



Probus Club - of Central
Edmonton
April 2018

editor: Brian Johnson

Speaker: April 10, – Michael Zaugg, ProCoro Canada

Our guest speaker last month was Michael Zaugg, Artistic Director and Conductor of ProCoro Canada. Michael gave us a short history of choral music. We have records of early group music dating back as far as 200BC, but what we would recognize as choral music began in the early 1400s with small groups that led singing during church services. The groups were small and consisted of boys and men (ages 5 to adult). There were originally no instruments – all singing was accapella - but the organ was introduced in the late 1400s. Michael took us through some of the great choral composers, culminating in JS Bach, “the greatest composer of all time”.

ProCoro started in 1980 in Edmonton and is a resident ensemble at the Winspear Centre. They are also attached to the Faculty of Choral Music at the Banff Centre.

Three and a half million Canadians sing in some sort of choir and 28% of Canadian adults have attended a choral performance.

Tour: April 26 – Hansen Distillery



My personal favourite!

We were the guests of Kris Sastrik and Shayna Hansen on our tour of the Hansen Distillery. The genesis of the business was the Hansen family’s tradition of “moonshining”, started by Shana’s grandfather when they moved to Alberta in the 1920s. While it was just a ‘hobby’ for them, clandestine sales to friends and neighbours helped get the family through the great depression and the war years.

Kris and Shayna started the distillery when changes in Alberta’s liquor laws allowed craft distilling of smaller batches of product. Using old family recipes, they are now making 1500 litres a week of various liquors. The tour finished with a tasting of 8 various products – vodkas, gins and cream liquors – and all delicious. We also saw the first Canadian ryes aging in barrels, with a timer attached. This product will be available in the spring of 2020 – we may want to book a return tour!