

# What's up, Alumni!

Fourth Edition • February 2010



## From your President

Hello everyone and happy winter! 2009 was an excellent year for the Shallaway/NSYC Alumni Association. A major goal in our strategic plan for 2009 was to increase awareness of the association amongst current choristers as well as Alumni. We held various activities to carry out this mandate and I feel we were successful with this endeavor. 2010 will be a new adventure for us and we are truly excited about it! While we say hello to new horizons and possibilities, we also say good-bye to the pillar and founder of our organization, Susan Knight. Although we are sad to see our beloved Mrs. Knight leave the choir as Artistic Director, we are happy and excited to welcome Kellie Walsh. We hope you all make every effort to attend our celebratory Wine and Cheese event to bid adieu to Mrs. Knight. More details of this celebration will be communicated in the coming weeks.

It is very important that we, as Alumni, understand our place within the organization. With over 400 of us worldwide, we ARE the best representation of what Shallaway aims to achieve. We are the product of an infrastructure that breeds excellence, community and culture in every sense. Put simply, we ARE the bright future of this place. The Alumni, holds a seat on the Board of Directors of Shallaway. This not only demonstrates that the organization sees us as an important part of the Shallaway family but that they are proud of us and they care what we have to say.

2010 will be a critical year for the Alumni Association. As we progress forth, we need your participation and involvement. This fall the Alumni

board will undergo reorganization. We are looking for new faces to sit with us and with the advent of technology; you do not have to physically be in St. John's to partake in our meetings. We are exploring what technology can offer in the form of virtual attendance as well! Please take some time to consider your involvement and ask yourself "Can I do more?" With as little as one hour per month, your involvement can help secure the future of our Alumni Association.

We are very proud of yet another Alumni Newsletter and hope you enjoy!

*Carolynn*

## Call for Executive Members!

The Shallaway/NSYC Alumni Association is reorganizing its Executive Committee. If you are interested in working to strengthen our Alumni, commitment can include attending only ONE meeting per month for ONE hour. We also offer virtual attendance via Skype and/or video chat. Please consider working with us to secure our future within the Shallaway family! To express your interest, please email [alumni@shallaway.ca](mailto:alumni@shallaway.ca)

## From Susan

Dear Alumni,

While Facebook and Twitter afford us great opportunities to remain connected and nourish relationships, our Alumni newsletter affords a special chance to reach all at once. Our Alumni organization itself was founded to secure that successive waves of choristers would have a medium through which to stay connected, both to each other and to the choir. Since I founded the organization 18 years ago, succession has been the central element in our philosophy.

The act of founding the choir was in response to my felt need to create a vehicle to secure the succession of our culture, which, following the imposition of the cod moratorium in 1992, was in real peril. This theme has driven all development in our organization. Its core symbol has been our fishpin, which encourages, reminds and pleads the case for succession on many fronts – environmental, social, cultural, knowledge acquisition, skill development, and so many more.

The central importance of mentoring within our organization has actualized the commitment to planned succession, consciously preparing the future in the present. Just so, I began looking for my successor at the beginning of the NSYC journey, as I was already nearly fifty years old when the adventure began. I knew I had found that successor when I re-acquainted with Kellie Walsh on her return to St. John's from Toronto, whom I had supervised as an intern in her graduating year from MUN. I was also pleased when both she and our Board embraced an open 5-year succession plan. Those five years have whizzed by, and Kellie will succeed me as Artistic Director this coming September for the

2010-2011 season. All NSYC/Shalloway alumni should feel affirmed that their organization is not only in great hands for the future, but in the familiar, respected and trusted hands of one of our own. All choristers have had a great opportunity to develop a relationship with Kellie. In fact, her Camerata group of the 2010-2011 Season will have been her Children's Choristers. This assures a seamless transition, as our Board and administration have also built a strong relationship and understanding with Kellie.

So when we return from our China tour this summer, I will have great confidence and satisfaction in handing the reigns of your organization over to Kellie. I do promise to stay close to the Alumni, you wonderful people who built the "Good Ship NSYC/Shalloway" over the last two decades.

Love and best wishes to all of you, and stay in touch with us and each other!

*Susan*



## From Kellie

Dear Alumni,

First of all I want to say thank you to Susan and the rest of the Shallaway/NSYC family for the incredible journey this has been thus far, and for the invitation and opportunity to become part of Shallaway's future. During the past five years, even though I have not had the chance to meet many of you, I have felt very connected to you. Your stories run through every 'vein' of the choir. Susan speaks about so many of you, not only with fond musical and social memories and pride in who you have become, but with huge pride in how you worked together to build the cultural entity and celebrated choir that Shallaway is today.

Over the past five years, Susan and I have shared many wonderful experiences. As well, we have had to make difficult decisions. Every step of the way, I've watched her recall your collective and sometimes individual stories and experiences, and use them as a guide.

I hope that I will be able to call on you as partners in the continued evolution of the choir. The face of our Province is changing, and in a prosperous society, traditional culture is at risk. Its remnants survive in a more complex, rapidly changing social environment, where people are exceedingly exposed to external influences. Moving forward, Shallaway will need to act on the keen awareness of a need to thoughtfully continue to develop programs that will value the preservation and revitalizing of traditional elements of our culture, as well as continuing to value community and excellence in music making.

An integral part of the future of Shallaway will be building on the foundational work of the current alumni. Creating opportunities and initiatives that will continue to enthuse, engage and inspire alumni, will be a powerful vehicle for the growth of the choir. I look forward to connecting with many of you in the future.

With thanks,

*Kellie*



### Hot Chocolate Social

**Thanks to all those alumni who attended the hot chocolate social on December 20th. It was a wonderful opportunity for everyone to catch up and lots of exciting news was shared and fond memories remembered. This will definitely be an annual event!**

# Upcoming Shallaway Events

## *Let Voices Ring* **Mrs. Knight's Final Concert**

Saturday • **May 1, 2010** • 7:30 p.m.  
St. John's Arts & Culture Centre

Our Annual Spring Concert is the finale of the SHALLAWAY season and offers an exhilarating culmination to our year. Enjoy a delightful array of musical styles, accompaniments, choreography and more!

This concert will also be a special farewell to Mrs. Knight. Alumni will definitely be invited to sing a few very special songs. We'll be in touch with more information later, but be sure to get your tickets soon.

Please note that tickets to this concert are available ONLY at the Arts & Culture Centre box office (729-3900).

## *Concert of the Place*

This mid-winter concert is guaranteed to lift you from the seasonal doldrums. It celebrates the traditional and not-so-traditional music of "our" place and our place within the world.

Sunday • **March 7, 2010** • 3:00 p.m.  
Cochrane Street United Church

Tickets \$20 each (\$15 students/seniors)

## Toronto Satellite Alumni

Adrienne Curran (Alumna year 2002) and Emily Noble, (Alumna year 2001) are extremely interested in getting some Alumni together in the Toronto area again for a pub night or a little wine and cheese or something of this sort!

Please touch base with Adrienne via email at [acurran30@hotmail.com](mailto:acurran30@hotmail.com) and help us get this branch of the Alumni Association up and running! We look forward to hearing from you!

## Alumni Year Representatives

2008 – Emily Thompson and Meaghan Aylward  
2007 – Julie Chaytor  
2006 – Erin Eaton  
2005 – Jeanette Bruce  
2004 – Kristen Williams  
2003 – Jaime Ryan and Gillian Langor  
2002 – Adrienne Curran  
2001 – Alanna Fitzpatrick  
2000 – Jennifer Babstock  
1999 – Sarah (Budgell) Nolan  
1998 – Catherine Tansley  
1993-1997 –Carolynn Spurvey

## Your Alumni Executive

**President** – Carolynn Spurvey

**Vice-President** – Jeanette Bruce

**Treasurer and Administration** – Nicole Dawe

**Secretary** – Kristen Williams

**Communications** – Jennifer Babstock

**Education** – Erica Lilly and Gillian Langor

**Shallaway Board of Directors Representatives:**  
Carolynn Spurvey and Ray Gosine

## Alumni Updates

We are interested in hearing from you. Have you, or another Alumna you know, received a special award, gotten married, had a baby, or done anything your fellow Alumni would like to know about? We would love to hear about what you are up to! Please contact Nicole Dawe at [alumni@shallaway.ca](mailto:alumni@shallaway.ca) or be in touch with your year-representative with updates.

We would also like to use the newsletter as a means for alumni to advertise to other alumni. Do you have an upcoming performance or a business that you think others might want to know about? Again, contact Nicole Dawe or your year-representative with information.



*Dana Parsons* (Grad of 1999) is engaged to fellow musician, Wade Tarling! Wedding is planned for Summer/Fall, 2011.

*Melissa Pelley* (Grad of 1998) is engaged to Adam Stanley! A destination wedding is planned for April 28th, 2009 in the Dominican Republic!

# Where Are They Now?



*Kathleen Allan  
Alumna 2007*

Hello Shallaway/NSYC family!

I realized while visiting home this Christmas that it has been so long since I've seen so many of you! I'm so glad we have this avenue for keeping in touch in our post-NSYC/Shallaway lives.

I am currently living in Vancouver and studying composition and voice at UBC. It is so beautiful here! I think having come from a place as beautiful as Newfoundland, and growing up as an NSYC/Shallaway member in the context of appreciating one's roots and surroundings, I can appreciate the physical landscape of Vancouver in creative ways. My composing has grown so much from the kind of visual inspiration I get every day from the gigantic

trees, endless sandy beaches, glassy ocean and snow-capped mountains.

The music community that I've come to know is almost as vibrant as the landscape. There are fantastic choirs and ensembles around every corner that open their arms freely to newcomers, and have mandates to perform new works and provide performance opportunities for young musicians. I've had original pieces played by the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Elektra Women's Choir, the Vancouver Chamber Choir, the University choirs and my church choir at Ryerson United. I'm also doing lots of singing – I sing with the UBC University Singers, as soprano soloist at Ryerson United Church, and this March I will be touring western Canada with

Jon Washburn and the Vancouver Chamber Choir! Another joy that I've discovered is that with the wonders of modern technology, it is possible not only for me to begin relationships with musicians in Vancouver, but also to develop the ones I already had at home. I recently finished a three movement choral suite for Newman Sound, which they will be recording for their upcoming CD!

Also upcoming in Vancouver are, of course, the Olympics! One might think that us composer-singer-types would simply spend two weeks feeling out of shape in comparison to the elite human specimens walking the streets, but luckily for us, they have organized an incredible amount of artistic and cultural events around the games. The UBC University Singers of which I am a part are performing at the arrival of the Olympic torch to Vancouver, and a quartet of us have just returned from an amazing trip to perform at local torch relay ceremonies around

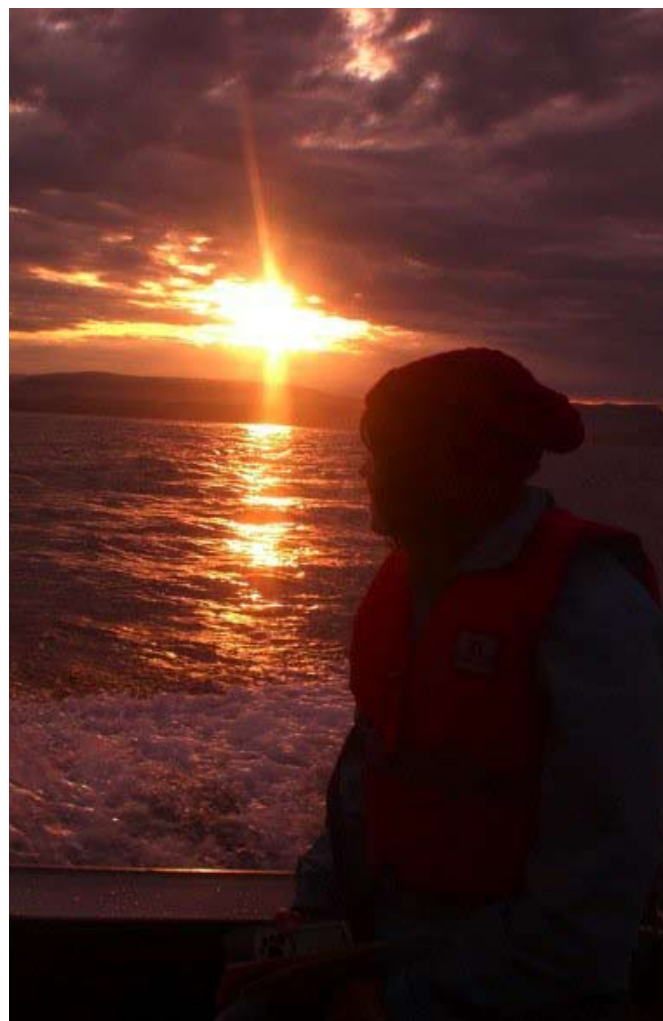
the province! The most moving and inspirational experience was in Bella Bella, where the first nations tribe called Heiltsuk lives. There is still a lot of pain felt in the community from the impacts of the residential schools, but the island is resounding with a feeling of renewed cultural importance and hope for the Heiltsuk youth. They welcomed us so warmly to their feast day planned around the Olympic torch arrival, and even though we hardly spent 24 hours on the ground, we were devastated to have to leave. (For those of you who were on the tour to Argentina, it felt like leaving Salta!) The feeling of excitement in Vancouver and all over BC seems to be getting stronger everyday. It should be quite the experience to be in the city and experience it all! I learned from my Shallaway years that nothing is as valuable as human connection through art and culture, so I'll be keeping those values in the front of my mind as I watch people from around the world come together to celebrate!

# Jeanette Bruce

*Alumna 2005*

When I joined NSYC in 1995, our province was still experiencing the aftershocks of 1992's cod moratorium. Mrs. Knight was the first person from whom I heard about this event and, despite being so young, I thought I understood the impact that losing the fishery had on Newfoundlanders. From our fish pins to singing "Bonavist Harbour" with the new, sombre verse about "no more fish", I learned how important the fishery was to our culture, both in terms of the economy it supported and the traditions it contained. As a "townie", I never experienced the hardships caused by the collapse of the fishery first-hand, but I was made aware of them and their significance through my participation in choir. I never realized how prominent these issues would become in my own life.

I'm now completing my final semester at MUN and, when I graduate, I'll have an honours degree in marine biology. There was a time about two years ago when I realized that the things I was learning in university could actually be used to help our province in a number of ways. Once I realized this, I decided to focus my studies on fish biology. As a part of my program, I signed up for a term of field courses, which I completed in the summer of 2009 in Norris Point, Newfoundland. Studying the flora and fauna of Bonne Bay, the largest fjord within Gros Morne National Park, solidified my love of the ocean and my desire to study its inhabitants. This experience also reaffirmed my love of my province in ways that I never anticipated. I discovered that I was meant to be a field biologist, studying my subjects and their habitats first-hand.



All of my childhood feelings about Newfoundland have come back to me as I've learned more about why the fishery collapsed and how we may be able to help it return. This curiosity has led me to continue my education by completing a Master's degree in fisheries biology. This program will take me away from Newfoundland, but I am confident that I'll come home with valuable knowledge that will allow me to do my small part in strengthening our fisheries, our communities, and our culture. Being a member of NSYC instilled in me a pride in being a Newfoundlander, and a desire to become a true member of our provincial community. I now feel like I've found a way to do so, and I can't wait to get started!