

315 words, column #32
Java Talk
(for November 29, 2007 to December 5, 2007)

Every Age Is The Best Age

Very Nice Men

Earlier this year, at Walt McConville's book launch of *Meaningful Melodies*, where he kept his promise that this would be a highly entertaining afternoon, I made plans to write something about the Arion Male Voice Choir. Walt, now 93, a poet-singer, and a most-memorable long-time member of the Canadian Authors Association, but also of the Arion Male Voice Choir, has a number of his own compositions included in the Arion's vast library of music (www.arionchoir.ca).

The Arion Male Choir, which was "founded in 1892 and has continued without interruption since that time...is primarily a brotherhood of like-minded individuals, whose purpose is three-fold: a. To produce and enjoy harmonious male-voice music; b. To entertain, and to raise money for [their] continued operation and for local non-profit organizations and individuals; c. To have fun." According to the *Encyclopedia of Music in Canada*, "it was named for Arion, the poet-singer of ancient Greece who symbolized good fortunes for traveling musicians."

It is no wonder, then, that so many years ago, when my long-time mentor was helping me understand what makes a very nice man, that Walt would invite her husband to join the Arion Choir. She had asked her husband, who has a very lovely voice, and whom I knew read poems to her because she liked that sort of thing, to take me out for lunch, as a role model. (N.B. My dad died when I was two). Ever since that afternoon at the Laurel Point Inn, I have been privileged to meet many very nice men; and my appreciation of what some very nice men do beyond their work and raising their own families, continually grows.

The Arion Male Voice Choir will be performing in "Christmas Voices," on Friday, December 7th, at 7:30 p.m. at Centennial United Church, 612 David Street, in Victoria, with special guests, School District 61 Youth Choir, \$15 at the door.

Deidre Hill