

Herd Across Canada

from sea
to sea
to sea



Bison Men's Chorus



- 1 *The Maple Leaf Forever* - Alexander Muir, arr. Ron Smail [4:08]
- 2 *Away From The Roll of the Sea* - Allister MacGillivray, arr. Diane Loomer [3:57]
- 3 *Un Canadien Errant* - Antoine Gérin-Lajoie, arr. Eleanor Daley [4:09]
- 4 *Hymn to Freedom* - Oscar Peterson, arr. H. Christie, S. Denby & Paul Read [3:37]
- 5 *Fogarty's Cove* - Stan Rogers, arr. Ron Smail [2:06]
- 6 *Song For The Mira* - Allister MacGillivray, arr. Stuart Calvert [4:43]
- 7 *Four Strong Winds* - Ian Tyson, arr. Larry Nickel [4:35]
- 8 *Northwest Passage* - Stan Rogers, arr. Ron Smail [4:32]
- 9 *Frobisher Bay* - James Gordon, arr. Diane Loomer [4:57]
- 10 *Vive La Canadienne* - trad., arr. Chris Denby [2:11]
- 11 *Wood River* - Connie Kaldor, arr. Willi Zwozdesky [4:37]
- 12 *O Canada* - Calixa Lavallee, arr. Steve Denby [1:15]

director: Steve Denby
accompanist: Cary Denby

The year 2010 is the 25th anniversary of the BISON MEN'S CHORUS. To celebrate this event we have compiled this selection of songs which we hope represents the diversity, breadth and beauty of the music of Canada. From Stan Rogers' frolicking FOGARTY'S COVE and rowdy NORTHWEST PASSAGE, through Connie Kaldor's Saskatchewan-inspired love song WOOD RIVER, James Gordon's haunting and chilling FROBISHER BAY to Oscar Peterson's inspiring HYMN TO FREEDOM these songs give a voice to our country.

Of course what patriotic collection would be complete without THE MAPLE LEAF FOREVER and O CANADA.

We are proud to present this collection of some of Canada's finest music with hopes that you will enjoy it for years to come.

www.BisonMensChorus.ca



UNIVERSITY
OF MANITOBA

The Songs

The Maple Leaf Forever^x (Words by Vladimir Radian, Music by Alexander Muir, arranged by Ron Smail) [4:08]

This arrangement by Ron Smail provides an excellent setting of Vladimir Radian's reworked and politically sensitive lyrics to this great anthem to the qualities of life and national pride we are fortunate enough to have in our country. Written in 1867, and considered by many to be the "first Canadian National Anthem", it is a fitting prelude to the sentiment and theme for this collection of "Canadiana".

Away From the Roll of the Sea[§] (Words and music by Allister MacGillivray, arranged by Diane Loomer) [3:57]

With ocean surrounding our country on three sides, it is natural that we include songs acknowledging and honouring the importance of life on the water. Diane Loomer's arrangement of *Away From the Roll of the Sea* is one of the most beautiful sea-songs in our repertoire; with its rich harmonies supporting a lilting melody, all floating on the piano part providing the rise and fall of the ocean waves.

Un Canadien Errant^x (Antoine Gérin-Lajoie, arranged by Eleanor Daley) [4:09]

This plaintive song, which tells of the pain of exiled French-Canadians following the Lower Canada Rebellion of 1837-1838, was actually arranged for treble voices by Eleanor Daley. It was too beautiful to resist, so the Bison Men simply sang the arrangement from the treble transcription, without any modifications except to sing in their own range. Daley's arrangement moves from the first verse in unison (highlighting the gorgeous melody) through a two-part second verse and finally the three-part acapella third verse.

Hymn to Freedom^x (Lyrics by Harriette Hamilton, music by Oscar Peterson, arranged by Harold Christie and Steve Denby after an arrangement by Paul Read) [3:37]

Performed and recorded by many artists in many styles, Peterson's *Hymn to Freedom* not only illustrates the brilliance of Peterson's musicality, but also the importance of the qualities of tolerance, freedom, and a dignity which bind us not only as a country, but as a people. We have taken some liberties with a few text elements in order to make this version as inclusive as possible.

Fogarty's Cove^s (Stan Rogers, arranged by Ron Smail) [2:06]

The place that inspired *Fogarty's Cove* consists of two parcels of provincial Crown land running along the rugged southern shore of Chedabucto Bay in Nova Scotia. That province has actually proposed to officially name this area Fogarty's Cove to commemorate Stan and his song, as no place carried that name when he wrote this song. This is essentially a love song telling the story of how the sailor and his beloved cope with the stresses of separation due to the long periods he spends at sea. Smail's arrangement features the baritone section with the other voices providing a rollicking vocal accompaniment.

Song For the Miraⁿ (Words and music by Allister MacGillivray, arranged by Stuart Calvert) [4:43]

Solos by: Victor Boudreau, Tim Sale, Ken Cairnie, Derek McLean, Paul Hope, Jim House
Violin: Rachel Moody

The Mira River is Cape Breton's longest river. The river's width and calm waters make it ideal for pleasure boating and fishing and its banks abound with swimming spots and sandy pleasure coves. The Mira slowly flows in a leisurely manner much like the citizens who live, work and play in this utopian destination (one of many) in Cape Breton. Come with us as we sing of its charms.

Four Strong Windsⁿ (Words and music by Ian Tyson, arranged by Larry Nickel) [4:35]

Being from Winnipeg (boasting Portage & Main - the windiest intersection in Canada) the Bison Men are all too familiar with the wind. Tyson's tale of wanderlust, loneliness, and yearning is beautifully set in this arrangement. The easy-going folk-song style is an interesting challenge when arranging familiar songs, and Larry Nickel has proven himself once again. It's always a pleasure to sing Larry's arrangements.

Northwest Passageⁿ (Stan Rogers, arranged by Ron Smail) [4:32]

Solos by: John Madden, Keith Tipples, Ken Cairnie, Victor Boudreau

With Canada being a vast tract of unexplored territory, especially through the perilous sea and islands of the Canadian Arctic, it was vital that the early Canadians become brave trail-blazers. Rogers' *Northwest Passage* is a great history lesson set to proud and steadfast music. Once again, Ron Smail demonstrates his mastery of the male chorus arrangement taking Rogers' fine song writing and making it as interesting for the singer as it is pleasing to the listener - and inspiring for both. Rogers said of this song "It is yet another metaphor for the ordinary person achieving the heroic".

Frobisher Bay[§] (Words and music by James Gordon, arranged by Diane Lomer) [4:57]

Solo by Pat Matthews

This selection is placed purposely after *Northwest Passage*, for the experience of life on the sea is not always cause for pride and celebration. James Gordon tells the tale from a more desolate perspective. The sailors in *Frobisher Bay* have been on a whale hunt, and for the sake of “one more whale” find themselves trapped in the sea ice with limited provisions, and no means of transportation to, or communication with, the world beyond the frozen waters of Frobisher Bay.

Vive La Canadienne[∞] (Traditional, arranged by Chris Denby) [2:11]

Steve’s brother Chris wrote this arrangement while studying at the University of Western Ontario and offered the arrangement when Steve approached him seeking music for his first recording project with the Bison Men’s Chorus “*He(ard) in Manitoba*” (2000). With his permission we have included the same recording on this album since it fits so perfectly with our theme of “*Canadiana*”. *Vive la Canadienne* (Long live the Canadian girl) was identified in 1859 as a ‘*mélodie nationale canadienne*’ or, roughly translated, a “*Canadian National anthem*”. O Canada was declared our first and only official national anthem in 1967.

Wood River[∞] (Words and music by Connie Kaldor, arranged by Willi Zwozdesky) [4:37]

Solo by Jim House

Connie Kaldor is a Juno Award winner, and in 2007 was named to the Order of Canada for her contributions to Canadian Folk Music as well as her humanitarian and charity-based work. This beautiful tune elicits the image of the lazy *Wood River* meandering its way through Gravelbourg and the southern part of Saskatchewan, bringing its own form of peace, joy and serenity to all who want or need to partake in its existence. The *Wood River* eventually empties into Old Wives’ Lake, and as Connie says “I mean, why rush if you’re going to an Old Wives’ Lake?!”

O Canada[§] (Arranged by Steve Denby) [1:15]

The Bison Men had already recorded this arrangement of *O Canada* when there came (out of nowhere) the suggestion that the words of our anthem needed to be changed *again!* Ultimately, there was no change in the words for our official national anthem, so we didn’t have to redo our recording. Although our national anthem is generally played at the beginning of major events, we think that it is appropriate that we close the circle on this project with the song which is ever in the minds and on the lips of all Canadians.



photo by Bob Talbot

Bison Men's Chorus



The Chorus - a brief history

The Bison Men's Chorus was formed in September of 1985 by **Prof. Larry Paterson** of the U of M Faculty of Education. The stated goal of the newly formed group was *"to foster University and community relations, heighten visibility of the University and provide expanded choral opportunities for university students, faculty and staff, and men of the community"*. The membership that year first numbered 26, mostly University staff and students (six of those original members still sing with the chorus). Over the years that number has grown to full roster of 54 with members coming from all walks of life, from all parts of Winnipeg. Larry Patterson served as director of the Chorus from the outset until his retirement in 1997. The Chorus' first accompanist was Jean Graham, wife of then and current chorister Lane Graham.

Not long after its inception the Chorus became officially affiliated with the U of M School of Music (now the Marcel A. Desautel Faculty of Music) as an Ensemble. This means (among other things) that music students can gain performance credits toward their degree by singing with the Bison Men for a season. The School/Faculty has provided invaluable support to the Chorus ever since.

In 1987 the Chorus initiated its first major fund-raising event. **A Feeste of Christmas** has become an annual tradition for the Chorus and its dedicated band of followers. Each year the Chorus hosts a medieval-style dinner complete with costumed choristers, entertainment, good food and a warm and family-like beginning to the Christmas season.

Over the years the Chorus has participated in a number of significant events. In 1988 the Chorus was a finalist in the **CBC National Radio Competition for Amateur Choirs** and in 1990 participated in the **Pacific International Festival of Male Choirs** in Vancouver, BC. as well as a joint concert with Winnipeg's renowned **Ron Paley Trio**.

1995 saw the Chorus travel to St. Paul, Minnesota to sing in the **Music Traditions - Associated Male Choruses of America Concert** with the 3M Male Chorus and the Unisys Chorus among other. That year also took the Chorus to Banff, Alberta to participate in the **Canadian Rocky Mountain Festival**.

With Larry Patterson's retirement in 1997 **Reno Gerl** took over the position of director. That same season saw **Cary Denby** appointed to the position of accompanist. Happily, she has been with us ever since. In 1998 the Chorus began what was to become a long-standing relationship with **Concert Choir of the University of Minnesota at Morris**. That year the Bison Men went to Morris, MN to sing with the Concert Choir. There have been at least 4 reciprocal visits between the two choirs in the years since.

In 1999 **Steve Denby** (yes, Cary's husband) was appointed director of the Chorus. Steve's high standards, great sense of fun, friendly cajoling and consummate professionalism has continued to challenge and motivate the members to ever-higher achievements. In Steve's 10 year (to date) tenure the Chorus has produced 3 CDs (He(a)rd in Manitoba, He(a)rd at Christmas and this CD) and, in addition to a regular seasonal performance schedule, has been involved in a number of fairly major projects. These include: **The Creation**, by Haydn with the University of Manitoba Symphony Orchestra, University of Manitoba Singers and the University Women's Choir; Mendelssohn's oratorio **Elijah** with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, University of Manitoba Alumni Choir, University of Manitoba Singers and the University Women's Choir; **Sister Cities Concert** with The Setagaya Citizen Chorus of Setagaya, Japan (Setagaya and Winnipeg are sister cities).

The 2008/2009 season saw a real milestone in the Chorus' history. That year the Chorus received an unusual and unexpected request. After a very brief discussion among the members it was decided that the gender of the male-range voice was irrelevant, so that season music student **Vanessa Unrau** joined the Chorus to lend her lovely voice to the (often too small) first tenor section.

With the 2009/2010 season being our 25th season the Chorus has collaborated with several other Winnipeg area male choirs to hold a symposium entitled **BROTHERS IN HARMONY, A Celebration of Male Voices in Winnipeg**. This weekend symposium will culminate with a gala concert featuring all six choirs and a massed choir performance of several pieces under the renowned choral conductor **Brainerd Blyden-Taylor** of the **Nathaniel Dett Chorale**. The participating choirs will be: the **Bison Men's Chorus**, the **Faith and Life Male Choir**, the **Golden Chordsmen Chorus**, the **Hoosli Ukrainian Male Chorus**, the **Winnipeg Boy's Choir** and the **Winnipeg Male Chorus**.

Steve Denby - Director

Steve has been teaching music in the public school system since graduating from the University of Manitoba in 1989. After teaching music for 12 years at École River Heights School, he moved to J. H. Bruns Collegiate where he continues to teach Choir, Band, Guitar, Jazz Band, Vocal Jazz, Jazz Guitar, Chamber Choir and Technical Music Production.

Steve is an alumnus of the University Singers under the direction of Henry Engbrecht, and has co-directed the Central Manitoba Youth Choir. He has served as a clinician for both the Vocal Jazz and Choral events at Choralfest.

Steve actively participates in less formal music-making, playing and singing with several different groups including an 80's rock group with his brother Chris, an eclectic acoustic/electric ensemble with friends and colleagues, singing with "The Riffs" (a five-voice male acapella group), and generally "jamming" with family and friends whenever the opportunity arises.

Cary Denby - Accompanist

The Bison Men's Chorus is proud to boast one of the very finest accompanists in Winnipeg. Cary's past projects include playing for chorus rehearsals, staging and performances with the Manitoba Opera, Rainbow Stage, and the Gilbert and Sullivan Society. She has also served as Music Director for two shows that have been produced by the company "Dry Cold." Her experience also includes organist duties at many churches throughout the city and serving as accompanist for numerous local choirs including the St. James Divisional Junior Concert Choir.

Cary is very involved with the Marcel A. Desautels Faculty of Music at the University of Manitoba accompanying the Women's Chorus, the Cantata Singers, the Musical Theatre Ensemble, Vocal Masterclasses and, of course, the Bison Men's Chorus.

Her musicality, vast musical experience and outstanding playing make her an invaluable member of our herd.

Comments Heard

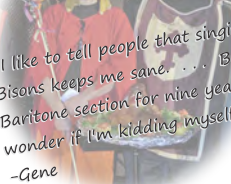
"The Bison Mens Chorus is, to me, the perfect blend of musicality, fellowship and laughter"

-Harvey



"... John Mundie always made a point of inviting his business students to join the chorus. It's been 17 years since I took John up on that invite and got hooked on the BMC. At the time I was probably just trying to ensure a passing grade in Administrative Policy."

-Rob



"I like to tell people that singing with The Bisons keeps me sane. . . . But singing in the Baritone section for nine years, I sometimes wonder if I'm kidding myself about my sanity."

-Gene

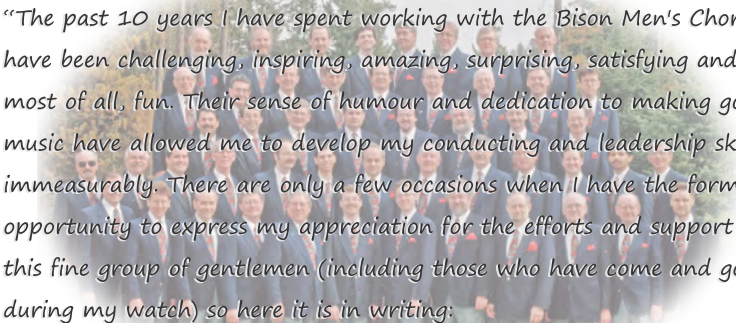


"... the Bison Men's Chorus has allowed me to practice one of my basic principles in life: take what you do, but not yourself, seriously"

-Keith T

"I was 19 years old when I first joined the Chorus. We sang Brown and Gold (the U of M "Fight Song") at my very first rehearsal. I remember the late Jim Goodman describing how he had sung it some 65 years earlier! More than 15 years later, I still enjoy the wonderful mix of people and music that make up the Bison Men's Chorus."

-Brian



"The past 10 years I have spent working with the Bison Men's Chorus have been challenging, inspiring, amazing, surprising, satisfying and most of all, fun. Their sense of humour and dedication to making good music have allowed me to develop my conducting and leadership skills immeasurably. There are only a few occasions when I have the formal opportunity to express my appreciation for the efforts and support of this fine group of gentlemen (including those who have come and gone during my watch) so here it is in writing:

Gentlemen, if life is a song, thank you for singing it with me."

- Steve

produced by: **Steve Denby**

recording engineer: **Grant Klassen**

graphic design & layout: **Paul Hope**

text & research: **John Mundie, Paul Hope, Steve Denby**

mastering: **Allen Hunnie Audio**

CD production & packaging: **Polar Bear Productions**

recording venues:

⌘ - recorded at First Presbyterian Church, Winnipeg, MB

§ - recorded at Eva Clare Hall, Marcel A. Desautel Faculty of Music, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB

◇ - previously released on "He(a)rd in Manitoba" (2000)

Herd on this recording

Phil Barnett
Victor Boudreau
Ken Cairnie
Keith Christie
David Cormie
Alvin Croll
Bill Diehl-Jones
Brian Doob
Rob Einarson
Peter Flynn
James Friel
Lane Graham *
Bill Guenter
Garry Hammerback
Gus Henne
Gord Henwood *
Paul Hope

Jim House
Ian Hughes
Tom Jones
Bill Kawka
Bob Kellow
Garry Krushel
Ian Livingstone
John Long *
John Madden *
Gary Martin
Daniel Martins
Patrick Mathews
Jack McDowell
Brock McEwen
John McKenzie
Derek McLean
John Mundie *

Henry Neufeld
Harvey Peltz
Rick Quinn
Tim Sale
Bill Smith
Peter Spencer *
Joe Stephanson
Harvey Stevens
Bob Stewart
John Tanner
Keith Tipples
Stirling Walkes
Gene Walz
Herman Yaeger
Jack Zonneveld

* founding member