served as director and producer until June 2001 (see Historical Highlights, page 13). Today we are a community service chorus comprising 50+ volunteer singers and support staff that live in the Greater Vancouver area of British Columbia.

We perform 15 to 20 shows per year throughout the Lower Mainland and sometimes beyond (see Sample Show Schedule, page 12), under the direction of our Music Director, Rob Gillis. The highlights of our show season are our public Christmas Show in December and each spring when we present two performances of music and comedy at the Massey Theatre in New Westminster.

The purpose of the Maple Leaf Singers is to provide quality choral entertainment for just about any audience including seniors' residences, care homes, churches, community organizations, handicapped groups, activity centers, fundraisers, conventions, and banquets.

Our mission statement: *"To sing, have fun, and to share our joy of music with others."*

We sing a variety of musical styles including rock, jazz, comedy, show tunes, gospel and the classics. Choreography adds energy and interest to many of our numbers and we do it all by memory! We are truly a vibrant and energetic group!

The Maple Leaf Singers is a federally registered charity and belongs to the New Westminster, Burnaby and Surrey Arts Councils and the BC Choral Federation.

For further information, please check our website at [www.mapleleafsingers.com](http://www.mapleleafsingers.com).

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

There are 5 members of the Executive Committee:

- 4 elected positions, elected each year: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer
- 1 Past President (immediate Past President if possible)

There are several advisors who offer advice and recommendations to the Executive Committee as required: Chorus Managers (Rehearsals, Shows, Massey/Christmas Shows, and General), Music Director, Accompanist and Choreographers.

The names of the persons on the Executive Committee and those holding other positions are posted on the Members section of our website.

For your convenience, group email distribution lists have been created. E-mails to the five members of the Executive Committee should be sent to [executive@mapleleafsingers.com](mailto:executive@mapleleafsingers.com). Emails to the Executive Committee plus the four managers and the Music Director should be sent to [leaders@mapleleafsingers.com](mailto:leaders@mapleleafsingers.com).

Under the terms of the Maple Leaf Singers Constitution, the Executive Committee “shall have charge and control of the affairs, funds, properties and equipment of, or under the care of, the Society. “

Your Executive Committee meets regularly throughout the year to ensure the affairs of the chorus are maintained and enhanced to serve the best interests of the members.

Your comments/suggestions are welcomed by any Executive member. Please put them in writing or email with your name and phone number for ease of response.

### **Section Leaders**

Section leaders play a critical role in the functioning of the chorus. They are the main contacts to get information quickly to all chorus members (e.g. cancellation of rehearsal due to weather). The section leaders help orient new members to the chorus, act as a ‘buddy’ to answer questions and generally help new members to feel at home. Please see your section leader if you have questions or need help in any way.

### **New Members/Leaving Members**

When you join the Maple Leaf Singers, at the first rehearsal (either in September or January), you will receive a name tag, an envelope of sheet music for the current season (e.g. Christmas music in September, spring show music in January), a contact info/waiver form to complete and return to the Secretary so you will be added to the Membership List. Prior to the first show the costume committee will contact you to arrange a costume for the show. By the end of October, you will be expected to pay your membership dues.

If/when you leave the Maple Leaf Singers, please advise the Music Director. He then will inform the General Manager, who will complete a checklist with appropriate other managers to ensure you have returned your music and your costumes and any other assets of the MLS, such as keys, props, etc.

## **CHORUS ORGANIZATION**

Please see Maple Leaf Singers Organizational Chart on the Members section of our website under Organization.

### **Music Director – Rob Gillis**

Son of Maple Leaf Singers’ founders George and Marie Gillis, Rob Gillis has grown up with music in his blood. He played percussion for the chorus starting at just eight years old and has been singing and playing in bands since the age of 10. As a founding member of the Vancouver band, Blue Meenies, Rob sang and played bass guitar for over 25 years.

In 2007, Rob and his wife Josie joined the Maple Leaf Singers as full-time singing members, taking on various duties including executive and managerial positions. Rob became Assistant Director in 2017, and was appointed as Music Director in 2018.

Rob blends his experience in senior living management in perfect harmony with music, arranging for the Maple Leaf Singers to provide their theatre quality entertainment to those unable to go out to a live performance.

### **Accompanist – Gail MacDonald**

A Vancouver native, Gail MacDonald graduated from John Oliver High School and received her Bachelor of Music degree and Teacher Certification from UBC. She has been a Music and ELL Specialist Teacher for over 40 years, working with students ranging from Kindergarten to Adult Education. She now teaches part-time.

As a chorister, Gail has performed locally, nationally, and internationally. She is a former Director of the Burnaby District Children's Choir and currently directs Andante, the Burnaby Retired Teachers Choir.

A member of the Maple Leaf Singers since 1998, Gail enjoys singing and accompanying our varied repertoire. In 2015, she received the Joyce O. Maguire Award from the BC Choral Federation for outstanding long-term service as a choral accompanist.

### **Assistant Accompanist – Marilyn Rushton**

For Marilyn Rushton, music is like a second language. She began playing piano at the age of five. Throughout her school years, she sang in school choirs and in a girls' quartet. She received her Bachelor of Music degree from UBC in 1975. Marilyn sang on radio jingles and worked in piano bars for nearly 15 years before taking on the role of co-director of the Burnaby Children's Choir from the late 1980s to 2000.

Marilyn received a Bachelor of Music Education degree from UBC in 2000 and joined the Maple Leaf Singers in 2001. She completed a Master's Degree in Special Education in 2002. She is a vision teacher with the Vancouver School District and regularly incorporates music into her students' programs. Marilyn also directs a performance choir for blind and partially-sighted singers.

## **THE MAPLE LEAF SINGERS CHORUS GUIDELINES**

### **Financial**

Dues: The dues, as suggested by the Executive and changed only by majority vote of the chorus membership each year, are payable by October 31<sup>st</sup> of the current year or within one month of joining. These dues are payable even if the full year is not attended.

Costume Fee: A one-time, non-refundable costume fee, as set by the Executive, is to be paid by October 31<sup>st</sup> of the current year or within one month of joining. All costumes provided by the Maple Leaf Singers must be returned when a member resigns. See page 10 for more details about costumes.

Ticket Responsibilities: Each member is currently financially responsible for selling a minimum of 8 tickets at \$25 each for the Spring Show, or as set by the Executive.

Annual Budget: The Treasurer will prepare a budget for the coming year, for approval by the Executive prior to the first Executive meeting in August.

### Committee Budget Procedures

Each committee will have one Chairperson.

The Executive will notify each Committee Chairperson of their Committee's budget for the season by or on the first rehearsal in September.

The Committee budget is for the fiscal year August 1 to July 31.

All committee expenditures must first be approved by the committee Chairperson.

Each Committee Chairperson will be required to keep copies of receipts for all expenditures, and will maintain a running record of remaining funds in the committee's budget. Actual itemized receipts (not credit card receipts) are required for submission to the Treasurer for reimbursement.

In the unlikely event that expenditures exceed the approved committee budget, the Committee Chairperson must present the expenditure to the appropriate chorus manager, who will then present the request to the Executive for final approval.

In the event of budget discrepancies, the Treasurer's report will supersede all other documents.

### **Volunteers**

Each member is required to participate in at least one volunteer job to assist the chorus, over and above set up of equipment at rehearsals and shows. The set up schedule for set up teams appears on the Google calendar in the Members' section of our website.

### **Suggestions / Grievances**

Communication of suggestions or grievances may be done in person with the appropriate member of the Executive or may be in written and signed, or sent as an email, to the Executive.

### **Singing / Speaking Solos, Small Group Acts**

Parts will be filled by audition.

### **Attendance**

With the exception of vacations, illness, work commitments and emergencies, all members are expected to attend scheduled rehearsals/shows. Members are responsible to notify the Attendance Coordinator (rather than the Music Director) when any of the above prevent them from attending rehearsals/shows. Attendance at rehearsals/shows must be noted in the attendance book provided. If a member has three or more unexcused absences, or at the sole discretion of the Music Director the member is not ready to perform, the Music Director, in conjunction with the Executive, may ask that member not to participate in a particular show or shows. An unexcused absence is when a member does not contact the Attendance Coordinator

to report their absence. If a member is absent for any reason, they are responsible to check what was they missed and to ensure that they rehearse on their own in order to keep up. They can check in with the Attendance Coordinator to find out what they missed, if the Music Director has not sent out an email in advance advising what is to be covered at that rehearsal.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Length of Chorus Season**

The first practice will be scheduled for the week after Labour Day in September. The last practice will be scheduled no later than the first week of June, unless approved by the chorus (based on show bookings).

### **Dress Code/Fragrances**

Members are to adhere to required dress code for all shows. No jewelry is to be worn other than wedding rings. Use of fragrances of any kind is not permitted at rehearsals or shows, due to allergies.

### **Membership in Other Organizations**

The Maple Leaf Singers will retain membership in the Burnaby Arts Council, New Westminster Arts Council, Surrey Arts Council, and BC Choral Federation, and pay dues accordingly.

### **Chorus Membership List**

This list is regularly updated and distributed to all members by the Executive. Members should advise the Secretary of any changes to their address, phone numbers, etc. as soon as possible. Please do not give any contact information on this list about another member to anyone outside of the MLS, unless you have permission from that member to do so.

### **Website**

The Maple Leaf Singers Website ([www.mapleleafsingers.com](http://www.mapleleafsingers.com)) has a Members section which is being used more and more frequently to communicate information to members such as announcements, schedules, set up teams, costumes, AGM and Executive Committee minutes, and the tracks for current and previous practice files. Please consult any of the chorus managers or the Executive to obtain the user ID and password for this section.

### **Emails**

Members are encouraged to send emails that are factual issues e.g. costume details, rehearsal set up, show times, choreography moves etc). Members are NOT to send any emails to the membership that result in personal financial gain, or that contain wording that may be offensive, aggressive, negative and or critical in nature. Failure to demonstrate this may result in the Executive taking the member's membership under review.

### **Social Media**

All avenues of Social Media are determined by the Executive, and are under the supervision of the General Manager. Currently we have accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and You

Tube. Members are encouraged to like our pages and share any posts on our pages to their own social media feeds. Anything posted to our page will be reviewed before it is shared with the public. When mentioning or tagging the Maple Leaf Singers in any social media post, we ask that it is done in a positive way to promote the chorus. Members are not to create any accounts on behalf of the chorus without prior approval from the Executive. If you wish to volunteer for the social media committee, please see the chorus General Manager.

Social Media Committee's role is to promote the chorus in a positive light through social media. Familiarity with different avenues of social media, photography skills, and creativity are assets in this committee. Posts are to be professional and free of grammar and spelling errors. Please see the chorus General Manager if you are interested in volunteering for this committee.

We currently use two platforms to inform members of upcoming shows and rehearsals.

Our Google Calendar is located in the Members section of the website. For your convenience, you can subscribe to it through the website and get automatic updates to your digital calendar. Information included is the date, set up time, choir arrival time, venue name, and venue address. The address is linked to Google Maps, so you can use GPS to find the location of shows. The calendar may also include the show order and costume pieces.

We also use a site called Muzodo. The system sends emails from time to time from Muzodu, asking if you will be able to attend shows. This information lets the Music Director know who is able to attend and whether or not we have the right mix of voices to perform. You do not have to sign in or be a member of this site, simply reply to the emails and select your availability (yes, no, maybe) for each show. For no and maybe answers, there is a field to explain why you may or may not be at any given show.

**NOTE: We will never share your social media profiles or email address with anyone except other members of the chorus.**

## **REHEARSALS**

Regular weekly rehearsals are held from September to June, excluding December. Rehearsals are on Monday evenings at the Burnaby Lake Pavilion in Burnaby Lake Sports Complex located at 6871 Roberts Street, Burnaby. Rehearsals run 7:30 pm to 9:45 pm with a 15-minute tea and coffee break. Please sign the attendance book as you arrive.

During several months of the year, extra rehearsals for the sections will be held, if deemed necessary by the Music Director, to prepare for the Christmas Show and Spring Show. These are held Thursday evenings from 7:15-9:45 at Byrne Creek Secondary School located at 7777 18th Street, Burnaby. We usually have the use of a music room and a dance studio.

There are two all-day Saturday rehearsals during March and May for intensive work on our spring performance. The date and location will be announced once determined. See the Google

calendar for schedule. Members are expected to attend all possible rehearsals. Please notify the Attendance Coordinator if you are unable to attend any rehearsal.

To assist in memorizing music, members will be given sheet music and downloadable rehearsal tracks are available on the Members website. CDs are available upon request to the Rehearsals Manager. Rehearsals are the time to blend the different voices together. Every attempt should be made to learn the music prior to rehearsal time.

When entering and leaving rehearsals/shows, please carry a piece of equipment with you to aid in loading and unloading the truck.

Please show courtesy to the Music Director and fellow chorus members by not talking during rehearsals. An Artistic Leadership Protocol for chorus rehearsals was proposed and approved unanimously at the 2012 AGM, as follows:

All direction and instruction shall come from the Music Director (including choreographers when appropriate), except in the case where individual comments and suggestions are invited by the Music Director. Members are expected to show courtesy and respect not only to the Music Director but to all chorus members during rehearsals. Please refrain from unnecessary talking and give the Music Director and choreographers your full attention at all times. Members are also expected to show respect, compassion, patience, understanding and loyalty at all times when speaking to the membership.

In the event of a disagreement between two or more members, the members are encouraged to work out their differences in private in a calm and respectful manner. *Under no circumstances should a member draw others (third-parties) into the issue.* If it is observed that a member continues to demonstrate disrespectful behavior, or if the Executive continues to receive concerns regarding a member's behavior, the Executive will discuss the concern with the member and if, after reasonable warning, that member fails to follow the guidelines, the Executive will consider revoking their membership. *Just to clarify, it is not the job of the Executive to act as referees or judges but to deal with members that are unwilling to resolve issues with other members privately.*

## **SHOWS**

The chorus performs 15-20 times a year at various venues plus the annual Spring Show and a public Christmas show. Please check Sample Show Schedule, page 9.

All costume information will be given in advance of each show. Show programs will be determined by the Music Director. Most shows except for the Spring Show at the Massey Theatre) are about one hour in length.

Chorus members are expected to be at all shows, ready to sing, at the time given on the show schedule (usually a half hour before start time). Members indicate they will attend a show in advance through Muzodu. (See Social Media, p. 7)

Please show respect for our audiences by not talking during performances. Remember, if they can hear you sing, they can hear you talk!

When a chorus member is introduced during the course of a show, it is not appropriate for the chorus to applaud. Whether Pianist, Soloist, Director or singing chorus member, we are all equally important as we are one performing group.

Members are expected to spend some of their own time to prepare for shows. If the Music Director in conjunction with the Executive feels a member is not adequately prepared for performing in a show, that member will be asked to not participate in a particular show.

### **Show Bookings**

Suggestions from members about possible new venues for shows are always appreciated by the Show Bookings Manager, but members should not directly volunteer, correspond or seek to book shows at other venues without first seeking approval of the Show Booking Manager. We book shows 6-8 months in advance so that it's possible to get all our 50+ singers out to perform.

### **Costumes**

There is a one-time non-refundable costume fee as noted on page 4. All members are supplied with costumes to complement the musical selections. A new costume is usually designed each year, although sometimes current costumes are modified.

To reduce storage costs to the chorus, all costumes remain in the possession of the chorus member until recalled by the Costume Committee or a member leaves the chorus.

Requirements to be purchased by chorus members are:

#### **Women**

- a) One pair of black performance shoes (Mary Jane "style" low heels and round toe with strap). These are available at many stores, including Payless and the Bay.
- b) Nightshade/black/ beige nylon stockings as required.
- c) One pair of earrings as required, if not provided.
- d) One pair of black dress slacks, if not provided, and black leggings.

#### **Men**

- a) A good pair of patent leather black dress shoes to complement tuxedo.
- b) Calf-height black dress socks.

Performance dress code must be strictly adhered to. A full outline of dress code requirements for performances will be distributed well in advance.

## **MEMBER VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES**

The chorus functions smoothly and cooperatively due to the many willing hands that help out in various areas. This type of involvement helps keep our costs down and our morale up!

Each member is required to take on a volunteer responsibility within his/her area of capability. See below:

- Set-up crews (expected of all members, as this is the chorus's greatest need on an ongoing basis)
- Costumes (sewing, shopping, design, administration)
- Social Committee (the fun stuff!)
- Special Events/Publicity (fundraising, etc.)
- Props
- Refreshments
- Music filing, stamping, distribution
- Ticket selling
- Poster distribution
- Pictures/videos
- Show Make Up
- Truck drivers
- Assisting with Inventory
- Assisting members of Executive Committee as needed

Please see any one of the Chorus Managers to sign up for one of these areas.

## **INFORMATION DISTRIBUTED SEPARATELY**

- Chorus Membership List
- Chorus Positions on Risers on website, from the Music Director
- Organizational Chart on website
- Rehearsal Schedule, locations and map on Google Calendar
- Show Schedule, locations and maps link on Google Calendar
- Set Up Crew, Sound and Truck Schedule on Google Calendar
- Volunteer Positions - Description of Duties on website

## SAMPLE SHOW SCHEDULE

Date	Location	Other
October	Good Samaritan, New Westminster	
November	Park Place Courtyard Terrace, Burnaby	Saturday afternoon
December	Whitecliff Retirement Residence, Surrey	
	Imperial Place, Surrey	
	Gilmore Gardens, Richmond	
	Lougheed Mall	Only sound system setup required, daytime
	Maple Leaf Singers Christmas Show	Tickets sold by Chorus (no obligation)
	Peninsula Retirement Residence, Surrey	
	Pacifica Retirement Home, Surrey	
	Burnaby Lake Pavilion, Burnaby	MLS Family & Friends Christmas Party and Show (free)
March	Dogwood Pavilion, Burnaby	
April	Harrison Pointe, Langley	
	Crescent Gardens, Surrey	
May	MLS Annual Spring Concert, Massey Theatre	Tickets sold by Chorus (8 tickets @ \$25 minimum)

## **HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS**

- 1968:** Maple Leaf Singers formed
- 1971:** First Annual Spring Show; James Cowan Theatre in Burnaby (1971-77), Massey Theatre in New Westminster (1978-present)
- 1973:** First show (of a series continuing to 2008) at Royal Heights United Church, Delta
- 1973:** Official choir for Canada Summer Games; New Westminster
- 1973:** Karen Magnussen's birthday party; The Coliseum, Vancouver
- 1974:** Grey Cup game; Empire Stadium, Vancouver
- 1977:** First of three (also in 1978 & 1993) shows sponsored by the Chilliwack Kiwanis Club; Evergreen Hall, Chilliwack
- 1977:** Tribute to the Silver Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II; Orpheum Theatre, Vancouver
- 1977:** New Westminster Silver Jubilee Celebration; Massey Theatre, New Westminster
- 1978:** Royal Visit by His Royal Highness Prince Phillip and Prince Andrew – salute to Captain Cook; Burnaby
- 1983:** Concert; Agassiz United Church, Agassiz
- 1984:** 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the City of New Westminster
- 1985:** Gala Italian Night; Orpheum Theatre, Vancouver
- 1986:** Expo 86, representing the Best of BC Talent at the B.C. pavilion, including vocal backup for Urban Sax from France; Vancouver
- 1987:** First of 2 (also in 1988) shows at Nanaimo Ecumenical Centre; Nanaimo
- 1991:** Music '91, BC Tel Centennial Community Showcase Road Show; Victoria
- 1994:** First of two (also in 1995) shows sponsored by the Okanagan Mission Lions Club of Kelowna and the Summerland Kinsmen of Summerland
- 1996:** First of five (also 1997-2000) shows sponsored by the Squamish Lions Club; Squamish
- 2001:** George and Marie Gillis retire as Music Director/Producer/Accompanist, passing on the leadership to Wilson Fowlie
- 2002:** Constitution rewritten and re-filed
- 2006:** Afghanistan Troop support
- 2008:** 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- 2010:** Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympics Games (see [www.mapleleafsingers.com](http://www.mapleleafsingers.com))  
About Us – Our History - for details of our participation in this event)
- 2015:** First public Christmas Show
- 2018:** "Solid Gold" 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show and 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala
- 2018:** Wilson Fowlie retires after 17 years and Rob Gillis is appointed as Music Director