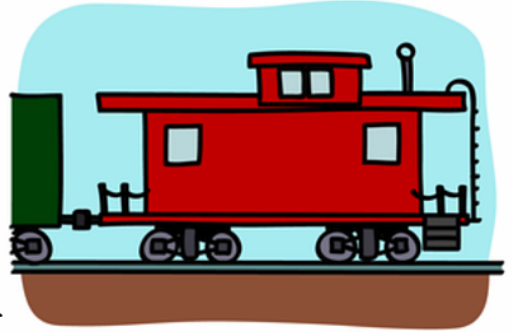




# THE CABOOSE



## AMBLER STATION SINGERS NEWSLETTER

ISSUE #2 JANUARY 2019

### *Hooray for the Holidays!*

Wow! From just an idea in June to a fully booked choral group doing a standing room only concert in December! You might say we are *Going Places!* Well, that's actually the title for our upcoming spring season and we'll get to that later. For this page, I think we need to pause and look back at where we have been since our last newsletter in October. Our merry band of singers made their debut at a rather frosty event on November 24th at Ambler Small Business Saturday (pictured at right) and the train was just starting to roll!



On December 8th, we did our first "official" concert at Trinity Church Ambler to a crowd of about 300. So many attended that we had to briefly stop before the second song and ask people to make a bit more room in the pews so others could sit down and enjoy the show. Chairs were also added to the isles for extra seating.

All in all, we had twelve shows in our fall season including some very interesting venues. These included welcoming Santa Claus to Ambler among a sea of children at Ambler Borough Hall. Here, we sung between stories read by Mrs. Claus while having a jolly good time!

A unique opportunity came up for us to create a smaller caroling group to entertain guests at the Morris Arboretum. We expanded on that mission slightly when we were offered (and accepted) an opportunity to stroll the main street of Ambler one evening, entertaining shoppers on the streets, and even did a few indoor numbers at some of the businesses.





We did not forget to have a little fun in the process! Rehearsals are serious business: often we must work very hard to get a number right. Still, after our Halloween rehearsal, we had a Halloween party! After our dress rehearsal at Trinity, we had an “Ugly Sweater” competition. Hard work and fun go together and may be one of the reasons we have seen our ranks grow from about 23 in September to 33 singers in December! The spring season title says it all! We are

### *Going Places!*



Much of our versatility comes at the hands of our director, Lisa VanHeldorf. Lisa is as comfortable directing a serious structured selection, such as a piece by John Rutter as she is with a parody of the Twelve Days of Christmas (think– chopping down the pear tree!) Lisa has quite a resume, which we covered in the last issue. If you missed it, it is on our website. We are very thankful to have someone who can get the serious work done but never hesitates to inject humor that leaves us all laughing!



### OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President:** Seema Vaidyanatham  
**Vice President:** Sandi Dziel  
**Treasurer:** Liz Seltzer  
**Secretary:** Sheila Bistany  
**Operations Manager:** John Dziel  
**Fundraising:** Barbara Zieper  
 Joan Lettieri  
**Singer's Liaison:** Maria Rosen  
 Lillian Higgins  
**Publicity:** Michelle Wilson  
**Venue:** Nancy Gold  
**Coordinators:** Doris Hurst  
**Member at large:** Jesse Shutt

### STAFF

**Incorporator/Director:** Lisa VanHeldorf  
**Accompanists:** Chris Henkel  
 Jackie Cohen  
**Website Design:** John Dziel  
**Soundman:** TJ Wilson

So, Who are we? Are we that formally dressed choir doing serious music? Or, are we that crazy bunch of singers in red shirt and jeans throwing out whatever song comes to mind?

**The simple answer is Both!!**



### Jesse Shutt - "Board Member at Large"

Those who have been with the group from the start know the story but for anyone new to the group, you may wonder "Who is Jesse, why does he appear every now and then, and what the heck is a 'Board Member at Large?'"

All good questions, so here are the answers! Jesse is an excellent bass singer with good sight reading skills who has been in previous choirs with many of us. Unfortunately, another choir he has been in for many years rehearses the same night we do! We have great respect for his opinions and he is a valued asset to the board. A member at large just means we want his input even though he does not have any fixed duties on the board. He has been involved with some of our singing projects, such as our caroling group, which did not conflict with his schedule. He has also been pressed into service to sing in our general choir and can do so quite easily as he is very used to Lisa's directing style, and is a current member of another choir she directs. So, if you see Jesse around, say "Hi" to a new old member of our merry band of singers!

### There's more to it than just a song !

There is another side to Ambler Station Singers that the audiences don't really see..... the set up and tear down! Most locations we go into do not have the type of sound or stage that we need to put on our best show. We carry all that stuff with us! About two hours or so before show time, John and Sandi show up with a truck and load into the building to set everything up. We don't really have any helpers for these set-ups but we are always looking! On teardowns we are far more fortunate. Pictured at right are our merry crew of roadie elves! Steve, Jake, Larry, John, Chris, and TJ (not pictured) If you are interested in joining our crew, please see John Dziel!



### Our Two Seasons



Being that it is January, we have just wrapped up our holiday season. This is the shorter of the two seasons and rehearsals kick off in September and end with our fall shows which are in late November and early December. Usually! The music is geared for the holidays, and we only have about 8 to 10 weeks to rehearse. **The Spring / Summer season is a different story!** These are far more intense shows and we rehearse January through May to get them ready! These shows are usually booked for late May through late June. For 2019 our Spring theme is **"Going Places!"** These will primarily be songs about travel and most likely some of those songs will involve.... Trains!

### What is the relationship between Trinity and our group?

*Ambler Station Singers* is not affiliated with any specific denomination. The people of Trinity have been very hospitable in allowing us to rent rehearsal space at the church and also giving us a discounted rate for our concert rentals. Our Operations Manager (John) works at Trinity as their Financial Administrator. As we are a non profit 501(c)(3) community outreach choir composed of volunteer singers, and a registered charity, we fit within the outreach definition of most churches.

### REHEARSALS

**WE REHEARSE WEEKLY AT TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
708 SOUTH BETHLEHEM PIKE, AMBLER, PA 19002  
7:15 PM WEDNESDAYS**

**The Caboose! Issue 2 January 2019** To submit ideas or articles, Email: [Caboose@AmblerStationSingers.com](mailto:Caboose@AmblerStationSingers.com)  
The Caboose is published each season or as may be needed!  
For all other matters, Email: [Office@AmblerStationSingers.com](mailto:Office@AmblerStationSingers.com)



### So, you want to do a solo?

Some people wonder why they never get picked to do solos. Of course, that's not the way it works. YOU as a singer have to go to the director and say "Hey, I'd like to do a solo!" Unless they know you want to do one, they are not going to put you on the spot. Some people have a dreaded fear of doing a solo, and the director cannot read minds. So, if you have a song you would like to do and it fits with the program theme, ask! Now, the director may like it or may suggest a different song for you. Still, the ball is now rolling forward!

Now the hard work begins. It is up to the soloist to obtain the music, any props or outfits, and figure out how to rehearse the piece. This last part is very important! It would be unfair to ask the accompanist to stay around an extra hour each night to rehearse everyone's solo. Only when the piece is near completion should you approach the accompanist. At that point you can work out the final details as well as get the final ok from the director that a number is "show ready."

The most common reason a solo may not go forward is that it is under-rehearsed. There are times when a number just isn't clicking by the time of the first show. This doesn't mean the piece gets trashed. Often, we will have done several shows before we start doing a piece. This is especially true in the shorter fall season.



### Maria Rosen - Singer's Liaison

When we formed Ambler Station we were looking for a way to always keep the lines of communications open between the singers and the board members. To do that, we created a position called the Singer's Liaison. Although the board only meets about 4 times a year, the board members are constantly active in their areas. If you have a question, problem, or even a complaint, Maria is the person to talk to! She will make sure whatever it is gets directed to the board member who is in the best position to answer your problem or find a solution for you! Just drop her an email at [Maria.rosen@verizon.net](mailto:Maria.rosen@verizon.net) Maria is also the person to contact if you can't attend a rehearsal.

### Spring 2019 Shows!

We are currently booking our spring shows, which will run from late May to late June. We are off to a great start with five shows already booked as of this writing! The primary public concert will be:

**Saturday, June 1st 3:00 PM *Going Places !***  
**Trinity Episcopal Church, 708 South Bethlehem Pike, Ambler PA, 19002**



Earlier picture from 12-16-18 MPC concert

### Surrounded by Pipes!

On December 29, members of Ambler Stations joined voices with the MPC choir to perform selections from Rutter's Requiem in a unique choir loft surrounded by a pipe organ. The service was to celebrate the life of Diane VanHeldorf, Lisa's mom, who passed on December 1st. *You just never know where the little train will take you!*