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Thanking frontline heroes with song

Brian Thompson

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The Brant Men of Song will perform A Concert Recognizing Frontline Heroes on June 11 at 7 p.m. at First Baptist Church in Brantford, Ontario. PHOTO BY BRIAN THOMPSON /The Expositor

The Brant Men of Song are getting back in their groove.

The male chorus, which began in 1961, had planned for a 60th anniversary celebration last year, but pandemic restrictions made it impossible.

“We discontinued practices on May 10, 2020,” said president Ralph Hastings. “We had about 40 members that made for a nice chorus. Now we’re down to 20.”

The vocal group resumed practising in smaller sections of tenors and baritones last September, then, at the beginning of February, as a full chorus, with accompanist Amy Groleau and director Bill Schatz.

Hastings said the Brant Men of Song will present “A Concert Recognizing Frontline Heroes” on June 11 at 7 p.m. at First Baptist Church, 70 West St., Brantford.

He said proceeds from the concert will go the Brantford General Hospital.

“We hope the audience will get behind this and help fill the coffers so we can show that we’re really thankful for what the frontline heroes have done for us these past few years.”

The chorus has been holding its practices at First Baptist instead of at its usual home, the Brantford School of Instrumental Music on Marlborough Street. That’s because a deteriorating roof makes the school’s building unsafe to use until repairs can be carried out.

Prior to the pandemic, the Brant Men of Song would perform throughout the year at retirement and nursing homes.

“I think the city has missed music, and I hope this concert will bring some of the arts back into the city,” Hastings said.

Larry Davis, also known as the town crier for the County of Brant, has been a member of the Brant Men of Song for 35 years.

“It’s great camaraderie. Bill and Amy pick nice music for us to sing,” Davis said.

“It’s the music I enjoy: popular music, classical, a little bit of Beatles, and sometimes some show tunes. Those are fun.”

Hastings noted that, while some members don’t read music well, they “have a good voice and ear.”

And he praised Groleau and Schatz.

“We have an excellent accompanist and a top-notch director. We’re very happy they are with us.”

Tickets to the June 11 concert are \$20.

They are available through members of the Brant Men of Song or by calling 519-759-5577.

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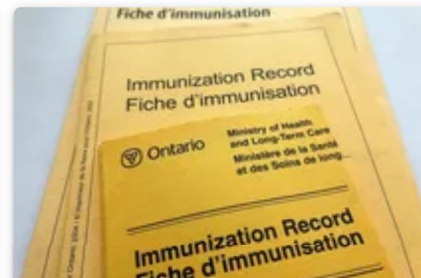
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