



50 Santa Rosa Ave, Suite #410
 Santa Rosa, CA 95404
 Event Chair: Karen Ely
 Presenter: Irene Sohm
 irene@sohmplace.com

**The Redwood Empire
 Virtual Sing-Along Messiah
 2020**

The Redwood Empire Sing-Along Messiah (SAM) began in 1980, under the baton of Dan Earl, in Santa Rosa, CA. For 39 years in a row, Dan Earl conducted this concert each December, with audiences numbering up to 500 participants. Originally, the event benefitted the Hospital Chaplaincy. When that organization dissolved in 2000, the Santa Rosa Symphony League (SRSL) stepped in to produce the event and receive the benefits. Now all proceeds from the event go to benefit the Santa Rosa Symphony Institute for Music Education.

Faced with the challenge of a worldwide pandemic in 2020, the SRSL was determined to keep the tradition alive, and offer Dan Earl the opportunity to lead the event into its 40th consecutive year. We decided to go virtual... creating a YouTube concert, composed of performances throughout the history of SAM, culminating with a new virtual "Hallelujah Chorus" for 2020.

Our Goals

- * Continue the tradition of SAM
- * Provide comfort and normalcy to our community during the pandemic.
- * Create a virtual legacy for the oldest continuous *Sing-Along Messiah* in the United States.
- * Raise funds to offset revenue lost due to pandemic

Founded in 1958, the Santa Rosa Symphony League is a non-profit organization of men and women who believe in the power of music. For more than five decades we have supported the Santa Rosa Symphony primarily by raising money for the Symphony's various music education programs. Every year we help reach nearly 20,000 young people with free concerts, hands-on training, and intensive in-school music immersion programs. We believe the young musicians of Sonoma County are our priority... and our future. As part of our fundraising activities, we host the oldest continuous *Sing-Along Messiah* in the United States, and we sponsor an ongoing *Festival of Parties* that includes musicales, author talks, bridge parties, gala events, and much more.



Collaboration

- * Ryan Brady
- * Dan Earl
- * Redwood Empire Chorus
- * Santa Rosa Junior College Chorus
- * Sonoma State University Chorus
- * Individuals from all over Sonoma County



Ryan Brady

Financials

- * \$500 Honorarium for Dan Earl
- * \$3500 Honorarium for Ryan Brady
- * Income:
 - o \$4000 Donation from Kiwanis
 - o \$2000 Online donations
- * \$2000 Net income



Dan Earl

Timeline

JUNE 2020: Reached out to Dan Earl, after being inspired by a virtual recording created by Ryan Brady, a former student of Dan Earl. (Ryan is a digital artist, multi-instrumentalist and award-winning composer for TV/Film and media.) Set up a zoom meeting and brainstormed how to produce a virtual event to honor our traditional SAM. Put together a core SAM committee of 7. Scheduled bi-weekly meetings via zoom.

JULY/SEPT 2020: Recovered and digitalized VHS recordings of previous SAMs. Created a cohesive one-hour show that embodied the essence of the longer Messiah. Identified possible participants for new Hallelujah chorus. Confirmed protocol for recording and submission of individual voices. Established media/communication platform to coordinate with participants.

SEPT/NOV 2020: Built the product – editing old footage, recording new introduction by Dan Earl, and syncing together every individual (90+ voices) submission of the Hallelujah Chorus. **Ryan Brady contributed 100s of hours of free labor to make this event a reality.** Set a drop date for this event on our YouTube page. Focused on advertising – marketed event via press, social media, radio, and eblasts.

DECEMBER 2020: The Redwood Empire Virtual Sing-Along Messiah premiered on Sunday, December 20, 2020. We scheduled a watch party, where viewers were able to interact with each other, posting comments as the concert progressed.

Successes

- * Watch party was attended by over 200 people.
- * We collected over \$2,000 in donations.
- * This event was attended by viewers in several different countries – expanding our presence as an organization.
- * We've had over 1.3K views thus far.
- * We kept the tradition (albeit virtually) alive and kicking.

The complete video can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/MVqapPldVaQ>