

Singers' Club turns nostalgic in "The Way We Were" this weekend

by Daniel Hathaway



When you're 125 years old, you have lots of memories to share. Institutionally speaking, the Singers' Club of Cleveland has reached that elevated station of life this season, and it's time to reminisce. The chorus will do just that on Saturday, March 10 at 7:30 pm in its next concert at the Breen Center at St. Ignatius High School in Ohio City.

"We've already programmed an old-fashioned Christmas," artistic director Natalie Mallis said in a telephone conversation, "and now we're going to give a concert titled 'The Way We Were,' with

the Barbra Streisand and Robert Redford movie in mind. We'll give the audience a look at what we've done over the years through footage of our performances, and sing songs from movies all the way back to the advent of the talkies and all the way forward to the music of John Williams. We'll even project baby pictures of our current members."

The all-male chorus is one of Cleveland's oldest performing organizations, having been formed at the request of the Cleveland YMCA in November of 1891. The chorus gave its first concert the following May, and has been going strong ever since under the leadership of conductors Melvin P. Unger, Albert Rees Davis, Beryl Rubinstein, Boris Goldovsky, George F. Strickling, Robert M. Stofer, Frank Hruby, Thomas Shellhammer, and now Natalie Mallis.

Soloists who have appeared with the Singers' Club over the decades include Tito Schipa, Nelson Eddy, Fred Waring, Eunice Podis, Sherrill Milnes, and Mark Doss. In

addition to its concert activities, the Club also awards scholarships for music students.



Saturday's concert will feature arrangements by Steve Milloy of the Cincinnati Men's Chorus. How do you make songs from the silver screen work with just the voices of guys? "Thank goodness for falsettos!" Mallis said. "But we've made a nice compilation of songs, including *Aura Lee* from the old 1930s movie *Come and Get It*. I've learned a lot during this process by conversing with members about the quintessential staples, and finding out when they remember first hearing certain pieces. The concert will also include songs by our small ensemble, The Centennials."

After reminiscing on March 10, the Singers' Club will begin work on their final program of the season. On May 19, "Through the Looking Glass" will explore themes from Alice's adventures in all twelve chapters of Lewis Carroll's book and include the premiere of a commissioned work by Andrew Rindfleisch. The program will also feature members of the chorus and local students reciting Carroll's unforgettable — and often nonsensical — poems.

Published on ClevelandClassical.com March 6, 2018.

Click here for a printable copy of this article

[Return to the Front Page.](#)