

KSC President's Report Oct 09
Connie Foss More

Since my last missive in the June 2009 issue, my volunteer work for the KSC has carried me on extensive journeys.

The first of these was representing the KSC at the International Kodaly Society's Symposium in Katowice, Poland, in August. In addition to participating in animated meetings of other national presidents with IKS personnel and interacting with ideas and colleagues from all over the world, I presented a well-received session on Canadian choral music for children's treble voices. KSC members Mary Stouffer and Ewa Krzatala impressed delegates with a summary of recent research in Toronto that significantly showed how Kodaly-style experiences for Grade One students raised IQ scores. Mary and Ewa also led delegates in some international musical games. BC Kodaly teacher Paul Domy's session focused on challenges created by multi-ethnic students such as those he has taught in Surrey, near Vancouver. Canada was also represented by AKA Vice-President Jorgianne Talbot.

A particularly auspicious moment came when Halifax resident and Lifetime KSC member Pierre Perron was unanimously named an Honorary Member of the International Kodaly Society by the IKS Board, in recognition of his long and distinguished service in Canada and at the international level. (See article elsewhere in this journal.)

Travel now is taking me across this continent Oct. 1 – Jan. 9, punctuated with workshops, observations and consultations with Kodaly, choral and university colleagues in Canada and the USA. My recent retirement from the role of Artistic Director of Victoria's "Viva Choirs" has enabled this more than 3-month odyssey. Here are the cities in which I'm involved in Kodaly activities, sometimes several things in the same location:

Alberta: Calgary, Red Deer, Lacombe, Edmonton, Medicine Hat

Saskatchewan: Regina, Saskatoon

Manitoba: Brandon, Winnipeg

Ontario: Waterloo, Toronto, Kingston

Newfoundland: Burgeo

Nova Scotia: Halifax

Massachusetts: Boston

Connecticut: Westport

Because "Kodaly" is such a broad concept, topics range from university aural skills and teacher-training to ideas for children from birth to secondary school. Vocal techniques and both folk and composed repertoire for children's choirs form another area of focus. My first stop was at the Kodaly Archives at the University of Calgary Library – a "must-visit" place for anyone doing research on the history of Kodaly's ideas in Canada. Amidst the busy visits are priceless opportunities to get to know real people who are enthused by the ideas of Zoltan Kodaly – sometimes during a homestay and other times over a meal or

during a cross-city drive. We have so much to share and enjoy!

Many other people have been busy with KSC projects, too, and I especially thank Vice-President Barbara Barter for her work with once again revising aspects of our By-Laws to meet national requirements. Past KSC President Kim Eyre and Secretary Carolyn VanderBurgh (née Neumann) shepherded these changes through a Special General Meeting in Ontario in August. Velvet Sulymka is organizing our next Annual General Meeting and national Board meetings in Winnipeg, in association with the Manitoba Orff Chapter and the University of Manitoba. We hope that lots of you can join us in Winnipeg on February 5 & 6! Maybe we'll prove that cold hands = warm hearts? I also continue to appreciate the major work that Eila Peterson does as Editor of "Alla Breve".

I'm thrilled to hear that there are plans to offer a Kodaly-inspired methods and musicianship course at the University of Alberta in Edmonton this coming summer. Watch "Alla Breve" and the KSC website for more information when it becomes available.

Reports from each branch show lively activity on a provincial level, and my heart rejoices. Don't forget that your membership entitles you to check out <http://kodallymusic.ning.com/main/authorization/signup> for assistance and inspiration at any time. Members and others can also make donations to the KSC and receive a charitable receipt in return for their generosity to a wonderful cause.

There are always challenges – financial cutbacks, membership recruiting issues, individual burnout-avoidance, and the like, but we are united in our belief that music is important and that our role can be significant.

This is one of my favourite quotes from Kodaly, and it's very fitting just now:

“Real art is one of the most powerful forces in the rise of mankind, and he who renders it accessible to as many people as possible is a benefactor of humanity.” (1953; The Selected Writings of Zoltan Kodaly, p 199.)