

# Remembering In S O N G

For the Fallen  
Text by Laurence Binyon

They shall grow not old, as we that  
are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them, nor the  
years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in  
the morning

We will remember them.

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the morning

We will remember them.

— by David Love

Very soon street corners and shopping malls will be anchored by men in blue blazers weighed down by rows of medals. Standing silent, they offer passers-by a symbol of solidarity and remembrance. By the simple act of fastening on that familiar red flower, we keep alive the diminishing corps of veteran's hope "lest we forget."

There are many different ways to remember. Some deeply personal and private, like the pause observed across this nation every Remembrance Day, and some public, like laying a wreath at a memorial or cenotaph or, attending a special Remembrance Day service.

In West Vancouver, the award-winning male choir, Chor Leoni

(Greek for "Choir of Lions") will honour veterans on November 11 with song.

The choir will perform songs which called men to war, provided comfort, spoke of peace and of home. Now in its third season, the 40-member Chor Leoni, under the baton of Diane Loomer, will reflect on wartime efforts through music from many languages and times.

A local Second World War veteran, Derrick Humphreys, a Regular Army member of the Royal Australian Engineers, says he can still recall the exact place and time he heard such familiar melodies as "Lili Marlene" and "White Cliffs of Dover." These songs, Humphreys remembers, were performed

in training camps to entertain the troops and more often were sung while they were "in-line."

These songs, still sung by Vera Lynn, hark back to stories and memories of emotionally charged times. Some herald victory, others cry out for peace and mercy. Each year, Chor Leoni conductor and founder Loomer sifts through music, most arranged specifically for male voices, and creates a performance she hopes will help us remember.

This year's program features a new work by Ramona Luengen and will also include Gustav Holst's dirge "For Two Veterans" (with brass), music from the movie sound track to *Henry V* and works by Tormis, Barber and Cherubini. Also back by popular request are "Songs Soldiers Sing" — a

collection of well-known First and Second World War tunes. Brass group Cornucopia, pianist Stephen Smith and narrator Christopher Gaze join with the choir in this musical remembrance.

As a gesture of respect and remembrance, the choir is offering complementary admission to veterans. This concert, says Loomer, has captured people's loyalty and serves as a comfortable, non-denominational way to remember and reflect. It's a tradition, she says, the choir is honoured to continue and to share with veterans and their families.

This Remembrance Day, Chor Leoni will present two concerts. The first will take place at noon at West Vancouver United Church, following the ceremony at the nearby cenotaph; the evening performance begins at 8 p.m. at Canadian War Memorial Church at 16th Ave., and Burrard St. Veterans are encouraged to contact 261-2670 for reserved seating. ☐

David Love is a member of Chor Leoni. Chor Leoni can be heard regularly on CBC radio. It's first CD called *Songs of War and Peace* is now available.

Diane Loomer in concert with Chor Leoni.

Photograph: Glen Erlson

