

Entertainment

Musical director is featured in Nornic Studio workshop

As Georgetown residents diversify their interests, interest in such fine arts as choral singing is on the rise, a movement anticipated by the Nornic Studio for the Performing Arts, which is presenting a workshop in choral development this month featuring well-known musical director Dale Wood.

From precocious beginnings at the age of three, Georgetown's Dale Wood already had claim to extensive experience in both vocal and instrumental music by the time he became organist for St. John's Church and, two years later, director of the Georgetown Choral Society.

Beginning October 17 and continuing for three consecutive Wednesday evenings, Mr. Wood will bring his teaching expertise to Nornic Studio's first adult workshop, to be held in the Knox Church hall on Main Street.

PLANNED WORKSHOPS
The first of three planned workshops for enthusiasts 16 years of age and over, Mr. Wood's course in choral development will act as both a primer for beginners and a refresher for those with experience, covering such aspects of voice training as breathing, diction and tone production. A variety of musical styles will present students with choral challenges as they learn the basics of "choral blend". Mr. Wood explained. One style in particular, however, will be examined in greater detail next May, when tutor Doreen Boss guides Nornic's adult students through a course in Broadway musicals.

Ms. Boss' four-week course will end the adult workshop series, preceded in January by a session in novice directing techniques, with Eugene Tishauer.

Like other tutors involved in the second season at the ground-breaking Nornic Studio, Mr. Wood admits that his course and curriculum must retain an experimental nature as the needs and abilities of students come into focus a year after the studio first opened its doors. There is every indication, however, that the public of Georgetown and district will turn courses like those of Mr. Wood and Ms. Boss into popular successes.

There has been "a tremendous response", for example, to Mr. Wood's plans to form a young people's choral "society", which, combined with at least five other choirs and similarly well-organized groups in the community, would push total membership to more than 100.

NO DOUBT
In church congregations across town, though, there are

no doubt members who cannot find the time to attend choir practices held on Sundays or alternate days during the week. Mr. Wood commented. The Wednesday evening workshops thus offer them an alternative means of becoming involved with an aspect of the fine arts that is at once inspiring, entertaining and stimulating.

And, of prime importance, the community and its environs offer graduating Nornic students ample opportunity to put their developing talents to use and continue their learning experience.

For Dale Wood, that learning experience began at age three and found an early highlight when he became the youngest Canadian ever to enter Grade 1 musical training. His youthful excellence at the piano enabled him to begin formal organ training at age 14, followed soon after with voice training.

With experience in teaching music dating back to his teen years, Mr. Wood obtained his teacher's degree from the University of Toronto in 1963, and carried on to conduct a 25-voice girls' choir before taking a job as assistant conductor and accompanist for the Etobicoke Centennial Choir, a ten-year sojourn that lasted until 1977.

It was during the latter part of that period that Mr. Wood was hired on at St. John's in Georgetown as church organ-

ist. In 1974, one year later, he performed as guest tenor soloist with the Georgetown Choral Society, an organization which dates back to the Thirties but remained inactive for several years until the mid-1970s.

PASSING EXPERIENCE
Mr. Wood's passing experience in coaching both baseball and football teams may have been more appropriate in Georgetown, where residents were only just beginning to develop interests beyond the Little NHL for which their community was famous.

During the period from 1975 to date, Mr. Wood's position as director of the Choral Society has seen that organization develop enormously from the status as a special-interest group to that of a motivating force in the community.

"This is no longer just a sports town," Mr. Wood commented. "When I started with the Choral Society in '75, we were really unsure of the market, but the audiences

really seem to have grown with it. Our Brahms' Requiem (performed early this year in conjunction with the Oakville Symphony Orchestra) was a big hit here, but it didn't do nearly as well in 'sophisticated' Oakville."

Mr. Wood notes the irony in the fact that the town is only now "struggling" to develop a proper theatre-auditorium facility, despite the presence

here of an active Little Theatre for some 20 years.

"When the theatre comes, it's going to be a great success," he added. "I foresee a day when we can have a full-scale orchestra here."

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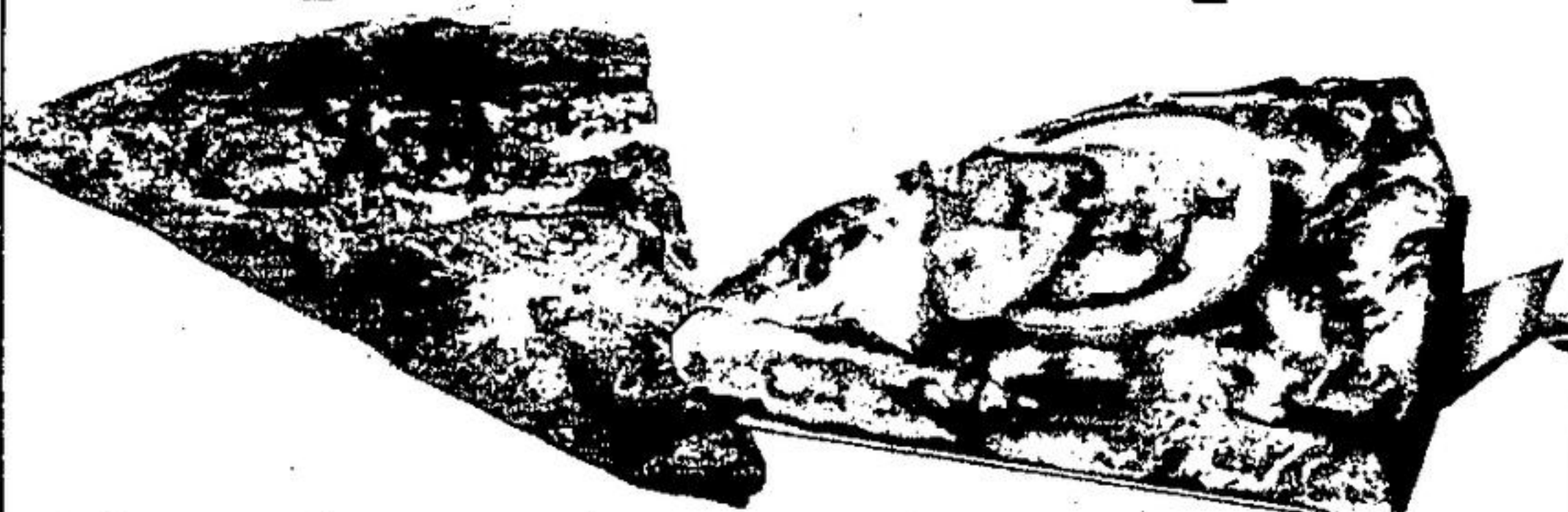
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