Photos by Patrick Webb

ABOVE: Milt Williams conducts the Bayside Singers during a rehearsal at the Ocean Park Lutheran Church. LEFT: Patten learned a musical piece in German ahead of the upcoming Bayside Singers concert series. RIGHT: Christl Mack of the Bayside Singers.

Bayside Singers embrace Schubert and show tunes

Peninsula music group plans two concerts

BY PATRICK WEBB

When Milt Williams thumbed through his musical options for directing the next Bayside Singers concert, he chose a Franz Schubert piece called "Ständchen," or "serenade."

It didn't worry Williams that the song's lyrics are in German. He had an ace up his sleeve, two in fact. Soloist Andrea Patten, who serves as the president of the Long Beach Peninsula based singing group, has German roots. Her friend Christl Mack, who has been singing with the group since it began, is also from Germany. Patten was delighted, although she and former director Barbara Poulshock weren't familiar with the 1827 piece.

"Unexpectedly, Milt included a piece by Schubert, neither Barbara nor I had known, that has me singing with a chorus accompanying my solo part, the chorus mostly echoing my part, in German, no less." Patten said. She declared that the singers rose to the

Bayside Singers perform

Chinook School, 810 U.S. Highway 101, Chinook, Washington, Saturday at 2 p.m.

Ocean Park Lutheran Church, 24002 U St., Ocean Park, Washington, May 21 at 2 p.m.

Donations will be accepted at the door.

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challenge in rehearsals. "It was quite a valiant effort on their part to learn the German, 21 pages of it," she said. "Of course, Christl was much help, and we both trained the women in pronunciation."

The Bayside Singers will include "Ständchen" in two concerts this month.

Bayside members curtailed activities during the pandemic, holding off on their annual pre-Christmas show , but gathered remotely on occasion. However, the unexpected break meant that many group members drifted away. Members cautiously resumed in-person rehearsals last summer, masked and spaced well apart at the Ocean Park Lutheran Church.

Two pieces they embraced last summer will be featured in their upcoming shows.

The group will present "You'll Never Walk Alone" from Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Carousel" and Tim Osiek's modern arrangement of the old spiritual "Like a River in My Soul." Other Broadway hits planned for the group's performances include the title song from Rodgers' "Oklahoma!," "They Call the Wind Maria," from Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe's "Paint Your Wagon," and "One" by Marvin Hamlisch.

Williams took over leadership of the group from Poulshock some years ago after he retired to a 5acre farm in Oysterville, Washington. His career as a music educator included many years teaching at the University of California, Berkeley, and Stanford University. He has sung professionally in Europe and directed or assisted with per-

formances of Leonard Bernstein's "Mass," including one at the Vatican.

His baritone voice will also be heard. "We are very much looking forward to the piece from 'Les Miserables,' 'Bring Him Home,' in which Milt will sing the solo part, though brief, but gorgeous," Patten said. The song is presented almost in the form of a prayer, in which a man worries about the survival of his young friend as a group of revolutionary youth storm the French barricades.

The Bayside Singers first came together under Sandy Nielsen 15 years ago. Poulshock was then an accompanist and later became the group's director. Bayside now has a new accompanist, Janet Williams, who was Milt Williams' choral and recital accompanist for more than 50 years.

Patten spends significant time recruiting new voices for the group. Tenor, bass and soprano voices are still needed. But despite this, she is enthused about the group's return to live performances. "Very excited about singing back in vivo, though we still have a dire shortage of singers," she said. "But we are very much hoping to be able to sing without masks next fall, and that will hopefully bring our numbers back up a little."