Christmas Oratorio – Radiant Music Offered with Love and Passion

by David Ruhf

At a recent rehearsal, Greg Funfgeld asked the singers to characterize the joy that radiates through the movement “Ehre sei dir, Gott, gesungen,” (“Let honor to you, God, be sung”). Some answers included the following descriptors: ebullient, transcendent, effervescent, irresistible. Such is the rhythmic zest and compositional perfection of the movement that opens the fifth cantata of Bach’s mammoth Christmas Oratorio, BWV 248, that performers and listeners alike ride a wave of exultation.

Last December, we performed the first three cantatas of the Oratorio, to considerable acclaim, including this appreciation from New York’s Lucid Culture Blog, “An unselfconscious joy and optimism radiated from the stage to the crowd: neither ensemble nor audience were the least bit blasé.”

At this year’s Christmas Concerts, we’ll survey the final three cantatas, composed for the Feast of the Circumcision, the First Sunday in the New Year, and the Feast of the Epiphany. The concert begins with an opening chorus of exceptional elegance and irresistible charm as horns, oboes, and strings combine with the singers to offer homage to the infant redeemer. The Biblical lessons for the day include a passage from Luke’s Gospel that shares the narrative of the naming of Jesus, and Bach’s librettist responds with 16 mentions of Jesus’ name in an outpouring of praise and devotion. Where some of the other cantatas of the Oratorio seem cosmic in their orientation, the fourth cantata is quite intimate in scope, with beautiful arias (including the famous Echo Aria, which has the soprano soloist in whimsical dialogue with a counterpart in the choir) and a closing chorale that somehow bridges the regal and the pastoral.

Contrasting the stately praise of the fourth cantata, the fifth begins with the opening chorus I mentioned earlier, a swift-moving and zesty movement that seems inexorable in its rhythmic

Please turn to page 5

The Nightingale Comes to Life for Family Concert and Festival Performances

by Bridget George

This has been an exciting week for the emerging Nightingale, a new work for The Bach Choir, Bach Festival Orchestra and Mock Turtle Marionette Theatre, based on Hans Christian Andersen’s enchanting fairy tale. The world premiere will be at our Family Concert on February 26 in Baker Hall at Zoeller Arts Center with additional performances as part of the Festival Saturday morning concerts.

I attended part of a rehearsal at Bethlehem’s Ice House, home of Mock Turtle Marionette Theatre and for the first time met the cast and witnessed the brilliant way in which director Doug Roysdon works with his puppeteers/actors to help them find the character of each beautifully carved, costumed, and articulated puppet.

Then back at Heckewelder House, Greg Funfgeld was immersed in choosing the music... strains of different Bach themes filtering up through our staff offices from the parlor piano. Virtuoso recorder player Tricia Van Oers will embody the voice of the nightingale and has sent three beautiful “nightingale” selections to Greg – Engels Nachtegaal by Jacob van Eyck; Le Rossignol en Amour by Francois Couperin; and The Bird Fancier’s Delight. These selections capture the feel of the nightingale improvising and creating its charming song anew in every moment. This is perfect for the contrast between the living song of the little brown bird and the Emperor’s gold and ruby encrusted artificial nightingale, whose song never changes.

Please turn to page 5
FROM THE CONDUCTOR
AT OUR SECOND REHEARSAL of the new season, I took a few minutes to introduce our eleven talented new singing students. I wanted our "veterans" to get to know the "newbies" and help them feel welcome in our midst. In talking with The Choir — a group of people I dearly love — I encouraged them to look around the room and see the astonishing group of which they were a part. I felt compelled to say something like "our every- one is so lucky to have such wonderful, gifted friends and colleagues with whom to share such a rewarding commitment and mission". It's easy to take for granted the amazing people with whom we share life, love and joy, and sorrow, and the music that means so much to us.

I've been thinking about these people who so beautifully enrich our lives and who have made possible the successful completion of our Re-imagining the Bach Festival campaign. We set a goal of $1,000,000 to be raised in three years to help launch our new initiatives and fund them in perpetuity through gifts to our endowment. There was an outstanding show of support from many of you who love the Festival and after June "Finish with a Flourish" challenge gift from a generous board member, new gifts and pledges to the campaign enabled us to exceed the goal by more than $4,000 in just two years.

Through our fruitful Re-imagining discussions, we knew that the Festival and our wonderful orchestra and orchestra still resonated with our local and national community. We also understood the need to bring our success of our educational outreach programs into the Festival itself, including more youth involvement and interaction between and audience and artists. In addition, we sought funds to support our distinguished guest artists and lecturers, enhance audience services, and expand our national exposure.

Guarantors and music critics affirm the special quality of what we have here in Bethlehem and we thought you'd enjoy these comments from May 2016. Thank you again for your tremendous generosity. Greg Funfgeld, Bridget George, and the entire board and staff join me in looking forward to sharing our evolving plans for a vibrant future and greeting you at many of this season's concerts.

Harold G. Black, President

FROM THE PRESIDENT
FROM THE CONDUCTOR

Dear Friends:

FROM THE CONDUCTOR
From our Guarantors 2016

"The music of Bach has become firmly set in my DNA and becomes more so with the passage of time. I find it to be as much a spiritual/religious experience as a musical one."

"In May 1955, my grandmother took me to hear the Mass in B Minor. She was 91, I was 17. It was an experience that I shall never forget and treasure forever."

"I think you folks are doing a magnificent job extending the Choir's outreach in ways that I wouldn't even have thought of."

From the Huffington Post - California 2016

"The performance was one of integrity, movement, passion and weight. The effortless virtuosity and stylistic homogeneity of the combined forces in the chapel's stone sanctuary, allowed Bach's music to sing out with infectious, exhilarating enthusiasm...Bethlehem may no longer have Bethlehem Steel, but it has in the cultural fuel of its Bethlehem Bach Festival, a generous helping of GPS for the soul."

-Laurance Vittes

I recently saw a YouTube video of Glenn Gould and Leonard Bernstein collaborating in a performance of Bach's D-Minor Harpsichord Conzerte (Gould was, of course, playing a piano, and it was fascinating to see two musical geniuses making Bach's music in a style that is increasingly rare in our era of historically-informed performance. It's very different...it's hard not to feel that time we sing the Mass...we've met many wonderful people and said goodbye to so many more wonderful people while we've been here. Each time we sing the Mass — it's very different...it's hard not to feel that each time we perform it, it's an echo of the voices of everyone whose singing it before... And in that same video, Dr. Wendy Gillespie from Indiana University (Bloomington) says "Having heard the B Minor Mass yesterday, I said to someone, 'I think the world is headed in the right direction...' it's been an amazing thing to get a little glimpse of this society — it's an incredible thing...absolutely incredible." I learned that yesterday, a wonderful friend of The Choir, Cassard Kaseymere entered eternal life at the age of 102. His 100th birthday was on a Monday night and, using my cell phone, The Choir sang a rousing version of "Happy Birthday to You" for him — our old Guarantor! I'm very proud to have enrolled our new granddaughter, Eleanor Ann Davis as our youngest Guarantor — to have her become part of such a family fills Nan and me with pride and joy!

You — our dear Guarantors and audience members; the incredibly committed members of our Bach Choir and The Bach Festival Orchestra; our brilliant soloists; the devoted members of our Board of Managers and The Bach Choir Staff; the children who come to meet Bach for the first time at our School concerts; the thousands who attend Bach at home; and the amazing young artists who inspire us at Zimmerman's Coffee House — each of you, and so many others, are part of something wonderful, venerable, of eternal value, cherished by Heidi New and Neil-Dominic Chaban. We were both most impressed with the quality of the students and the way our national as well as local audience will have a chance to hear Bel Canto, our Children's Chorus, perform in April and May. If you are in town, I also encourage you to attend Bel Canto's Winter Concert, which every season is the beginning of the wonderful year-round partnership is flourishing as Bel Canto begins its first season based in Bethlehem.

Wendy Lega is the new Bel Canto administrator (see Board and Staff News page 6) and she and assistant director Joy Hinokawa are both delighted that the number of new singers auditioning this season tripled compared with 2015-16 and the number accepted and registered doubled. So in spite of losing some members in the far south of Bel Canto's geographic range we have an expanded chorus — 27 choristers in the Concert Choir and 16 in the Prep/Intermediate choir directed by Heidi New and Neil-Dominic Chaban.

In August, Greg Funfgeld and I stopped by the Bel Canto Summer Camp, which every season is the beginning of the wonderful year-long teaching relationship between Dr. Hinokawa and her choristers. We were both impressed with the quality of the students and their singing. This season Greg has involved Bel Canto not only in our March 26 Spring Concert, as described by David Ruhl in his article above, but also in both Saturday morning concerts at the May Festival. So our national as well as local audience will have a chance to hear Bel Canto's fine young singers perform with the Bach Festival Orchestra. If you are in town, I also encourage you to attend Bel Canto's Winter Concert at the Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts featuring Benjamin Britten's Missa Brevis and their Spring surveys of Mahler's Second Symphony, the Bernstein, come to mind). Both Bach and Bernstein end their respective masses with poignant pleas for peace, as timely in 1740s Germany or 1971 in the midst of widespread turmoil as they are today. Greg Funfgeld is pairing the Bernstein work with Bach's colossus, the Mass in B Minor. Our February 22, which is, in the strictures of the choral motet form, an exceptionally kaleidoscope exploration of color, textures, and expression.

Since Bernstein's Mass calls for a children's choir, we're delighted to be celebrating our burgeoning partnership with the Bel Canto Children's Chorus of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem, by featuring the young singers in both the Bernstein, and, since Bach was no stranger to young voices (as the renowned choir trainer of the Tempechoer, or the boys choir at St. Thomas), in the motet, as well. They'll join the ensemble for the larger movements, and they'll also offer a treble-only movement by themselves. Those who saw our 2012 performances of Britten's St. Nicolas, have our Children's Christmas in Bethlehem recording, or attended last year's Family Know that Bel Canto is an excellent ensemble, full of polish and poise, and we're thrilled to mark a new and fruitful degree of collaboration in what promises to be a beautiful and moving Spring Concert.

Bach Canto Children's Chorus 2016–17 Season

A Flourishing Affiliation with The Bach Choir

The launching of the bach choir's affiliation with the bel canto children's chorus last january produced much enthusiastic response from the Lehigh valley community and beyond. This exciting partnership is flourishing as Bel Canto begins its first season based in Bethlehem.

David Ruhl, President

Concert on May 6 featuring samplings from Bach, Britten and works from the British Isles.

The Bach Choir is very excited about all the opportunities Bel Canto is bringing to its young choristers and for the many ways this program expands The Bach Choir’s impact on the next generation of choral singers. For a full description of Bel Canto’s 2016–17 activities, go to belcantochildrens.com.
FROM THE PRESIDENT

looking forward to sharing our evolving plans for a vibrant future and from 2016. Thank you again for your tremendous generosity. Greg

audience services, and expand our national exposure.

funds to support our distinguished guest artists and lecturers, enhance

programs into the Festival itself, including more youth involvement

and orchestra still resonated with our local and national community. We

exceed the goal by more than $4,000 in just two years.

the June “Finish with a Flourish” challenge gift from a generous

AT OUR SECOND REHEARSAL of the new season, I took a few minutes to introduce our eleven

talented new singers. Last time, I wanted our “veterans” to get to know the “newbies” and help

them feel welcome in our midst. In talking with The Choir – a group of people I dearly love – I

encouraged them to look around the room and see the astonishing group of which they were a part.

But now they are something like “our every-

tone is so busy to have such wonderful, gifted friends and colleagues with whom to share such a rewarding commitment and mission! It’s

ty to take for granted the amazing people with whom we share life and love, joy and sorrow, and the music that means so much to us.

I’ve been thinking about these people who so beautifully enrich our lives and how very blessed we are by the associations we have with the
ever-expanding group we lovingly refer to as our “Bach Choir Family.” Each of the dancers from TAYLOR 2 shared greetings in a card we received after the 2016 Festival. “Thank you so much for having us perform in the Bach Festival – it was such a treasure to perform with such amazing musicians and warm audiences! It’s a performance I won’t forget!” Anisa George’s beautiful video of the

May Festival captures a lovely interaction between Daniel Taylor and Benjamin Butterfield – this Festival has seen us through many changes in our lives...we’ve met many wonderful people and said goodbye to many wonderful people while we’ve been here...Each time we sing the Mass – it’s very different...it’s hard not to feel that each time we perform it, it’s an echo of the voices of everyone whose

sung it before...” And in that same video, Dr. Wendy Gillispie from Indiana University (Bloomington) says “Having heard the B Minor Mass yesterday, I said to someone, “I think the world is headed in the right direction...it’s been an amazing thing to get a little glimpse of this society – it’s an incredible thing...absolutely incredible.” I learned that yesterday, a wonderful friend of The Choir, Cassard Kasemeyer entered eternal life at the age of 192. His 100th birthday was on a Monday night and, using my cell phone, The Choir sang a rousing version of “Happy Birthday to You” for him – our old Guarantor! I’m very proud to have enrolled our new grandchild, Eleanor Ann Davis as our youngest Guarantor – to have her become part of such a family fills Nanci and me with pride and joy!

You – our dear Guarantors and audience members; the incred-

ibly committed members of our Bach Choir and Bach Festival Orchestra; our brilliant soloists, the devoted members of our Board of Managers and The Bach Choir Staff; the children who come to meet Bach for the first time at our School concerts; the thousands who attend Bach-at-Noon, and the amazing young artists who inspire us at Zimmermann’s Coffee House – each of you, and so many others, are part of something wonderful, venerable, of eternal value, cherished through more than a century of life! Thank you...and bless you. see you soon!

Yours ever, Greg Funfgeld, Artistic Director and Conductor

FROM THE CONDUCTOR

THE LAUNCHING OF THE BACH CHOIR’S AFFILIATION with the Bel Canto Children’s Chorus last January produced much enthusiastic response from the Lehigh Valley community and beyond. This exciting partnership is flourishing as Bel Canto begins its first season based in Bethlehem.

Wendy Lega is the new Bel Canto administrator (see Board and Staff News Page 6) and she and artistic director Joy Hirsakowa are both delighted that the number of new singers auditioning this season tripled compared with 2015-16 and the number accepted and registered doubled. So in spite of losing some members in the far south of Bel Canto’s geographic range we have an expanded chorus – 27 choristers in the Concert Choir and 16 in the Prep/Intermediate choir directed by Heidi New and Neil-Dominic Chalan. In August, Greg Funfgeld and I stopped by the Bel Canto Summer Camp, which every season is the beginning of the wonderful year-

tlong relationship between Dr. Hirsaka and her choristers. We were both most impressed with the quality of the students and their singing. This season Greg has involved Bel Canto not only in our March 26 Spring Concert, as described by David Ruhl in his article above, but in both Saturday morning concerts at the May Festival. So our national as well as local audience will have a chance to hear Bel Canto’s fine young singers perform with the Bach Festival Orchestra. If you are in town, I also encourage you to attend Bel Canto’s Winter Concert at the Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts featuring Benjamin Britten’s Missa Brevis and their Spring

Concert on May 6 featuring samplings from Bach, Britten and works from the British Isles.

The Bach Choir is very excited about all the opportunities Bel Canto is bringing to its young choristers and for the many ways this program expands The Bach Choir’s impact on the next generation of choral singers. For a full description of Bel Canto’s 2016-17 activities, go to belcantochildrens.com.

Barbara K. Black, President

AROUND THE CONDUCTOR

FROM THE PRESIDENT

from the Huffington Post – california 2016

“The performance was one of integrity, movement, passion and weight. The effortless virtuosity and stylistic homogeneity of the combined forces in the chapel’s stone sanctuary, allowed Bach’s music to sing out with infectious, exhilarating enthusiasm...Bethlehem may no longer have Bethlehem Steel, but it has in the cultural fuel of its Bethlehem Bach Festival, a generous helping of GPS for the soul.

– Laurence Vittes

THE LAUNCHING OF THE BACH CHOIR’S AFFILIATION with the Bel Canto Children’s Chorus last January produced much enthusiastic response from the Lehigh Valley community and beyond. This exciting partnership is flourishing as Bel Canto begins its first season based in Bethlehem.

Wendy Lega is the new Bel Canto administrator (see Board and Staff News Page 6) and she and artistic director Joy Hirsakowa are both delighted that the number of new singers auditioning this season tripled compared with 2015-16 and the number accepted and registered doubled. So in spite of losing some members in the far south of Bel Canto’s geographic range we have an expanded chorus – 27 choristers in the Concert Choir and 16 in the Prep/Intermediate choir directed by Heidi New and Neil-Dominic Chalan. In August, Greg Funfgeld and I stopped by the Bel Canto Summer Camp, which every season is the beginning of the wonderful year-long relationship between Dr. Hirsaka and her choristers. We were both most impressed with the quality of the students and their singing. This season Greg has involved Bel Canto not only in our March 26 Spring Concert, as described by David Ruhl in his article above, but in both Saturday morning concerts at the May Festival. So our national as well as local audience will have a chance to hear Bel Canto’s fine young singers perform with the Bach Festival Orchestra. If you are in town, I also encourage you to attend Bel Canto’s Winter Concert at the Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts featuring Benjamin Britten’s Missa Brevis and their Spring

Concert on May 6 featuring samplings from Bach, Britten and works from the British Isles.

The Bach Choir is very excited about all the opportunities Bel Canto is bringing to its young choristers and for the many ways this program expands The Bach Choir’s impact on the next generation of choral singers. For a full description of Bel Canto’s 2016-17 activities, go to belcantochildrens.com.
The Nightingale cont.

For more than forty years, the American Bach Society has promoted the study and performance of Johann Sebastian Bach’s music. In 2000, in collaboration with The Bach Choir, the Society established a biennial competition to recognize and award excellence in vocal performance. The competition takes place at the Bach Festival, where finalists perform before a panel of judges, competing for prises of more than $3,000. In addition to the monetary prize, first place winners are given the opportunity for a solo performance with The Bach Choir and Greg Funfgeld. The judges may also choose to give cash prizes of $500 each.

The Bach Choir continues to welcome many of these singers to performances. Past winners include Dushan Buntin, bass-baritone and founding member of Barongail of Tehran, who will perform at this year’s Gala concert. Laura Atkinson, mezzo-soprano, and winner of the award in 2012, performs with The Choir in our upcoming Christmas Oratorio, Parts 4, 5, and 6. Laura has also been awarded a prestigious Fulbright Grant, which led to a year of study at the Mendelssohn Conservatory of Music in Leipzig, Germany.

We’re delighted to feature her in our performances regularly.

At this year’s competition, first prize winners were soprano Nola Richardson, and Christopher Edwards, baritone. We anticipate both these young performers will enjoy long and successful careers, sharing their talent around the world.

Praised by both the New York Times and the Washington Post, Nola made her major symphony debut with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Additional recent performances include Aïsia and Galatoo with the American Bach Solists, Bach’s Magnusfest and Cantata 51 with The Baltimore Choral Arts, and Mass in B Minor with Bach in Baltimore.

Christopher Edwards is studying under William Sharp at the Peabody Institute. He has performed with the Charleston Symphony and will perform the title role in Le Nozze di Figaro and Pippagno in The Magic Flute at Peabody Opera Outreach this season.

Reflecting on the competition, Christopher terms it “an extremely positive experience.” While he recognizes the musical challenges, he appreciates the “vote of confidence and encouragement” the award represents. “Bach is daunting for singers (it certainly is for me) and I know I will never learn all there is to learn about singing Bach, but I feel enlightened in the knowledge that I have something to offer in the transmission of this unparalleled music.”

The next competition is in 2018! We look forward to meeting the impressive and gifted singers who will share their gifts with us.
FOR MORE THAN FORTY YEARS, the American Bach Society has promoted the study and performance of Johann Sebastian Bach’s music. In 2000, in collaboration with The Bach Choir, the Society established a biennial competition to recognize and award excellence in vocal performance. The competition takes place at the Bach Festival, where finalists perform before a panel of judges, competing for prizes of more than $3,000.

In addition to the monetary prize, first place winners are given the opportunity for a solo performance with The Bach Choir and Greg Funfgeld. The judges may also choose to give cash awards of $500 each.

The Bach Choir continues to welcome many of these singers to performances. Past winners include Dashon Burton, bass-baritone and founding member of Bangs of Teufel, who will perform at this year’s Gala concert. Laura Atkinson, mezzo-soprano, and winner of the award in 2012, performs with The Choir in our upcoming Christmas Oratorio, Parts 4, 5 and 6. Laura has also been awarded a prestigious Fullbright Grant, which led to a year of study at the Mendelssohn Conservatory of Music in Leipzig, Germany.

We’re delighted to feature her in our performances regularly. At this year’s competition, first prize winners were soprano Nola Richardson, and Christopher Edwards, baritone. We anticipate both these young performers will enjoy long and successful careers, sharing their talent around the world.

Praised by the New York Times and the Washington Post, Nola made her major symphony debut with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Additional recent performances include Acis and Galatea with the American Bach Solists, Bach’s Magnificat and Cantata 51 with The Baltimore Choral Arts, and Mass in B Minor with Bach in Baltimore.

Christopher Edwards is studying under William Sharp at the Peabody Institute. He has performed with the Charleston Symphony and will perform the title role in Le Nozze di Figaro and Papageno in The Magic Flute at Peabody Opera Outreach this season.

Reflecting on the competition, Christopher terms it “an entirely positive experience.” While he recognizes the musical challenges, he appreciates the “vote of confidence and encouragement” the award represents. “Bach is daunting for singers (it certainly is for me) and I know I will never learn all there is to learn about singing Bach, but I feel emboldened in the knowledge that I have something to offer in the transmission of this unparalleled music.”

The next competition is in 2018! We look forward to meeting the impressive and gifted performers who will share their gifts with us.

The Nightingale cont.

As for Bach – Hans Christian Anderson’s original tale is set in Japan but this version set in 17th century Germany is a perfect vehicle for a transcendent choral and instrumental music to contribute to the central theme of story. What unfolds is a triumph of the spirit as the real nightingale lifts sickness and death from the heart of the Emperor through its loyality and the beauty of its song. The first collaboration between The Bach Choir and Mock Turtle Marionette Theatre is particularly thrilling for me because I have worked with Doug Roysdon many times in my pre-Bach theatre life and know the power of his inventive mind and craftsmanship. I remember seeing a marionette performance of his “Nightingale” back in 1985 written for tiny marionettes. Now Doug is working with a much larger ensemble and a talented orchestra perfectly – each about 4ft high with arms, legs, feet, and mouths articulated by the actors as they participate in the amazing dance of the story’s characters. The actors all talked about how fun and challenging it is to work with puppets. Jannal Joseph compared it to having an air in a video game except this is hands-on and you literally displace your emotions into the inanimate object, giving it life.

The narrative has also evolved. Castmember Anna Russell, who worked with Doug on editing and expanding the script for this performance with live choir and orchestra, talks about how “The Nightingale” is a metaphorical story exploring the relationship between life and death. The taunting, silly ghosts and the false beauty of the artificial bird are Death’s children but the character of Death itself is treated with dignity – neither good nor bad – but rather a stoic look on the power of the force of life and expressing it with the power of music.

Tickets for The Nightingale make a wonderful holiday gift for your friends and family of all ages so call now 610-866-4382 Ext. 115 or purchase on-line BACH.org.

Sunday February 26, 3pm at Baker Hall, Zeller Arts Center.
Greg Funfgeld – The Bach Choir’s first full-time artistic director and conductor

The board of managers, led by President Hal Black, approved the milestone decision to offer Greg full-time employment at its June board meeting, in anticipation of his retirement from First Presbyterian Church in August, 2016. Greg is now able to devote additional attention to The Bach Choir as warranted by the tremendous expansion of Bach Choir programming under his tenure. Now in his 31st season, he has expanded the programs of The Bach Choir beyond the actual Bach Choir in order to provide opportunities for the audience of over 20,000. We look forward to the continued growth of The Choir’s artistic excellence, educational outreach, community engagement, and national recognition under his consummate direction.

Jack Payne joins the board of managers.

We are very pleased to welcome Jack Payne to our Board of Managers. Jack is currently Senior Vice President of Finance & Operations at Ambassador Financial Group. Previously he spent 15 years as Chief Investment Officer for JoycePayne Partners with offices in Bethlehem, PA and Richmond, VA. Jack also spent nearly a decade with Air Products & Chemicals in Allentown, PA., serving in a variety of corporate finance functions ending with the title of Financial Risk Manager. Jack holds a BS in Finance from the Pennsylvania State University and an MBA from the University of Rochester. Away from the office, Jack enjoys golf, swimming, volleyball and being involved with music. He serves as Treasurer and Board of Director member for Youth Education in the Arts, an Allentown, PA. Jack is an active trumpet and mellomophone player who marched with the West Chester University Blue Band and Cadets during his college career. Jack especially cherishes his time with his wife Kelly and their sons Jack and Kelly enjoying Bach Choir events.

New Staff join the administrative team at Heckeredeker House

Many of you know that in June, we said fairwell to our Executive Director, and Ronnie Lindsey, accounting manager, after many years of excellent service. The Bach Choir is grateful for all that you contributed to advancing The Choir’s mission and are pleased to welcome two new wonderful staff members, Renée James and David Strain, in the newly structured positions of Marketing and Finance & Administration. We also give a warm welcome to Wendy Lega, the new administrator of the Bel Canto Children’s Chorus of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem.

Choir of Bethlehem.

Bel Canto Children’s Chorus of The Bach Choir has welcomed two new staff members, Renee James and David Strain, in the newly structured positions of Marketing and Finance & Administration. We also give a warm welcome to Wendy Lega, the new administrator of the Bel Canto Children’s Chorus of The Bach Choir.

Wendy Lega, Bel Canto administrator, has served as a volunteer, board member, and Parent Auxiliary Chair for The Bel Canto Children’s Chorus for over ten years. She spent the majority of her professional career at Sun Microsystems, Inc., an innovative computer manufacturer and software company. She was responsible for evangelizing and selling Sun’s groundbreaking, Internet enabling technologies: As a Sales Technology Manager, and subsequently the Northeast Area Technology Manager, she impacted approximately $1 billion in sales per year throughout the Northeastern United States. Wendy enjoyed her time with the Bel Canto Children’s Chorus, a position that allowed her to work with children. Wendy has served as a Vesty member at Trinity Episcopal Church, Bethlehem, led the Stratford Festival, and the Sun Valley Choral Festival. She is currently a member of the Sun Valley Choral Festival’s Leadership Council.

Reneé James, marketing director, comes from a senior level marketing position at Rodale Press, where she worked for 27 years. She offers many years of experience in strategizing and executing marketing programs both for Rodale and the many Fortune 500 clients she has managed over the years. She has a BA in English/Communications from Moravian College and her columns have been published in the Morning Call, Philadelphia Inquirer, Baltimore Sun, and Chicago Tribune. Her personal life has included supporting and “giving back” to many non-profit organizations. She is currently on the Board of the State Theatre in Easton and has chaired the Freddy Awards Committee. She also recently concluded a nine-year term as a member of the Forum for Ethics in the Workplace at DeSalesUniversity. Classical music has been and remains an integral part of Renee’s life. She is an instrumentalist and pianist, and performed with ensembles while a student at Moravian College. Her three sons have all been vocalists in District and Regional Choruses and her oldest student classical voice at Boyer College of Music, Temple University and earned his MA in vocal performance and pedagogy from Steinhardt School at New York University.

David Strain, finance & business manager, comes to us from Lake’s Hospital where he had worked as a Financial Analyst in the Finance Department since 2008. He has a B.S. in Management Science from Lehigh University and a B.A. in Business from City College and an Associate’s Degree in Accounting from DeSales University. Prior to St. Lukes, he worked in the Membership Department of the National Association of Colleges and Employers, Bethlehem Pa (2006–2008) and in the Finance and Editorial Departments of the Express Times, Easton PA (1992-2006). He was the business manager of the Bethlehem Area Chamber of Commerce from 1995–1998 under President Bob Epstein, and is the son of former Executive Director of the Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce, Richard Strain. David is passionate about all kinds of music and has worked in a variety of challenging fundraising positions, retiring from the New Jersey Department of Health in 2008. Tom practiced law in northern and central New Jersey.

Newly elected are: Tom and Judy Hall.

Tom and Judy Hall met while they were students at The University of Arizona in the early 1960s. They could not have known that half a century later they’d be returning to the University of Arizona for the opportunity to enjoy the musical life of the Bach Choir of Bethlehem and become Guarantees and strong supporters of the arts in the region. Tom went to Rutgers University after graduation from Arizona, and stayed to earn a Ph.D and a law degree. After giving birth to four children, Judy returned to college, got her BSN at Trenton State and her MSN at Rutgers-Newark and worked in a variety of challenging nursing positions, retiring from the New Jersey Department of Health as an ending with the title of Financial Risk Management roles and rolled out major contributions to the territory’s annual strategic planning and budgeting process while overseeing Sun’s groundbreaking, Internet enabling technologies: As a Sales Technology Manager, and subsequently the Northeast Area Technology Manager, she impacted approximately $1 billion in sales per year throughout the Northeastern United States. Wendy enjoyed her time with the Bel Canto Children’s Chorus, a position that allowed her to work with children. Wendy has served as a Vesty member at Trinity Episcopal Church, Bethlehem, led the Stratford Festival, and the Sun Valley Choral Festival. She is currently a member of the Sun Valley Choral Festival’s Leadership Council.

Fond Farewell to Our Oldest Guarantor and Warm Welcome to Our Youngest by Bridget George

Charles Cassard Karsenemey (1924-2016), who at the age of 102 was The Bach Choir’s oldest Guarantor, died on October 4, 2016. His family fondly remembers his faithful presence at the Festival for decades with his beloved wife Marjorie and daughter Bobbi. “We also remember Cassard’s surprise and enjoyment when The Choir sang Happy Birthday to him over the phone for his 100th birthday. Cassard also regularly attended Bach at Noon at Central Moravian Church, of which he was a devoted member. It was lovely to see Bobbi and sister Polly in attendance on October 13 for Cantata 100 that ends with the image of God holding the wayfarer upon “the rugged path” of this life “like a father in his arms.” Cassard came to Bethlehem as a student of industrial engineering at Lehigh University (class of 1945). He was hired by Charles H. Fuller Company in Cataasqua in 1935 and worked for the company until his retirement. His children Bobbi and Marjorie write beautifully in his obituary: “From his father Cassard inherited a sense of adventure and mechanical ability and from his mother a family fondly remembering nature. From both he inherited courtesy, honesty, and a lack of pretension. His writing ability and quiet humor were all his own; his wider sense of fun came from Marjorie.” Some of us have treasured memories of our last visits with Cassard – his mind sharp, wit brilliant and fun, and spirit luminous to the end. How lovely that in his last days, he got to meet his 11th great-grandchild for the first time. While they loved the mountains, lakes and people of Northeastern Pennsylvania, they were worried about leaving the cultural treasures of New York and Philadelphia. That was one need-less concern! Judy puts it this way: “With the Northeast Pennsylvania Philharmonic, The Bach Choir, and the many community theater and chamber groups in the region, we have a wonderful opportunity to enjoy the performing arts nearly every week.” With their children spread throughout the world, the Halls enjoy a lot of travel. Tom described one trip through the Bahamas region which featured splendid concerts every night for two weeks as “a smorgasbord of creativity!” The Halls thank long-time Bach Choir Guarantor Peggy Fulmer for introducing them to The Choir, and reinforcing the need to support the arts, not only by coming to performances but also financially. “The days of our backs support-ing the arts are long gone,” said Tom, “and governmental support for the arts – which we regard as essential for a complete life – is a small fraction of what is needed.” Judy noted, “If we don’t support the arts, our lives are poorer – and the chances for our children and grandchildren to hear this music are diminished.”

Eleanor Ann Davis, our youngest Guarantor, came to The Choir in 1989, with her parents, grandparents Greg and Nanci Funfgeld. Eleanor was raised in Michigan. She joined the Choir in December of 2016. In July 12, in Cheney Chase, Maryland, the joy and blessing of Eleanor’s life was celebrated with a special gift from Rosa Lamouroux. One month after the birth, she sang Leonhard Bernstein’s Greeting during the fifth annual Bach Choir musical salon at the Hermann J. Wiener Vineyard in the Finger Lakes:

When a boy is born, the world is born again, and takes its first breath with him. When a girl is born, the world stops turning round, and keeps a moment’s hushed wonder. Every time a child is born, for the space of that brief instant, the world is pure.
Greg Funfgeld – The Bach Choir’s first full-time artistic director and conductor
The board of managers, led by President Hal Black, approved the milestone decision to offer Greg full-time employment at his June board meeting, in anticipation of his contract signing at the Bach Choir’s annual meeting in Church in August, 2016. Greg is now able to devote additional attention to The Bach Choir as warranted by the tremendous expansion of Bach Choir programming under his tenure. Now in his 31st season, he has expanded the programs of The Bach Choir beyond the traditional Bach Choral Festival season of 31 concerts and educational programs for an audience of more than 20,000. We look forward to the continued growth of The Choir’s artistic excellence, educational outreach, community engagement, and national recognition under his consummate direction.

Jack Payne joins the board of managers.
We are pleased to welcome Jack Payne to our Board of Managers. Jack is currently Senior Vice President of Finance & Operations at Ambassador Financial Group. Previously he spent 15 years as Chief Investment Officer for JoycePayne Partners with offices in Bethlehem, PA and Richmond, VA. Jack also spent nearly a decade with Air Products & Chemicals in Allentown, PA, serving in a variety of corporate finance functions ending with the title of Financial Risk Manager. Jack holds a BS in Finance from the Pennsylvania State University and an MBA from the University of Rochester. Away from the office, Jack enjoys golf, swimming, skating, volleyball and being involved with music. He serves as Treasurer and Board of Director member for Youth Education in the Arts, an Allentown, PA. Jack is an active trumpet and mellophone player who matched with the Bach Choir on The Bach Choir’s Blue Band Cadets during his college career. Jack especially cherishes his time with his wife Kelly and their three sons Jack and Kelly enjoying attending Bach Choir events.

New Staff join the administrative team at Heckewelder House
Many of you know that in June, we said farewell to Tim Breen, deputy executive director, and Bonnie Lindsey, accounting manager, after many years of excellent and devoted service to The Bach Choir. We are tremendously grateful for all they contributed to advancing the mission and administration of The Bach Choir. We are proud to welcome two wonderful new staff members, Reneé James and David Strain, in the newly structured positions of Marketing Director, Development Director, and Finance & Business manager. We also give a warm welcome to Wendy Lega, the new administrator of the Bel Canto Children’s Chorus of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem.

Board & Staff News

Meet Tom and Judy Hall
Guarantor Spotlight by Cheryl Dungan
Meet Tom and Judy Hall
Tom and Judy Hall met while they were students at The University of Arizona in the early 1960s. They could not have known then that half a century later they’d be retiring. They were offered the opportunity to purchase the Bach Choir’s 114-year-old Heckewelder House in downtown Bethlehem at a time when The Choir was experiencing tremendous growth. Tom and Judy love the home’s historic charm and wanted to let the building continue to be used by the community.

Eleanor Ann Davis, our youngest Guarantor, celebrated her 90th birthday with her grandparents Greg and Nanci Funfgeld, Eleanor Ann’s great-grandfather, Bruce, and husband Michael (Clay) Davis on July 12, 2016 in Cherry Chase, Maryland. The joy and blessing of Eleanor’s birthday was enhanced with a special gift from Rosa Lannumos. One month after the birth, she sang Leonard Bernstein’s Greeting with the world on the phone for his 100th birthday.

Wendy Lega, Bel Canto administrator, has served as a volunteer, board member, and Parent Auxiliary Chair for The Bel Canto Children’s Chorus for over ten years. She spent the majority of her professional career at Sun Microsystems, Inc., an innovative computer manufacturer and software company. She was responsible for evangelizing and selling Sun’s groundbreaking, internet enabling technologies: As a Sales Technology, and subsequently the Northeast Area Technology Manager, she impacted approximately $1 billion in sales per year by building customer and channel relationships with customers and partners, and developing the go-to-market strategies. She is a graduate of the University of Arizona in Speech and Language Pathology and has worked in the field of speech pathology for 28 years. She is married to Mark and has two children, Michael and Kelly. Wendy and Mark reside in central New Jersey.

Guarantor Spotlight
Charles Cassard Kaseymerey (1914–2016)
who at the age of 102 was The Bach Choir’s oldest Guarantor, died on October 4, 2016. His beautiful family song, sung with his wife Marjorie and daughter Bobbi, “We also remember Cassard’s surprise and enjoyment when The Choir sang Happy Birthday to him over the phone for his 100th birthday. Cassard also regularly attended Bach at Noon at Central Moravian Church, of which he was a devoted member. It was lovely to see Bobbi and sister Polly in attendance on October 13 for Cantata 100 with its image of God holding the wayfarer upon “the rugged path” of this life “like a father in his arms.”

Marjorie and daughter Bobbi. We also remember his faithful presence at the Festival for decades with his beloved wife Marjorie and daughter Bobbi. “We also remember Cassard’s surprise and enjoyment when The Choir sang Happy Birthday to him over the phone for his 100th birthday. Cassard also regularly attended Bach at Noon at Central Moravian Church, of which he was a devoted member. It was lovely to

Pass the Guarantor tradition on to the next generation!
Do you have a child or grandchild to whom you would like to give the gift of Associate Guarantor membership? Many of our sustaining members first joined us through a gift from parents or grandparents, who sponsored their membership. Associate level membership (pledge of $50–124 a year) is reserved for young people up to age 25. Contact us to help set up your gift of membership.
Give a Gift of Music from The Bach Choir this Holiday Season!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># Ordered</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Ascension Oratorio CD</td>
<td>@ $17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Child's Christmas in Bethlehem CD</td>
<td>@ $17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas in Leipzig CD</td>
<td>@ $17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Christmas Oratorio Featured at our 2016 Christmas Concerts! CD</td>
<td>@ $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set of Child’s Christmas and Christmas in Bethlehem, Vol. 2, 3, &amp; 4 CD</td>
<td>@ $40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas in Bethlehem, Vol. 2 CD</td>
<td>@ $15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas in Bethlehem, Vol. 3 CD</td>
<td>@ $15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas in Bethlehem, Vol. 4 CD</td>
<td>@ $15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnificat &amp; Gloria CD</td>
<td>@ $17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass in B Minor CD</td>
<td>@ $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songs of Hope CD</td>
<td>@ $17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint John Passion CD</td>
<td>@ $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wachet Auf! CD</td>
<td>@ $17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># Ordered</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dear Mr. Funfgeld Book</td>
<td>@ $50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleece Jacket Navy blue featuring The Bach Choir logo</td>
<td>@ $60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Bach Comes to Call Great to pair with a coloring book! DVD</td>
<td>@ $25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloring Book Perfect for your young family and friends!</td>
<td>@ $3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5-inch Round Magnet Perfect for the car or refrigerator!</td>
<td>@ $5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set of 9 Notecards Featuring images from Bach Festivals</td>
<td>@ $8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notepad An ideal stocking stuffer!</td>
<td>@ $1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton Tote bag</td>
<td>@ $10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipping &amp; Handling $5.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Enclosed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For a complete list of merchandise, or to order individual items, please visit BACH.org or call the Bach Office at 610.866.4382 ext. 110.

Place Your Order Today!

Name ______________________________
Address ______________________________
City ____________________ State Zip ________
Telephone ______________________________
Email ______________________________

To charge your order, please complete this information:

Visa □ MC □ AmEx □ Discover □

Name on Card (please print) ______________________________
Card Number ______________________________
Expiration Date ____________________ CVV ________
Signature ______________________________

Return this form with your payment to:
(Make checks payable to The Bach Choir of Bethlehem)
The Bach Choir of Bethlehem
440 Heckewelder Place | Bethlehem, PA 18018
BACH.org

For questions or more information, please contact Andrea Fritchey at andrea@bach.org, 610.866.4382 ext. 110
News from the Archives and History Committee  by Renée James

AFTER MANY YEARS DEVOTED SERVICE. Priscilla Wolle has retired as the chair of the Archives and History Committee and we welcome Dr. Janet Loengard as the new chair. Dr. Loengard is professor Emeritus of History at Moravian College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, holds a law degree from Harvard Law School and a Ph.D. from Columbia University. As a historian and member of the board of The Bach Choir, she is dedicated to honoring and preserving history. Dr. Loengard has visited the archives in the Moravian Museum with Choir archivist Mary Dawson and says, “I realize what a treasure they are. You could almost say they are a capsule reflection of the history of Bethlehem over the last 100-plus years!” She calls them “a window into Bethlehem’s culture and community spirit.”

As the Archives and History committee continues to develop ways to share our treasure with a wider audience, including a more significant presence on our website (BACH.org), we invite the community to explore the archival materials and step back in time, to our remarkable history. Founded in 1898, The Bach Choir has maintained a presence in Bethlehem for almost 120 years. The archives contain well over a century of performances, personnel records, manuscripts and history about The Choir. Starting in 1900, Choir archivists preserved materials from many of The Choir’s seasons in detailed scrapbooks, which contain programs, photos, news clips and music representative of that year’s performances and events. In addition to paging through the scrapbooks, visitors can examine The Choir’s discography; compiled and annotated programs; vocal and orchestral scores and correspondence of J. Fred Wolle and Ifor Jones; short histories of The Choir; and images and archival photos.

We invite you to contact archivist Mary Dawson (marydawson@bach.org) to arrange an appointment. Bach Choir News, and our website, will offer more updates about the Archives online presence in the months to come.