



## North Hills High School Alumni Choir Reunion Update, 09-09-14

---

Hello Alumni!

It's hard to believe that the alumni choir reunion is less than a month away, but the calendar doesn't lie! As promised, here are the additional details you need to know for our event in October. I couldn't fit everything into the cover letter with your packets, so here goes...

### **Music Preparation**

Hopefully by now most, if not all of you have received your music packets. Gentlemen, I apologize that you all received "The Water is Wide" in your packets. I didn't specify to Musik Innovations that we needed a men's and a women's packet, so everyone got everything. That is a 3-part women's piece, so you're off the hook for learning it! Ladies, if we could have a decent representation of all 3 parts, that would be great, so if you think hearing the Soprano 2 part would work for you, please learn it.

Practice files and performance recordings for most of the songs have been posted on the choral website at <http://www.northhillschoralmusic.org/music-practice-files.html> "Day by Day" will definitely be the last one posted – it's been out of print for some time, so no recordings were available, which means I'll have to record the practice tracks myself, and there's no guarantee I'll get to it, but I'll do my best!

As I mentioned in the packet cover letter, our goal is to make a musical memory with this reunion and concert, and not to create a stressful situation for anyone. Don't worry if you don't know your part perfectly or are a little confused. All we ask is that you give it a listen ahead of time so that you're not completely lost during the rehearsal and find yourself not wanting to perform with us. We'll make sure to go over parts during the Saturday afternoon rehearsal.

### **Invitation to Join Choir Class for a Day**

I've been given permission by the principal to invite anyone who would like to come and sit in on our Symphonic Choir classes the day before the concert, Friday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>. This year's group of around 70 is divided into 2 classes, and is made up of the 9-12 men and 11-12 women (the other 70 freshmen and sophomores make up the Women's Choir that also meets in 2 class periods). We will make a point to go over "Song of Democracy" and "River in Judea" at least during class that day, as we're performing both at an upcoming event later in October with the Pittsburgh Concert Chorale. The times of the 2 classes are: Period 5 – 10:34-11:14 and Period 9 – 1:20-2:00. If you arrive about 10 minutes before each class and check in at the front entrance (they'll most likely ask for ID and possibly your keys), they will call down to the room and I can send one of the Women's Choir members down to escort you to the room.

### **Friday Night Meet-and-Greet**

We have been able to reserve the back room at Sieb's Pub on Babcock Blvd from 8:00-10:00PM on Friday night, October 3, 2014. A good number of you indicated that you would be interested in attending a less formal gathering where you can sit back, relax, and share stories together. The Choral Parents Association will purchase a few appetizer platters to have on the tables, and you'll be on your own for any additional food or drinks you may wish to have. There isn't a whole lot of space in the room, so I'd imagine most will be standing around talking, but there are several tables for those who may need to sit. We'll also have name tags for you to fill out so that folks can easily communicate with each other.

### **Saturday Morning – Building Tours**

At 10:00AM, we will have students at the auditorium entrance to both buildings, and they will lead a short tour of each building for anyone who may wish to recapture the “memories that never die.” There is a substantial amount of work being done to the Middle School (formerly junior high, and before that, the original high school building), so it may not look quite as polished as you might remember. Flooring is being replaced and ductwork installed for air conditioning in the whole building. I’m figuring the tours will run 20-30 minutes in each building, and we’ll run a second one at 10:30 for those who wish to check out the other school as well.

### **Registration – 12:30-1:00PM, High School Auditorium Lobby**

I’m trying my best to hold everything in the high school building if at all possible so that we don’t have to walk back and forth for anything. With our current numbers (hovering around 90ish), we should be able to rehearse in the high school choir room and fit on risers in the high school auditorium (even working around the set that is being built for the fall play in November).

We’ll have registration tables set up in the auditorium lobby. You’ll receive a name tag, program, and we’ll collect the \$15 for dinner at that time if you are joining us. I plan to have all of the albums on display out on tables there as well, and will have an empty table set up for anyone who may wish to bring a photo album or other memorabilia to share.

I’m really hoping to have the vinyl-to-mp3 project completed by the reunion as well. I’m converting all of the existing NHHS Choir record albums we have in the collection to digital files and hope to have them all made into CDs on sale. They will be \$10 per CD, with all proceeds going directly back into the choir student account to help purchase new madrigal costumes.

### **Rehearsal – 1:00-4:00PM, High School Choir Room & Stage**

It will be tight, but we can fit 125 chairs in the high school choir room. I’d prefer that we be able to sit for as long as possible while we go through each of the concert selections and get them ready for performance. Harriet Valliant (director from 1988-2011) and I will share the concert, taking turns on the podium at rehearsal and performance. The plan is to rehearse in the choir room until 3:00, take a quick break, and line up on stage to run the concert in the auditorium.

### **Dinner – 4:30-6:00PM, High School Cafeteria**

After we finish up our rehearsal together, we’ll walk to the other side of the building where we have a wonderfully catered buffet-style dinner for you. I hope to be able to bring the tables of memorabilia from the lobby to the cafeteria so that in addition to enjoying fellowship with each other, you can look through the pieces folks bring in to share.

If you happen to have any special dietary restrictions or allergies, please let me know so that we can arrange with the caterer to have something available for you to eat. We haven’t finalized details with the caterer yet, but I’d think it’s a pretty safe bet to say we’re having some sort of chicken and pasta along with salad and a dessert item.

### **Get Ready for the Concert – 6:00-6:30PM**

I would imagine most of you don’t plan to wear concert attire the whole afternoon, so we’ve allotted time to change clothes. What we settled on for the performance is standard concert black and white, and if you’d like to accent with red, feel free (ear rings, necklaces, pins, scarves, ties, etc.). When you arrive at registration, you may put your performances clothes in the auditorium draped over a seat. We’ll have classrooms open to give us plenty of space to change, and we can lock those rooms during the performance so that you may keep purses and other personal belongings safe.

## **Warm-up – 6:30PM, Choir Room**

## **Concert – 7:00PM, Auditorium**

We'll move the black chairs out of the way and line up in the choir room as if it is the stage, do a quick vocal warm-up, and then head to the stage at 6:55 so we can begin at 7:00PM. I'm going to invite our building and district administrators to attend, so if they would like, they may share some words with us prior to the concert as well as offer a welcome to the audience. I don't anticipate the concert running longer than about 35-40 minutes. There may also be a reception afterward, still working out details of that.

Al Teare Recording will be making a professional recording of our performance, which you may purchase to remember our time together. Order forms will be available in the lobby at the concert (Al brings them with him). I'll also make sure someone has my camera throughout the day and will post photos online within a week of the event on both the choral website as well as the Facebook group.

After the concert, we'll unlock the classroom doors where you have your belongings, and will also have boxes for you to drop off your music packets (unless you're paying the \$12 to keep it).

\* \* \* \* \*

I think that covers just about everything. I'm so looking forward to meeting you all and learning more about the wonderful choral tradition at North Hills. In my 13 years here, I've certainly grown to appreciate and understand what makes NH so great, even though my alma mater is on the other side of town.

In case you might be available and/or interested in seeing our current group(s) perform, here is a list of our upcoming choral events:

- Sunday, October 26 – Symphonic Choir performs with the McKeesport High School Choir at the Pittsburgh Concert Chorale's choir festival. We are performing 4 movements of Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* as a massed choir, and then we have a portion to perform and plan to sing "Song of Democracy" and "River in Judea." It takes place at Carnegie Music Hall in Oakland at 4:00PM.
- Sunday, November 9 – Women's Choral Festival. Our Women's Choir will perform on a concert that includes women's vocal ensembles from Duquesne University, the University of Pittsburgh, Pine-Richland High School, and the Carica Milica Serbian Women's Choir. This festival takes place at the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood at 3:00PM.
- Friday, December 5 – Symphonic & Women's Choirs join with the River City Brass Band and the Carson Middle School Choir for a holiday concert. 7:30PM, Carson Middle School (North Allegheny School District)
- Saturday, December 13 – Choral Parents Association's annual Madrigal Dinner fundraiser. Our talented young men and women will don renaissance era costumes, act out a skit, and sing old holiday favorites, all during a pasta meal served by the students and prepared by the parents. Tickets are \$12 and \$7, and will be available for purchase after Thanksgiving. The Madrigal Dinner is held at St. Athanasius Church and begins at 6:30PM.
- Wednesday, December 17 – Annual Winter Holiday Concert, featuring the Women's Choir, Symphonic Choir, and North Hills Singers. 7:00PM in the High School Auditorium.
- Sunday, December 21 – North Hills Singers perform at Phipps Conservatory at 7:00PM.

Looking forward to seeing you all on October 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup>. E-mail or call with questions ([cloonans@nhsd.net](mailto:cloonans@nhsd.net) or 412-318-1400 x3047).

Sincerely,  
Shaun Cloonan