

Date: Feb. 4, 2010
Subject: **Lady Cove Women's Choir to perform in Labrador**

Lady Cove Women's Choir, one of Newfoundland and Labrador's most celebrated choirs, has been invited as a special guest performer for the Festival 500 Labrador Regional Festival, happening in Happy Valley-Goose Bay from Feb. 18-21, 2010.

The Labrador Festival brings together adults and children from across Labrador to Happy Valley-Goose Bay, and Lady Cove Women's Choir, based in St. John's, for a four-day intensive musical experience, filled with workshops and rehearsals, culminating in a gala performance at the new Lawrence O'Brien Arts Centre. The concert includes performances by the massed adult choir, conducted by Dr. Douglas Dunsmore, a pan-Labrador youth choir, conducted by Kellie Walsh and special guest performances by Lady Cove Women's Choir and Cadence, an A cappella vocal ensemble based in Southern Ontario. The choirs will end the concert with a massed performance of almost 200 singers sharing with the audience the fruits of their four-day immersion in choral music.

Festival 500 *Sharing the Voices* is a celebrated international non-competitive festival of choral music that takes place in the intimate setting of North America's oldest city, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. Festival 500 was conceived around the ethos of singing as community which is reflected in the festival's name, *Sharing the Voices*. Singing has been an integral part of the

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province's community life – a way of celebrating, mourning, documenting events, telling the stories. The Labrador Regional Festival is an important and powerful initiative of Festival 500, one that heralds the power of song in all parts of our province.

“The power of song, the broad appeal and importance of choral singing lies in the unsurpassed opportunity it gives people to participate in an activity that involves them artistically, builds community, and allows them to contribute to a product greater than themselves,” said Kellie Walsh, Lady Cove's artistic director. “The experience of singing in a choir forges relationships that change the course of the singers' lives. Choral participation gives people a greater capacity for reflection upon and respect of their own heritage, as well, as the heritage of other cultures. We are delighted to be travelling to such a beautiful part of our province to participate in such an event. Lady Cove in Labrador allows us to broaden our presence in the province and our mentorship mandate, the benefactors of which are the young people of Labrador.”

Some members of Lady Cove Choir are professionally trained singers, instrumentalists and actors, including professors from Memorial University's School of Music, members of the Newfoundland Symphony Orchestra as well as school and private music teachers. While in Labrador, members of the choir will work individually, sharing their talents and skills with the children who would like private instruction in the arts. It is hoped the professional instruction and personal attention afforded by Festival 500, Labrador, and Lady Cove's participation will impact the lives of the young people involved. Likewise, the experience of making music with people from the community of Labrador will impact the lives of the members of Lady Cove Choir, broadening what defines them as a Newfoundlander and Labradorian.

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“Our intent is to invite young people who would like to further explore experiences in singing, playing, or other forms of the arts, to come to the island of Newfoundland in June to work with Lady Cove once again, as well as sing at Lady Cove’s final concert for the 2009-2010 season,” Ms. Walsh said.

The Lady Cove Women’s Choir will be performing on Friday, Feb. 19, 8 p.m. at the Lawrence O'Brien Arts Centre and on Saturday, Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m., also at the Lawrence O'Brien Arts Centre. Tickets are the Arts Centre box office, 709-896-4028.

The Festival 500 Labrador Regional Festival is sponsored by the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Labrador School Board and Provincial Airlines.

About Lady Cove Women’s Choir

Lady Cove Women’s Choir is named after the community of Lady Cove in Trinity Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador. Based in St. John’s, the choir of more than 40 voices was established by Kellie Walsh in September 2003. In 2008 the Choir won first place in the CBC Radio Competition for Amateur Choirs in the Contemporary Music category and then took first place at the 2008 Bela Bartok New Music Competition in Debrecen, Hungary. Most recently, Lady Cove has been invited to perform at the World Symposium on Choral Music, in Argentina, in August 2011.

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Nicole Dawe, Choir Administrator. (709) 687-7460,
E-mail: nicoledawe@gmail.com Web: www.ladycove.ca/
Or

Festival 500, *Sharing the Voices*, Jennifer Babstock. (709) 738-6013
Email: information@festival500.com, Web: www.festival500.com