

## **Historical view of Yale Russian Chorus activities 1980 - 1989**

**April 11-12, 1980** YRC represented Yale at Harvard Festival of Men's Choruses; concerts at St. Paul Church and Sanders theater.

**Fall 1980** **Guy Brewer** became conductor.

**February 27, 1981** YRC provided the male chorus in a concert version of Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina* in Carnegie Hall with Eve Queler's Opera Orchestra of New York.

**November 10, 1981** Shostakovich's Choral (13<sup>th</sup>) Symphony, *Babi Yar*, with the New Haven Symphony in Woolsey Hall.

**May-June 1982** 9<sup>th</sup> Tour to USSR: Moscow, Leningrad, Baku (Azerbaijan), Tbilisi (Georgia), Kiev.

**Fall 1982** **Gregory Burnside** became conductor.

**January 1983** Midwest tour & Washington DC (broadcast on Voice of America).

**March 1983** Spring tour to Northeast (incl. Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville NY).

**1983** Another spin-off group – Bruce Lieberman's New York Russian Chorus, ex-YRC singers, mostly YRC music, concert at UN, CD 1987.

**September 1983** 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary concert.

**November 1983** First "Movable Feast" organized for **YRC Alumni** by Dub Alston and Rob Keeney, with a concert at First Church in

Springfield MA and a banquet at Rob's house in Somersville CT. These alumni weekends were repeated virtually annually until 1992.

**January 1984** Winter tour to Midwest included performance on NPR's *Prairie Home Companion* in Minneapolis, including a Russian version of the "Powder Milk Biscuits" song.

**March 1984** Spring tour to Florida; workshop with Denis at Emory Univ.; concert at Kennedy Center in Washington DC.

**1984** YRC Songbook, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., issued, Tom Grossi scribe.

**Summer 1984** Tour to USSR and Europe. In Moscow YRC sang rock songs (Lil Darlin', I Get Around) to great effect. In Warsaw YRC encountered some Solidarity people and learned their anthem. In Germany YRC member Bob Fischelis arranged for YRC to crash the inaugural party of the newly elected President of West Germany, Richard von Weizsäcker. The tour also featured the forceful ejection of the YRC, first from the Kremlin (Moscow) and later from the Arc de Triomphe (Paris), in both cases because it had spontaneously begun to sing Borodino.

**Fall 1984** **Parke Burgess** became conductor.

**October 1984** YRC performed Glinka's *Life for the Czar (Ivan Susanin)* with Eve Queler's Opera Orchestra of New York at Carnegie Hall and the Academy of Music in Philadelphia.

**1984 - 1985** Georgian spin-off groups formed by former YRC singers in Minneapolis and Boston: the Kartuli Ensemble and Iveria. Kartuli has toured Georgia repeatedly, appearing on Georgian national television and has itself spun off groups in various US cities.

**1985** 8th YRC record (Burnside) issued.

**Fall 1986** Michael Schnack became conductor. 9th LP issued.

**1987** YRC appeared again on NPR's Prairie Home Companion.

**June-July 1987** 11<sup>th</sup> tour of USSR and Europe: Leningrad, Moscow, Yerevan, Tbilisi, Taskhent, Irkutsk, Alma-Ata, Berlin, southern France, Spain, England, Wales. During tour YRC won 3rd prize in the "Choir of the World" competition at the Llangollen International Choral Festival (Eisteddfod) in Wales.

**December 8, 1987** YRC sang for Mikhail and Raisa Gorbachev at the State Department during the Summit in Washington DC. George Schultz quipped that, although a Princeton man himself, one thing that Yalies do well is to sing Russian music.

**March 1988** "Making Music Together" Festival with the Bolshoi Opera Chorus and the Boston Opera Chorus.