

# Grand River Rainbow Historical Project

[www.grandriver-rainbowhistory.ca/](http://www.grandriver-rainbowhistory.ca/)

*celebrating the lives and times of rainbow folk in Grand River country*

## *Rainbow Chorus Events (1995- )*

**Publishing History:** Documents issued at irregular intervals by the **Rainbow Chorus** for its concerts, fundraisers, and other events.

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# Rainbow Chorus

Of Waterloo/Wellington County

Presents:



# Rainbows Remembered

## The

# 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

choral performance

Conducted by: **Robert Phillips**

Accompanied by: *Ann-Marie MacDairmid*

January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2000

Eight o' clock in the evening

## Some thoughts about Rainbow Chorus....

As a straight person, I joined the Rainbow Chorus after I heard them sing in their first performance at the AIDS Walk in May of 1995. I had enjoyed singing in various choirs all my life but subconsciously was yearning to sing songs and anthems from other than a religious origin.

Since then, being together to sing the poignant, triumphant, and 'campy' songs from the perspective of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered community has given me an opportunity to grow in my understanding of my sisters' and brothers' struggles for safety and freedom, their many sorrows and losses often leading to a rearranged sense of family, and finally, their outrageousness, rebellion, and mirth in the face of it all.

I have had so many experiences that I would not otherwise have sought - many ceremonies, memorials, services, and Pride Day events....

I attended a conference of Gay Choirs in Edmonton, which is one of the highlights of my life. The choral excellence of gay choirs across the country was truly astounding. We filled the city with freedom songs and laughter and there was dancing in the streets! I have even had the wonderful pleasure of singing with the Rainbow Chorus at my own wedding! I continue to be grateful for the inspiration and for the opportunity to be in solidarity with this community.

Joanne Coyle

this evening's performance



Solfeggio

Maxwell, Robert

Seasons of Love

Larsen, Jonathon

Asikhatali

African Medley

Siph Amandla

Ensemble:

Joanne Coyle, Sue Gadbois  
Cory Waechter, Jan Robertson  
Dave Vervoort, Wendell Martin  
Murray Jose, Robert Bojczko

Poetry Reading

Mia Anderson

Hymn to Freedom

Osear Peterson

Winter Song

Ginger Starling

Amazing Grace

Arr. Ron Smail  
Soloist: Jeff Madgett

Poetry Reading

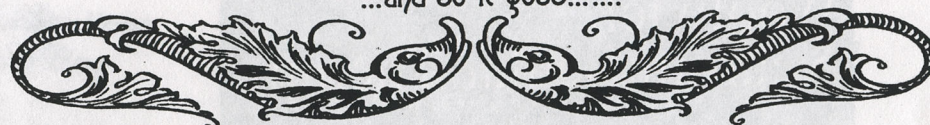
Mia Anderson

We Rise Again

Leon Dubinsky  
Soloist: Wendell Martin

Intermission

...and so it goes.....



Over the Rainbow

Harold Arlen

Flying Free

Don Besig

Set Down Servant

Arr. Robert Shar

Soloists  
Cory Waechter  
Murray Jose

Freedom is Coming

African Medley

We Shall Not Give Up

Ensemble

the Fight

Kim Bolton, Karen Partanen  
Cory Waechter  
Leslie Smith, Dave Vervoort  
Jeff Madgett

Hold On

Norman/Simon

Poetry Reading

Mia Anderson

Thoughts on Living a 'No

Trump Lifestyle'

Tom Settle

Get on Board

Spiritual

Please join us for refreshments

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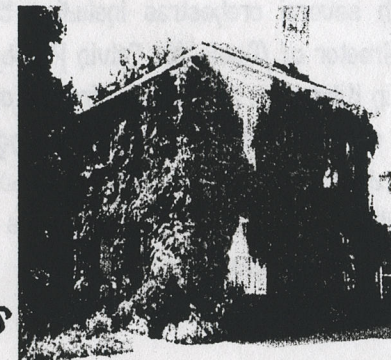


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# Supporting Our Community

## Robert Phillips - Music Director

Rob came to Ontario from Michigan in 1993. Prior to arriving in Canada, he served as Choir Director for churches in Virginia and Michigan. From 1985 thru 1990, he was the music director of the Schubert Male Chorus of Port Huron. A native of Boston Massachusetts, he has performed for several seasons with the Elora Singers and as Tenor Section lead for Te Deum in Hamilton until the spring of 1997. He has appeared as soloist with several orchestras including the International Symphony. Rob is the Director of Music for Calvin Presbyterian and The Children's Arts Program in Kitchener, as well as director of Camp 'Poco a Poco', a summer music camp for children. Commencing in September 1998, Rob assumed the duties of Music Director with both the Rainbow Chorus and the Coro Cultural Italiano di Guelph. He is continuing his musical studies at Wilfrid Laurier University.

## ANN-MARIE MACDAIRMID

ANN-MARIE MACDAIRMID has an honours B/Mus from Wilfrid Laurier University and a M/Mus from the University of Western Ontario. She is currently one of the staff at Music Plus in Kitchener. As well as playing for the Rainbow Chorus Ann-Marie accompanies the Grand River Chorus in Brantford, the vocal jazz group Cricket and directs the Shoreline Chorus in Owen Sound. On Sundays Ann-Marie plays at various churches most often at St. Andrew's Presbyterian in Kitchener. Ann-Marie also performs solo and chamber recitals throughout the year.

## Rainbow Chorus Members

### First soprano

Kim Bolton  
Joanne Coyle  
Sue Gadbois

### Second soprano

Beth Farley  
Shari Lynn Ladanehuk  
Birgit Niiggebaum-Purvis  
Karen Partanen

### First alto

Jan Robertson  
Cory Waechter

### Second alto

Carol Matsui  
Marg Perehaluk  
Pat Richards

### First tenor

Jan Baker  
Tom Stinson  
Dave Vervoort

### Second tenor

Robert Bojczko  
Wendell Martin

### Baritone

Murray Jose  
Leslie Smith

### Bass

Riek Beutler  
Dan Kelly  
Jeff Madgett  
Van Waffle

...one last thought...

When asked the standard interview question, "What accomplishment are you most proud of and why?", I think for a moment (seemingly an eternity of weighing risks and benefits) and answer: "Being one of the four founders and an ongoing member of the Rainbow Chorus."

This is, for me, what the Rainbow chorus is about: providing an opportunity through our music to support the GLBT and supportive communities and have an impact on the larger community. Over the years, the following experiences, lessons and circumstances are examples of why the Rainbow Chorus is so important to me and to our communities:

- α singing at vigils for the Montreal massacre and Matthew Shepard and seeing the effect these events had on each of the choir members no matter our gender or orientation
- α creating a venue that combines our love of making music (no matter our training or experience) with a safe and fun environment
- α performing wonderful music and seeing the impact that has on our larger communities
- α watching the ripple effect of our existence as children, family, co-workers (potential employees if they ask the right question) and friends learn about our choir and communities
- α learning from the diverse membership of the choir about inclusion, and supporting all of our sexuality issues.

I have learned and continue to learn a great deal through my membership with the Rainbow Chorus, and look forward to many more years of learning and singing.

Murray Jose

## Looking Back

In November 1994 four people collaborated to create a social activity that could represent our diverse community as well as provide a vehicle through which that diversity would be visible to our greater community. Murray Jose, Kevin Fallowfield – who has since passed away- Robert Bojeczko and Glen Pelshea agreed that a community choir might meet the requirements.

Through a choir of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Friends some of the perceived barriers about sexual diversity might be addressed in a safe and respectful manner through the universal language of music.

The foursome got to work and rehearsals began in January 1995 with perhaps a dozen participants at St. George's Anglican Church and Rob Gascho conducted the rehearsals. Murray Jose was given the role of founding chair. In February of 1995 rehearsals moved to the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. In the spring of 1995 the choir performed its first debut at the AIDS WALK for the AIDS Committee of Guelph and Wellington county. The choir also began the process of developing a mission statement and made application for non-profit status. A first draught of by-laws and a mission statement was completed in 1995.

A key aspect of the Rainbow Chorus is to participate in community events, such as: a vigil for the Montreal Massacre, Toronto and Kitchener Gay Pride Days and union (wedding) ceremonies. This past year Rainbow Chorus lent its voices for an AIDS Vigil for World AIDS day in Hamilton, and performed in a Christmas concert at the River Run Centre in Guelph with five other choirs. The Guelph Chamber Choir conducted by Gerald Neufeld organized the concert; we look forward to singing in next year's Christmas concert with them.

In the fall of 1995 a new director was found for the choir. John Tute, an established teacher and performer, led the choir to new heights. John conducted the first Christmas concert performed by the Rainbow Chorus at Chalmers United Church in Guelph where the choir executed challenging pieces such as "FANTASIA" by Vaughn Williams.

We are very pleased to have Robert Phillips on board as our new conductor. Rob was hired in the fall of 1998. This is his third concert at the helm with Rainbow Chorus. Robert is well connected in the music community, and has brought with him an inclusive and respectful disposition. We look forward to learning with Robert and also to the ongoing challenge of educating the broader community on issues of lifestyle diversity.

