

the gustavus choir

# Echoes & Overtones

volume 1 ✕ number 1

## Message from the President

by Roy Heilman '00

Tenor and 1999–2000 president of the Gustavus Choir

Hello all Gustavus Choir Alumni and other friends of the choir! This is the very first edition of a newsletter that will be coming to you periodically! Current members of the Gustavus Choir have been and will continue to work on putting out this newsletter two times a year or so. The idea came from a past president of the choir, Jim Gale. He was president for the '82–83 school year and has given us much encouragement and support. This issue contains an article about his memories of being in the Gustavus Choir and his visions for this newsletter.

This inaugural issue has been sent to Gustavus Choir alumni for whom we have current addresses and to current Choir members. If you know of anyone else—alumni, parents, friends of the Choir, etc.—who would like to receive future newsletters, send their names and addresses to one of the contacts listed below. Enjoy! ➤

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**Echoes & Overtones:**

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## Musings of a Choir Alumnus

by Jim Gale '83

*Remember the times you've had here,  
Remember when you're away.  
Remember the friends you've made here  
And don't forget to come back some day.  
Remember the hills and valleys,  
The skies so heavenly blue—  
For you belong to G.A. College,  
And Gustavus belongs to you.*

*Remember the Gustavus Choir,  
Remember when you're away.  
Remember the songs you've sung here  
And don't forget to come back some day.  
Remember the joyous spirit,  
The memories deep and true—  
For you belong to the Gustavus Choir,  
And the Choir belongs to you.*

Near the beginning of the 1979–80 school year, in accord with then-prevailing tradition, the elders of the Gustavus Choir (including current Gustavus chaplain, Brian Johnson) informed those of us who were new to the group that we would be the guests of honor at a fast-approaching fall banquet. They told us that we would have two responsibilities to fulfill at the banquet: First, we would have to provide the evening's entertainment—a skit, song, or some other presentation of our design. And second, we would be expected to lead the Choir in singing "Remember." Specifically, the new members would stand in front of the returning members and sing the first verse. The returning members then would stand and join in the second verse. We were admonished—sternly—to memorize "Remember" for the big night.



Jim Gale

In the days following, we youngsters dutifully composed some sort of silly skit. However, we did not really even try to memorize "Remember." We figured that it had taken us a long time to put our skit together and that our senior colleagues couldn't really expect us to put in still more time to memorize a corny little song. And we figured that if we couldn't sing from sheet music, we could get a laugh by singing through the song in a mocking tone, omitting most of the words like this: "Remember, la la-la la la, Remember, la la-la la." Suffice it to say, we miscalculated.

As the banquet neared its end, we were told to sing "Remember." We'd barely started into our "funny" version when several of the upperclass members stopped us. They quite clearly were angry and disappointed. They told us to get our sheet music, given that we obviously needed it, and to try again. We were convinced that they were over-reacting. But, not wanting to stir up any more bad feelings, we went along. We sang this time not in a mocking tone, but without much enthusiasm either. We just wanted to finish and get out of there. As we finished our rather tepid rendition of the first verse, the returning Choir members stood and sang the second verse with us—and to us. Their singing was anything but tepid. As we listened, it began to dawn on us that this corny little song

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## Gustavus Choir Conductor, Dr. Gregory J. Aune

by **Melanie Kelly** Soprano '01

Gregory J. Aune just completed his fifth year as associate professor of music and conductor of the Gustavus Choir. He joined the Gustavus faculty in 1995 after teaching for seven years at Bethany College in Lindsborg, Kansas, where he conducted the Bethany College Choir and the Bethany College-Community Orchestra, and directed Lindsborg's annual Messiah Festival of Music and Art.

Dr. Aune earned his bachelor's degree in public school music in 1976 from Concordia College of Moorhead, Minn., where he also sang for noted choral conductor Paul Christiansen. He completed graduate programs in choral conducting leading to his doctorate in musical arts at the University of Iowa in 1987. His postgraduate experiences include study and performance with the Robert Shaw Chorale Institute sponsored annually by Carnegie Hall, New York.

At Gustavus, Dr. Aune conducts the Gustavus Choir, the Chamber Singers, and the St. Ansgar's Chorus (male chorus). He also teaches classes in conducting and choral literature and serves as the music director of the College's annual Christmas in Christ Chapel program.

Dr. Aune is very active on the campus of Gustavus, and often enjoys dining in the new Campus Center, or running across campus with his dog Oreo, who also has been gifted with musical talents that have been showcased during choir rehearsals. Dr. Aune also enjoys reading, fishing, spending time with his family, and participating in the annual choir football game (tenors and sopranos vs. altos and basses).

The Aune family is also very involved in life at Gustavus. Dr. Aune's wife, Julie Aune, teaches elementary music method courses for music and elementary education majors, and also directs children's choruses in the surrounding community. They have two daughters, Berit and Sonja; Berit was a first-year student at Gustavus this past year. ➤

## Beethoven's Ninth Symphony

by **Paul Miller** Bass '02

The Gustavus Choir performed Beethoven's Ninth Symphony the evening of Sunday, April 30, to a full house in Christ Chapel. The choir joined the Mankato Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Dianne Pope. The concert was the choir's highlight performance for the spring semester, and it was also the finale to the orchestra's fiftieth anniversary season. Joining in the celebration were the Concert Choir of Minnesota State University, Mankato, the St. Peter Choral Society, and the Minnesota Valley Chorale, for a combined choir of about 200 singers.

The Ninth Symphony is one of Beethoven's best-known works, and is

among the greatest compositions of all time. It is most famous for its "Ode to Joy" theme. The choirs joined the orchestra for the fourth movement. It is a jubilant setting of Schiller's great poem, *An die Freude*. The performance also included the talents of four professional soloists, including Gustavus' own Dr. Patricia Snapp.

"It was a nice opportunity for the students to do a major work," Dr. Aune commented. He was pleased to give the choir exposure to such great literature since, as he said, "This isn't really something we could take on tour." ➤

## Even So, Come, Lord Jesus Christmas in Christ Chapel 1999

by **Paul Miller** Bass '02

Five times during the weekend of December 3–5, 1999 Christ Chapel filled with worshippers to join in Gustavus' annual Christmas musical celebration. The theme was "Even So, Come, Lord Jesus: Scenes from the Revelation." It was the last Christmas in Christ Chapel service led by Chaplain Richard Elvee, who retired at the end of the 1999–2000 academic year. "I think Chaplain Elvee wanted to make a lasting contribution in his last year here. He did that by choosing Revelation as the theme," said Kevin Bergeson, '02, a baritone from Mendota Heights, Minn. Many students and worshippers were surprised to find a Christmas message in Revelation's apocalyptic scenes. The service concentrated on St. John, played by Chaplain Elvee. His visions were portrayed through dramatic readings, dance, a huge mural by artist Konstantin Berkovski, and—of course—music. The Christ Chapel Choir, the Lucia Singers, the Gustavus Brass Choir, the Gustavus Choir, the Gustavus Orchestra, the Christ Chapel Ringers, and the congregation joined to provide the music for the service. ➤

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Other contributors to the publishing of this newsletter are:

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# Tour 2000: Texas or Bust!

by **Katie Howe** Soprano '02

This past January, the Gustavus choir's 2000 concert tour included venues in Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. As usual, we sang for a few Gustavus alumni along the way, including Bruce and Natalie Peterson Torkelson '70 '71, Karin Hogberg Schatte '98, Rev. Stephen Youngdahl '68, and Pastor Dan and Nova Lien Kolander '68 '75. We enjoyed hearing their stories about Gustavus, and we were also very appreciative of all the other generous host families we encountered. The highlight for most of the choir was the free night that we spent in San Antonio, where we explored the historic city, ate at restaurants along the Riverwalk, and stayed in a hotel with an outdoor pool. Tour was a wonderful opportunity for all the choir members to become better acquainted and to brush up on the official card game of the Gustavus Choir, 500. ➤



**Former Gustavus choir director Philip Knautz and current director Greg Aune met at Texas Lutheran University in Seguin, Texas, during the choir's January 2000 tour.**

## *Musings continued from page 1*

represented for them what we only over time would come to understand as the deep and enduring traditions of the Choir. By mocking the song, we had mocked these traditions and had trespassed on "holy ground."

Nearly four years later, in the spring of 1983, most of us who had mangled "Remember" in the fall of 1979 gathered with our junior colleagues for the Choir's spring banquet. As departing seniors, we again were honored guests. It again was our responsibility to lead the Choir in "Remember." This time we did it right. Sure, we still knew that the song was rather corny. But we also had come to recognize the role played by the ritual singing of this song in passing on from generation to generation stewardship for the Choir and its traditions—and for making clear that one's stewardship opportunities did not necessarily end with graduation. As each of us ended his or her singing days with the Choir, those left behind reminded us in song that we each still "belong to the Gustavus Choir, and the Choir belongs to [us]."

If nothing else, we who sang with the Choir left Gustavus with wonderful memories of our experience. We shared long bus rides, hundreds of hours of rehearsal, concerts all over the world, Christmas in Christ Chapel, enduring friendships, and more. Most of us, I believe, left with an enormous reservoir of good will toward the Choir.

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is an important step  
toward making it possible  
for all of us to participate  
supportively in the  
Choir's activities.

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This is the first edition of a newsletter intended in part to replenish that reservoir by opening up new lines of communication between Choir members young and old. Current students will tell about their experiences. And old timers may share stories from the past.

The newsletter also is a vehicle for tapping into the reservoir of good will. It will let us know how we can support the Choir, for those who might choose to give support. Support might come in various ways, such as helping to plan a tour concert or giving money. It might involve something as simple as attending a concert, or offering support through prayer.

"Echoes & Overtones" is an important step toward making it possible for all of us to participate supportively in the Choir's activities. But are there other steps that we should take? Please think about whether you believe it makes sense to formally organize the alumni and friends of the Choir for the purpose of providing ongoing support. Some of us will be discussing this issue in the months ahead. If you want to contribute to these discussions, feel free to contact me any time. My phone numbers are 212/446-4849 (work) and 201/239-0495 (home). My e-mail address is <james\_gale@kirkland.com>. You also should feel free to contact Greg Aune, conductor of the Gustavus Choir, at 507/933-7347 or <gaune@gustavus.edu>. ➤

# Gustavus Choir in the American West (Part II)

by **Matt Hoppe** Bass '01

**Yes folks!** After 12 long years the Gustavus choir will tour the West Coast. We felt it was time again having not been there since 1989. Due to the difficulty of touring this area of the United States in a week, we will be traveling over the majority of our January-term. We will be learning the geography of the west under the guidance of Robert Moline, professor emeritus of geography. We fly into Seattle on January 12, make our way to Vancouver and Portland, and then San Francisco on January 16. There we will be joined by our loyal and friendly bus service, Lake Crystal Lines, who will transport us for the remainder of the tour. Our stops include:

- Washington (Port Angeles, Seattle)
- British Columbia (Vancouver)
- Oregon (Portland)
- California (San Francisco, Sacramento, Monterey, Visalia, Los Angeles, San Diego, Riverside)
- Arizona (Sun City, Scottsdale, Flagstaff)
- New Mexico (Albuquerque, Santa Fe)
- Colorado (Colorado Springs, Denver)
- South Dakota (Rapid City, Sioux Falls)

The tour is still in its planning stages. If anyone reading this lives in any of the venues named and has any suggestions for sponsors or concert sites, please contact Dean Wahlund in the next few weeks. You can reach him by phone (507-933-7521) or by email ([dwahlund@gustavus.edu](mailto:dwahlund@gustavus.edu)). ➤

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## Tentative Touring Plans for the Next Few Years

**2001** – West Coast (see article in this issue!)

**2002** – Upper Midwest (Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois)

**2003** – International Tour (Scandinavia or South America)

**2004** – High Plains (North and South Dakota, Montana, Minnesota)

**2005** – East Coast or Florida

Is the Choir touring in your area?  
Do you know of a good venue?  
Call Tour Manager Dean Wahlund at 507/933-7521 with your suggestions. ➤

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