



CHESTER COUNTY  
**CHORAL**  
SOCIETY

# Celebrating 50 Years



*the  
Exton  
Chorale*  
1973



CHESTER COUNTY  
**CHORAL**  
SOCIETY  
2023

## **Chester County Choral Society**

### **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

The Chester County Choral Society (CCCS) is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> season in 2022-2023. Founded in 1973 as the Exton Chorale, CCCS is a non-profit community chorus of 80 auditioned, volunteer singers from the greater Chester County region, led by a professional director, associate director, accompanist and governed by a volunteer board of directors.

CCCS is dedicated to excellence in performing diverse choral music in order to enrich the cultural life of the community, audiences, and its members. CCCS presents two to three major concerts per year in multiple venues and offers outreach concerts at retirement communities and community events such as Chester County's Naturalization Ceremony.

CCCS collaborates with other choirs, professional soloists, conductors and orchestras including Kennett Symphony, Newark Symphony Orchestra, Pennsylvania Philharmonic, and Immaculata Symphony.

CCCS has toured twice in Europe, and by invitation has sung in Colonial Williamsburg, Mt. Vernon, the National Cathedral, Unionville, Alfred University, Longwood Gardens, and others.

CCCS presents quality performances of choral music's best-known works and has presented two world premieres by Chester County composers: David Bennett Thomas's *By the Brandywine* and Valerie Showers Crescenz' *Mass of Peace*.

In 1993 CCCS established the Excellence in Vocal Performance Competition to recognize, promote, and reward the achievement of young singers. CCCS has awarded over \$25,000 to high school seniors since its founding.

CCCS's Chamber Ensemble, which was begun in 2009, focuses on advanced repertoire for concerts and liturgies. The Ensemble performs occasional concerts and has represented CCCS at events such as the Jonathan Beech Memorial Concert in Kennett Square, PA.

CCCS has experimented with various small ensembles to provide additional opportunities for members to create, direct, or sing in a small group to expand our musical offerings.

## FIRST 10 YEARS – Exton Chorale

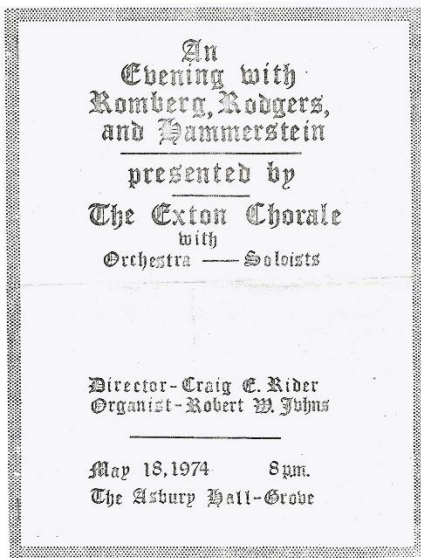
Fall 1973 – Spring 1983

Craig E. Rider, director, Paul Hoffman interim director

Accompanists: Bob Johns, Roberta McJilton

The Chester County Choral Society began as the Exton Chorale in **September, 1973**. It was formed by Craig E. Rider with singers from five area church choirs who were seeking challenging and varied repertoire.

**Spring 1974** – First Spring Concert, *An Evening with Romberg, Rodgers, and Hammerstein*.



The Program	
Desert Song .....	Romberg
Mill Song .....	Romberg
Wanting You .....	Romberg
Stouthearted Men .....	Romberg
Lower Come Back To Me .....	Romberg
(Mrs. Shaw and Mr. Jones with Chorale)	
Your Land and My Land .....	Romberg
***Intermission***	
Student Prince Choral Suite .....	Romberg
Student's Marching Song	
Golden Days (Mr. Jones and Mr. Shaw)	
Drinking Song	
Serenade	
Deep In My Heart	
King and I Choral Suite .....	Rodgers/Hammerstein
March of the Siamese Children	
Getting To Know You	
We Kiss In A Shadow	
I Whistle A Happy Tune	
Hello Young Lovers	
South Pacific Choral Suite .....	Rodgers/Hammerstein
Some Enchanted Evening	
There's Nothin' Like A Dame	
Sail, Sail	
A Wonderful Day	
Younger Than Springtime	
Some Enchanted Evening Finale	
*****	

**Spring 1976** – With the Grove Tabernacle Choir performed a Bicentennial Concert as a memorial tribute to James Mark Bruce, II, at Arch Street United Methodist Church in Philadelphia.

## Spring 1976 – A Bicentennial Concert, *One Nation Under God*



ONE NATION UNDER GOD is the theme of the Exton Chorale spring concert May 22, 8 p.m., at the United Methodist Church, High and Barnard streets, West Chester. Practicing for their performance are Virginia

Schwacher on guitar, director Craig E. Rider (middle) and Robert A. Johns on piano. Staff photo by Larry McDewitt.

DLN - 5-18-76

## Spring 1977 – Spring Pops Concert with Chamber Brass Quintet



SPRING POPS CONCERT is rehearsed by Exton Chorale members (from left) Robert W. Johns, Ann Jones, director Craig E. Rider, Tom Jones and Freda

Payne, in preparation for May 21 at 8 p.m. in the United Methodist Church of West Chester.

# Out Of an Ecumenical Movement, a Community Chorus

"Without music, there wouldn't be Christmas for many people," says Craig Rider, director and founder of the Exton Chorale. In its fifth season, the 60-voice community chorus is preparing for its Christmas concert Dec. 17 to be held at the United Methodist Church, West Chester. The chorale also will perform at Exton Square Mall Tuesday, Dec. 20 at 7:30 p.m.

"Christmas is a warm part of the year," Rider says. He considers music an integral part of the holidays. It gets people in the spirit of things and enriches the worship experience, he says.

Chorale members come from the Paoli, Chester Springs, Valley Forge, Coatesville and Downingtown areas. Rehearsals are held every Tuesday evening from September until after the spring concert at the Grove United Methodist Church, Boot rd. The hour and a half sessions are expanded to two hours as performances approach.

Although the membership changes due to the transient area, Rider says the total number remains around 60. Sacred, popular, show, classical and operatic music fill the chorale's repertoire.

Featured in the Christmas concert will be some Bach chorales, flutist Beatrice Howlett, secular

seasonal songs and "How Excellent Thy Name" from Handel's oratorio, "Saul."

In January the chorale will begin rehearsing for the March performance of Gordon Young's oratorio, "Missa Exultate." The spring concert in May will feature music from the stage and screen with instrumental accompaniment, tentatively including selections from "Kismet" and "Star Wars." This is the first year the chorale has planned three performances.

Rider says the chorale does a lot of work with a brass ensemble and percussion. Last year for the Bicentennial the chorale performed religious and patriotic music at the Arch Street Methodist Church, Philadelphia, with orchestral accompaniment.

Rider considers accompanist Robert W. Johns a major part of the chorale's organization. Johns, a Cheyney State graduate, has been the organist at the Grove United Methodist Church for ten years. He is a member of the choral staff at J.W. Pepper and Son, Inc., Valley Forge.

A choral and general music teacher at the Drexel Hill Junior High school, Rider has been the music director at Grove Methodist for ten years also. He was a voice and conducting major at the former Philadelphia Music

Academy, now the Philadelphia College of the Performing Arts located in the renovated Shubert Theatre. Rider did his graduate work at West Chester State College.

The Exton Chorale grew out of an ecumenical movement by the Exton Ministerium a number of years ago, Rider says. Seven Exton area churches joined to perform cantatas and other special music with performances at the Church Farm School.

Changed circumstances resulted in Rider's contacting a nucleus of 50 people from the ecumenical group to form a community chorus. The chorale no longer has a direct tie with any church. Performances are held at the United Methodist Church of West Chester where, Rider says, there are good audience accommodations, acoustics and a fine pipe organ. Rider says it was always his ambition to have a community choral group.

The chorale is funded by free will donations and weekly dues. Working with a minimal budget, Rider says about 80 per cent of the funds is spent on music.

Rider talks to prospective members before they join the chorale for rehearsals. He prefers newcomers to have had some high school, college or church choral experience. Each

new member participates on a trial basis for two weeks.

Officers of the Exton Chorale are Thomas Jones, Malvern, president; Jonathan Kulp, Chester Springs, vice president and his wife, Carol, secretary-

treasurer. Robert Davis, Exton, is publicity chairman.

Section leaders are Betty Johns, West Chester, soprano; Ann (Mrs. Thomas) Jones, Malvern, alto; Al Streleckis, Exton, tenor, and Tom Jones, bass.



JONATHAN KULP of Chester Springs, one of the members of the Downingtown Area School board, is one of the enthusiastic participants in the Exton Chorale.



**December 1978 Christmas Concert for Jason**, a benefit concert for Jason Mooney, a child with a rare disease. Peter Thomson, an 8th grade student, played bagpipes.



## Spring 1980 – The Exton Chorale



EXTON CHORALE

1980

LEFT to RIGHT, First Row: Craig E. Rider (Director), Fran Drobnicki, Evelyn Moyer, Barb Fradin, Carol Cairns, Peg Stern, Elaine Leiter, Robert Johns (Accompanist). Second Row: Kay Leszczynski, Elaine Brooks, Phoebe Knepley, Betty Johns, Nancy Pollock. Third Row: Linda Martin, Carol Kulp, Barb Noble, Dave Fradin, George Ehr Gott, Mark Daly, Jon Kulp, Hedi Beck, Florence Cahill, Mary Norris. Fourth Row: Ruth Bullock, Eileen Dougherty, Diann Rollins, Jay Gross, Luke Lipka, Warren Simpson, Al Streleckis, John Ban, Betty Miller, Dot Littmann, Karlene Brittingham. Fifth Row: Mim Garrett, Bert Dickinson, Sally Gross, Muriel Ziegler, Charles Dickinson, John Berta, Tom Jones, Paul Hoffman, Herb Littmann, Nancy Busby, Jean DiFrancesco.

**1981 – The Exton Chorale Logo first appeared on a program.**



**1982 – Paul Hoffman became the Interim Director for one year**

## **NEXT 16 YEARS – Exton Chorale**

**Fall 1983 – Spring 1999**

Bernice H. Brady, director

Accompanists:

Katherine Littlefield, 1983; Carla Ritchie, 1984;  
Jane Llewellyn, 1984-1992; Timothy Sidebotham, 1992-1994;  
Bonnie Sumerfield, 1994-1995; Ann Marie Ellis, 1995-1999

**1983** – Bernice Hatch Brady became Director. During her tenure the group expanded to 70 members to include singers from throughout Chester County.



**1988** – Festival of Dedication of new sanctuary at Exton Baptist Church

**Spring 1988** – The Chorale presents *Bach to Broadway* Concert



## November 1989 – Article regarding couples in the Chorale:

THURSDAY, MAY 18, 1989

### Chorale keeping couples in tune

BY ANDREW MACBETH

When some members of the Exton Chorale sing "Ten Shes, That's My Baby" during their current concert program, they aren't necessarily singing to the audience.

Instead, they are probably singing to a certain significant other member of the Chorale.

Because for couples Ben and Gail Hyson, Edith and David Rowland and John and Carol Kulp and their daughter Julie, participating in the Exton Chorale is a family affair.

The Kulp's, from Chester Springs, have been singing together in the Chorale since 1976. Carol began two years earlier and persuaded Edith to join her.

"I've always enjoyed singing," said John, "and it's fun to do it with Carol."

And with Julie home from college for the semester, the Kulp's have three representatives in the Chorale. "It's a good thing to do with the family," she said.

How did the 19-year-old adjust to spending her Tuesday evenings with her parents and other older adults? "I was surprised at first about the age difference, but I really enjoy it," she said. John said his other daughter would like to sing in the group but hasn't been able to fit it into her schedule.

Time constraints are something each couple in the group

Continued on Page 12



Andrew Macbeth

BEN AND GAIL HYNSON of Frazer are one of seven married couples who sing together in the Exton Chorale.

### Chorale keeping couples in tune

Continued from Page 1

must deal with. The Rowlands help push each other to fit the Chorale into their schedules.

"The other person in the house gives a push for motivation," said Edith Rowland.

"It takes time," said David Rowland, "but you have to make the commitment."

The Paoli couple have sung together before but joined the Chorale in January when John Kulp mentioned it to them. The Chorale needed a tenor and David fit right into the group.

The Rowlands have two sons who also sing, but have not participated with the Chorale.

For Ben and Gail Hyson, singing together in the Exton Chorale is one of the many activities they

enjoy doing together.

"We work together during the day," said Ben, adding with a laugh, "We may have taken this thing too far."

The Hysons, from Frazer, have been singing together in the Chorale for a year. Like the Kulp's, the Hysons take advantage of their opportunities to practice their songs at home.

"I sit at the piano," said Ben, "and we try to find our parts."

Ben said although the Chorale practices only one night a week, he and Gail have trouble finding time to spend by themselves.

"We're always doing something," he said. "Dinner together would be nice, but it's not always feasible."


In addition to the Hysons,

Kulp and Rowlands, the musical family of the Exton Chorale boasts four other married couples and two mother and daughter couples among its 64 members.

Now in its 16th season, the Exton Chorale, under the direction of Bernice Hatch Brady and accompanied by Jane Lowellen, whose husband Al sings with the group, presents concerts for the public.

The group will be performing Saturday, May 20th in the Lionville Junior High School auditorium at 8 p.m. The show is titled *It's All American* and features works by American songwriters.

Donations are \$5 for adults, \$2 for students. For more information about the Exton Chorale, call 692-9008.



Andrew Macbeth

EXTON CHORALE members John, Carol and Julie Kulp of Chester Springs make singing in the group a family experience.

## February 1990 – Small groups of Chorale members perform Singing Valentines to raise funds for the upcoming European concert tour.

Suburban Adv Feb. 22, 1990



Michael Moore

**SURPRISE!** Dianna Schmidt receives an unexpected serenading from members of the Exton Chorale on Valentines Day. Chorale members Joan Kelly, Valerie Brogan, Hazel Brightvill and Sue Hudson were summoned by Schmidt's husband, Paul, to visit Arkwright Insurance in the Great Valley Corporate Center, and sing Dianna two romantic selections amidst impressed co-workers in a crowded luncheon.





**June 22 – July 6, 1991** - Concert tour to Europe, performing in Austria, France, Germany, and Switzerland

Concerts Performed:

June 24 - Strasbourg, France

June 25 - Molsheim, France



June 27 - Engelberg, Switzerland

June 29 - Volders Kirche, Innsbruck, Austria



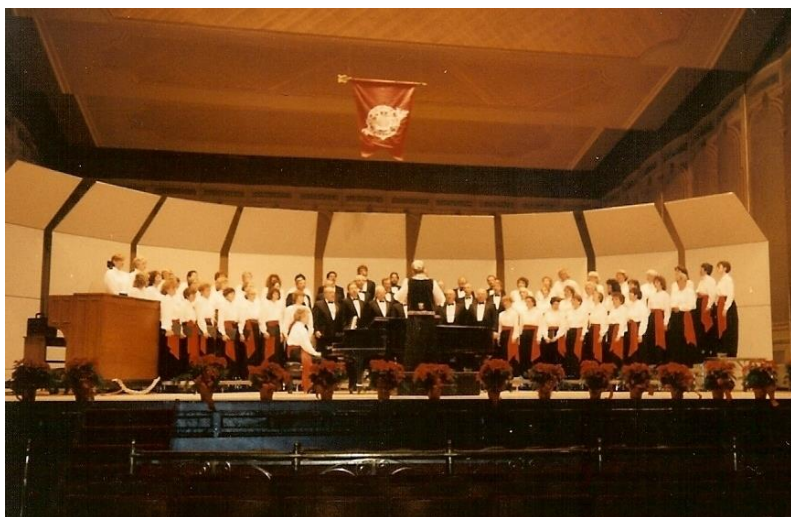
June 30 – Westendorf, Austria

July 4 – Buhlertal, Germany



July 5 – St. Laurentius Kirche, Ahrweiler, Germany

**December 1991** – The Chorale sang with the Orpheus Club at the Academy of Music at their first private concert.



**December 1992** The Chorale performed at Valley Forge Music Fair as part of Rosemary Clooney's *White Christmas Party*, accompanying Clooney and Debby Boone, as well as singing several Christmas favorites.

**Spring 1993** – The first Excellence in Vocal Performance Competition for high school seniors was launched with one winner, Rebecca Tuffey, being honored.



The Exton Chorale will present its first Excellence in Vocal Performance Award to West Chester East High School senior Rebecca Tuffey (center) during a spring concert at 4 p.m. Sunday in Swope Hall auditorium, West Chester University. Congratulating the winner are chorale president Valerie Greet (left) and director Bernice Hatch Brady. For more information about the concert, call 399-0134.

**Fall 1995** – Ann Marie Ellis became the Accompanist for the Chorale.



**1995** – Chorale sang at Bruton Parish Church, Williamsburg, VA



**June 27 - July 9 1997** –Concert tour through the British Isles, performing in England, Scotland, and Wales

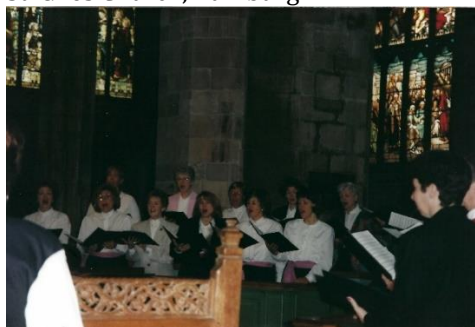
Tour guide (John Fryer) greeting Bernice Brady's Chorale



Chorale at Stirling Castle, Scotland



St. Giles Church, Edinburgh



Ladies and bagpiper, Edinburgh





July 4 -Chorale at a Ruthin Castle,  
Wales singing National Anthem



Concert at St. James Church,  
Chipping Campden, England



July 8, Concert at St. James, Piccadilly, London



**Spring 1999** – The Chorale represented Pennsylvania in the National Festival of the States in Mt. Vernon, and performed at the National Cathedral, St. Matthews, and Christchurch. They laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.



## **NEXT 24 YEARS – Chester County Choral Society\***

Fall 1999 – Present

(\*Renamed in 2000)

Gary P. Garletts, Artistic Director

Pattie Mancuso, Associate Director

Accompanist, Ann Marie Ellis

**Fall 1999** – Gary P. Garletts became the Artistic Director. Under his direction, CCCS has sung major works and collaborated with several orchestras, brass bands, and chorales.

**Fall 2000** – The Exton Chorale was renamed Chester County Choral Society to better reflect its presence in and membership from the Chester County area. A new logo was designed by charter member Ruth Bullock.



**October 2001** – CCCS travelled to Uniontown to perform Testament of Freedom by Randall Thompson with the Greater Uniontown Chorale weeks after 9/11/01.

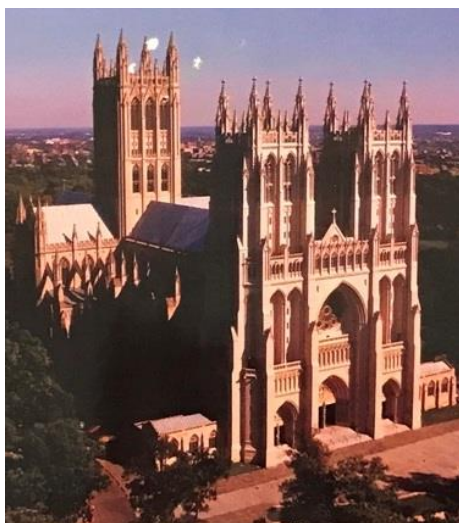
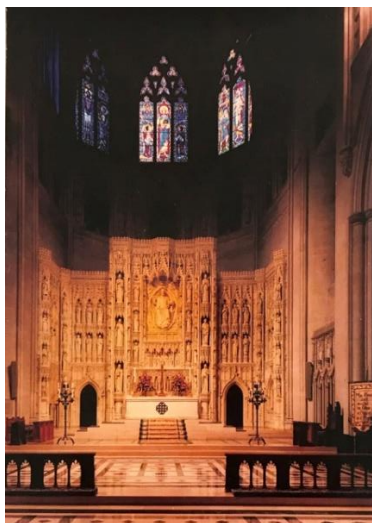
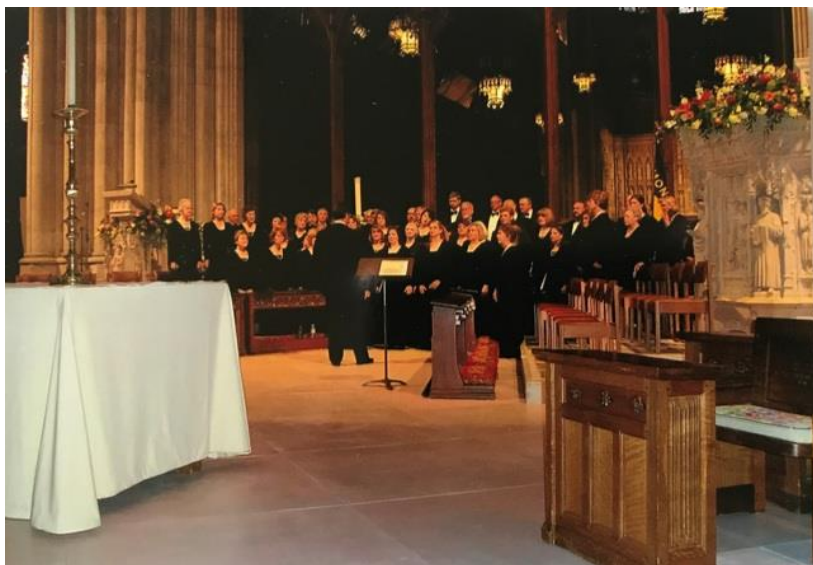
**Spring 2003** – 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert, CCCS performed Brahms' *Liebeslieder Walzer*. The former directors directed selections.



Left to right: Gary Garletts, Paul Hoffman, Bernice Brady, Craig Rider

**February 2005** – The first Dinner and Song Gala fundraiser was initiated. The Gala included dinner, silent auction and performances of contemporary music selections by individuals and small groups in a festive setting.

**Spring 2005** – Invitational Concert at the National Cathedral, Washington, DC.



**Spring 2008** – 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert, *Our Poets Sing*, world premiere of work commissioned for CCCS, *By The Brandywine*, by David Bennett Thomas.

**Spring 2009** – CCCS performed Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with soloists and orchestra.



**Spring 2010** – The world premiere of *Mass of Peace*, by local composer Valerie Crescenz, was performed as well as several works by Samuel Barber to celebrate the centennial of his birth.

**Spring 2010** – Judge Charles B. Smith, benefactor of the Vocal Competition Awards from 2010 through 2019, and President Neil Cullen.



**November 2010** – Performed Beethoven's 9th Symphony, *Ode to Joy*, with Immaculata University Symphony and three other choirs.



**February 2011** – Dinner and Song Gala – *An Evening at the Oscars*. All songs performed were Academy Award nominees or winners.



### **2011 Society Performances:**

**Spring** – Performed *Testament of Freedom* by Randall Thompson and *Dona Nobis Pacem* by R. V. Williams at *War and Peace* concert to commemorate the events of 9/11/01

**August** – Performed portions of *Testament of Freedom* with the Kennett Symphony and Mary Green Singers at the *Celebrate Freedom* concert at Longwood Gardens

**October** – Travelled to Alfred, NY to perform *Testament of Freedom* with the Alfred Chamber Singers and Orchestra



**March 2012** – Several members of CCCS sang for the Naturalization Ceremony at the West Chester Courthouse. Members have continued to participate in a number of these ceremonies welcoming new citizens.



**December 2012** – First of 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concerts, *Sing Forth This Day*



**Spring 2013 – 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert, Brahms *Requiem***



**Spring 2013 – 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert – PA State Senator Andrew Dinniman presenting Recognition Certificate to CCCS President Bob Morgan**



**February 2014 – Concert for children with Disney songs sung by the Dinner and Song Company**





**Spring 2015** – The Civil War, 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Retrospective with Beck's Brigade Band



**Fall 2018** – A new logo was designed and introduced:





**Spring 2019 – Great Opera Choruses**

**Fall 2019 – Handel's *Messiah***



**Fall 2021 – *Let's Begin Again* – outdoor concert with masks**



**December 2022 – Chamber Ensemble**

**Pattie Mancuso, Associate  
Director 2022**



## OTHER HISTORICAL FACTS ABOUT CCCS:

### Past Presidents:

Tom Jones ~1976-1981

David Fradin ~1981-1983

Carol Kulp 1984-1985

Susan Kurt 1985-1987

Janet Heller 1987 – 1990

Jody Maneth 1990 – 1991

Valerie Brogan/Greet 1991 – 1993

Hazel Brightbill 1993 - 1995

Norman Greet 1995 – 1997

Marjorie Majka 1997 – 1999

Steve Shirk 1999 – 2001

Ron Bolesta 2001 – 2003

Lloyd Hope 2003 – 2005

Dave Shealy 2005 – 2007

Fred Thompson 2007 – 2009

Neil Cullen 2009 – 2011

Bob Morgan 2011 – 2013

Susan & Wayne Kline 2013 – 2015

Kara Bourdreau 2015 – 2017

Chuck Cuttic 2017 – 2019

Sue Drummond 2019 - 2021

John Banionis 2021 – 2023

**March 2019:** Seven Past Presidents at Memorial for Hazel Brightbill



Back: Bob Morgan, Neil Cullen, Fred Thompson, Lloyd Hope, Ron Bolesta.  
Front: Steve Shirk, Susan Kline, with Gary Garletts, Director.

### CCCS has performed the following major works:

Bach's *Magnificat* in 2002, 2010

Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in 2010

Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy* in 2010

Brahms' *Liebeslieder Walzer* in 1994, 2003, 2016

Brahms' *A German Requiem* in 2013

Britten's *Ceremony of Carols* in 1999

Clausen's *A New Creation* in 2002

Charpentier's *Midnight Mass* in 2014  
 Valerie Crescenz's *Mass of Peace*, world premiere 2010  
 Faure's *Requiem* in 2018  
 Gounod's *Mass in C* in 1981  
 Handel's *Messiah* in 1981, 2000, 2007, 2019  
 Haydn's *St. Nicholas Mass* in 2015  
 Joseph Jenkins' *Cantate Hodie* in 2006, 2012  
 Mendelssohn's *Elijah* in 2009  
 Menotti's *Shepherd's Chorus* from *Amahl* in 1979, 2009, 2017  
 Montgomery's Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address* in 2015  
 Mozart's *Mass in C* in 2006  
 Mozart's *Missa Brevis in D* in 2023  
 Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* in 2014  
 Rheinberger's *The Star of Bethlehem* in 2004, 2016  
 Rutter's *Requiem* in 2009  
 Saint-Saens' *Christmas Oratorio* in 2001, 2018  
 Schubert's *Magnificat* in 2014  
 Schubert's *Mass in G* in 1997, 2004  
 Susa's *Carols and Lullabies* in 2011 and 2022  
 David Bennett Thomas' *By The Brandywine* world premiere in 2008  
 Thompson's *Frostiana* in 2008  
 Thompson's *The Testament of Freedom* in 2001 and 2011  
 Vivaldi's *Gloria in D* in 1976, 2008, 2021  
 Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* in 2011

### **Collaborations:**

Chamber Brass in 1976, 1977, 1978  
 Grove Aeolian Ringers in 1981  
 West Chester Alumni Community Band in 1986, 1987, 1989, 1990  
 Orpheus Club at the Academy of Music in 1991  
 Praise in Bronze Handbell Ensemble in 1991  
 The Sounding Brass in 1992  
 Ocean City (NJ) Pops Orchestra in 1998  
 Kennett Symphony, Kennett Symphony Children's Chorus, and Mary Green Singers several times  
 Kennett Middle School Singers several times  
 Greater Uniontown Chorale in 2001 and 2002  
 Chesapeake Brass Band in 2005  
 Westminster Brass Quintet in 2006  
 Kimberton Waldorf School in 2007  
 Alfred University Chamber Singers in 2009 and 2011  
 West Chester Ecumenical Choir in 2009  
 Immaculata Symphony with 3 other choirs in 2010  
 West Chester Brass Quintet in 2012  
 Beck's Philadelphia Brigade Band in 2015

Prana Winds in 2013, 2015, 2022

### **Concert tours and invitational concerts:**

Bruton Parish Church (Colonial Williamsburg) in 1995

National Cathedral (Washington, DC) in 1996, 2005

Valley Forge Music Fair in 1992

Concert tour to Europe, performing in Austria, France, Germany, and Switzerland in 1991

Concert tour through the British Isles, performing in England, Scotland, and Wales in 1997

The Chorale represented Pennsylvania in the National Festival of the States in Mt. Vernon, VA in 1999, and performed at St. Matthews and The National Cathedral in DC, and Christ Church in Alexandria, VA.

Malvern's *Victorian Christmas* several times

Longwood Gardens many times

Naturalization Ceremony in West Chester Courthouse many times

West Chester *Old Fashioned Christmas* many times

Uniontown with Greater Uniontown Chorale in 2001

Brandywine River Museum, Chadds Ford

Waterloo Gardens, Exton

Hagley Museum, Wilmington, DE in 2010

Alfred University, NY in 2011

Brownbacks UCC Senior's Group, Spring City in 2014

HandiCrafters, Thorndale in 2014

Brandywine Valley Association/Myrick Center, West Chester in 2015

Fundraiser for Still Waters Ministries, Morgantown in 2015

United Methodist Women's Group, West Chester in 2015

Fundraiser for Bethesda Project, which supports the homeless in Philadelphia in 2022

### **Outreach Concerts - Retirement Communities:**

Barclay Friends, West Chester; Freedom Village, Coatesville; Kendal-

Crosslands, Kennett Square; Maris Grove, Glen Mills; Meadowbrook

Retirement, Skippack; Shannondell, Valley Forge; Tel Hai Retirement

Community, Honey Brook; Whitehorse Village, Newtown Square; Willow

Valley Retirement Community, Lancaster

### **Chester County Choral Society Significant Event Timeline**

1973 The Exton Chorale was formed by Craig E. Rider with singers from five area church choirs who were seeking challenging and varied repertoire.

1976 The Chorale and Grove Tabernacle Choir performed a Bicentennial Concert as a memorial tribute to James Mark Bruce II

1978 Christmas Concert benefit for Jason Mooney. Peter Thomson (eighth grader, bagpipes)



- 1982 Paul Hoffman became Interim Director for one year
- 1983 Bernice Hatch Brady became Director. During her tenure, the group expanded to 70 members to include singers from throughout Chester County.
- 1988 Festival of Dedication of new sanctuary at Exton Baptist Church
- 1990 Small groups of Chorale members performed Singing Valentines in person or on the phone to raise funds for the upcoming concert tour.
- 1991 Concert tour to Europe, performing in Austria, France, Germany and Switzerland
- 1991 Performed with the Orpheus Club at the Academy of Music at the first private concert
- 1992 Performed at Valley Forge Music Fair as part of Rosemary Clooney's *White Christmas Party*, accompanying Clooney and Debby Boone, as well as singing several Christmas favorites.
- 1993 The first *Excellence in Vocal Performance Competition* for high school seniors was launched with one winner, Rebecca Tuffey, being honored.
- 1995 Ann Marie Ellis became the Accompanist for CCCS
- 1997 Concert tour through the British Isles, performing in England, Scotland, Wales
- 1999 Gary P. Garletts became Artistic Director. Gary has broadened CCCS's repertoire to include major works and collaborations with exceptional soloists, orchestras, brass bands, and chorales.
- 2000 The Exton Chorale was renamed Chester County Choral Society to better reflect its presence in and membership from the Chester County area.
- 2001 CCCS launched its first website, [chestercountychoralsociety.org](http://chestercountychoralsociety.org).
- 2001 CCCS travelled to Uniontown to perform *Testament of Freedom* by Randall Thompson with the Greater Uniontown Chorale only weeks after 9/11/01, which made the work very meaningful.
- 2003 For the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert, CCCS performed Brahms' *Liebeslieder Walzer*. The former Directors directed several pieces.
- 2004 The first *Dinner and Song* Gala was initiated with individuals and small groups performing in a dinner setting including a fundraising auction.
- 2006 Invitational – Centennial Gala Concert at St Matthias Parish – performed Mozart's Coronation Mass
- 2008 For the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert CCCS performed a work commissioned for CCCS, *By The Brandywine*, by David Bennett Thomas.
- 2009 Chamber Ensemble was formed as a small group focused on more challenging repertoire
- 2010 The world premiere of *Mass of Peace*, by local composer Valerie Crescenz, was performed by CCCS as well as several works by Samuel Barber to celebrate the centennial of his birth.

- 2010 Performed Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Immaculata Symphony and 3 other choruses
- 2010 A CCCS Facebook Group was created.
- 2011 CCCS travelled to Alfred, NY to perform *Testament of Freedom* by Randall Thompson with the Alfred Chamber Singers and Orchestra.
- 2011 CCCS performed portions of *Testament of Freedom* with the Kennett Symphony and Mary Green Singers at the *Celebrate Freedom* concert at Longwood Gardens to commemorate the events of 9/11/01.
- 2011 CCCS improved its website, [chestercountychoralsociety.org](http://chestercountychoralsociety.org).
- 2013 Brahms' *Requiem* 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert
- 2013 Chamber Ensemble performed at St. Peter's, Lewes, DE.
- 2014 Children's Concert – Disney music
- 2014 *Carmina Burana* with percussion
- 2014 Members participated in Yoga Voice workshop.
- 2015 Chamber Ensemble sang for 8<sup>th</sup> Jonathan Beech Memorial in Kennett
- 2015 The Civil War – a 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Retrospective – World premiere of Gary Garlett's new arrangement of Montgomery's *Gettysburg Address*
- 2016 The Three B's:  
     Bach selections from *Mass in B Minor*  
     Beethoven *Fantasia in C Minor* ("Choral Fantasy")  
     Brahms *Liebesslieder Waltzer, Schicksalslied*
- 2016 CCCS sang the National Anthem at a Phillies game
- 2016 An official CCCS Facebook Page was created
- 2018 CCCS - New website, [chescochoral.org](http://chescochoral.org), webmaster, Gerry Daney
- 2019 Great Opera Choruses
- 2019 Handel's *Messiah*
- 2020 A CCCS You Tube channel was launched.
- 2020-2022 Due to Covid-19 quarantine, CCCS produced 5 Virtual Recordings:  
     November 2020: *Requiem*, Gilkyson  
     December 2020: Christmas Medley 2020, arr. Gary Garlett  
     June 2021: Excerpts from *Judas Maccabaeus - Hallelujah, Amen; See the Conquering Hero Comes* - GF Handel  
     August 2021: *Let's Begin Again*, Rutter  
     March 2022: *The Storm Is Passing Over*, Tindley
- 2022 Pattie Mancuso became Associate Director
- 2023 A CCCS Instagram account was launched.
- 2023 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert and Reception featuring Mozart's *Missa Brevis in D*

## Vocal Competition Winners:

1993	Rebecca Tuffey	2009	Laurel McLaughlin
1994	Rachel Olsen	2010	William Townsend
1995	Melissa Joy Natale	2011	Bess Ann Ploener
1996	Crystal Chen	2012	Laura K. McCauley
1997	Zakiya Young	2013	Heather McConnell
1998	Jeffery McDermott	2014	Shannon Maguire
1999	Melissa Baker	2015	Abu Akki
2000	Jennifer Hasselhan	2016	Rachel Kobernick
2001	J. Elizabeth March	2017	Thomas Lock
2002	Meghan Santulli	2018	Emily Damasco
2003	Nathalie Dalziel	2019	Sofia Bobrysheva
2004	Emily Adams	2020-2021	No competition due to Covid-19
2005	Adriana Devine	2022	Bryce Kelly
2006	Meghan Elizabeth Hickey	2023	Macy Danenhower
2007	Lauryn Salvo		
2008	Murphy Bug		

## Dinner and Song:

From 2004 through 2018 CCCS presented a Dinner and Song Gala with solos and small singing groups performing contemporary music in a festive dinner setting. A fundraising auction raised funds for professional musicians for concerts.

2004 – Evening of Dinner and Song	2011 – An Evening at the Oscars
2006 – Music and Amore	2012 – Introducing...The Beatles
2007 – Music...The Food of Love	2013 – Sounds of '73
2008 – On with the Show	2014 – Be Our Guest!
2009 – Juke Box Saturday Night	2015 – Coast to Coast
2010 – Talking About My Generation	2016 – A Night in the Country
	2017 – Love...Lost & Found
	2018 – Now Playing

## February 2018 – Dinner and Song Gala – *Now Playing*



Kathy Kauterman and John Fryer



D&S Company



## 50th Anniversary May 2023



**December 2022 – Carols and Lullabies Concert**

CCCS thanks the following members of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee:

Coordination: John Banionis, Jaymie Lacombe

Concert: Ron Bolesta

History Booklet and Displays: Susan Kline, Barbara McIntosh

Mementos: Debrah Stradley Moore

Reception: Irene Banionis, Kathy Kauterman, Sue Davies, Barry

Greenspan, Alex Cuttic

And others too numerous to mention!

**Chester County Choral Society**  
**P. O. Box 3466**  
**West Chester, PA 19381**  
**A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization**

[www.chescochoral.org](http://www.chescochoral.org)  
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