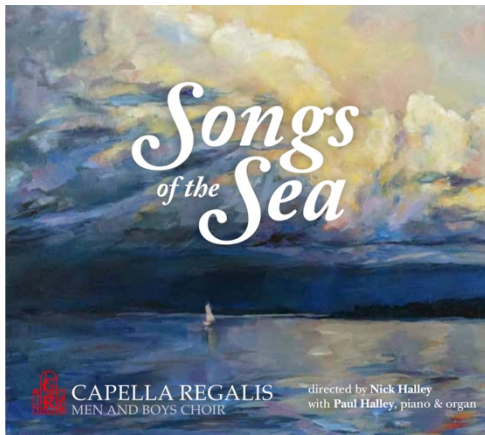




# CAPELLA REGALIS CHOIRS

6036 Coburg Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 1Y9 [www.capellaregalis.com](http://www.capellaregalis.com)

For immediate release: July 4, 2025



**3. Farewell to Nova Scotia**

1 The sun was setting in the west,  
The birds were singing on every tree.  
All nature seemed inclined to rest  
But alas there was no rest for me.

*Farewell to Nova Scotia, the sea-bound coast,  
Let your mountains dark and dreary be.  
For when I am far away on the briny ocean tossed,  
Will you ever heave a sigh or a wish for me?*

2 I grieve to leave my native land,  
I grieve to leave my comrades all,  
And my parents whom I love so dear,  
And the bonnie, bonnie lass that I do adore.  
*Refrain*

3 The drums they beat and the wars do alarm,  
The captain is calling, I must obey.  
Farewell, farewell to Nova Scotia's charms,  
For it's early in the morning and I'm far away.  
*Refrain*

4 I have three brothers, they are at rest,  
Their arms are folded across their chest.  
And a poor simple sailor just like me  
Will be tossed and turned on the deep blue sea.  
*Refrain*

*Words & Music: Trad. (Nova Scotia),  
arr. P. Halley*

In his Foreword to a children's book about this song, Allister MacGillivray wrote: "Farewell to Nova Scotia," also known as "The Nova Scotia Song," has been handed down from generation to generation since the 1800's, steadily and gracefully emerging as an unofficial provincial anthem. He relates how, in the 1930's, Nova Scotian folklorist Dr. Helen Creighton collected several variations of the song, and eventually published a composite of these variations in her 1950 book, "Traditional Songs of Nova Scotia." MacGillivray explains, "In essence, that is the version that we know and love today."

Although this piece has been recorded extensively (there are many, many different versions — even Celtic punk rock!), I felt that Capella Regalis, as a Nova Scotian choir, could not release its first album of sea songs without including it. Therefore, Nick and I asked Paul to arrange it for this CD. He gave the song a dash of exotic allure by envisioning the military drums in a Brazilian-inspired Marcha rhythm, which he knew Nick could readily provide. Paul's version, an immediate hit with the choristers, is a wonderful addition to the "Farewell" canon.

PHOTO: "Capebreugh Harbour, Nova Scotia".  
Photo by William H. Buckley, ca. 1900. Buckley  
Family Nova Scotia Archives 1985-386 no. 47

**Capella Regalis Men & Boys Choir takes a deep dive into the musical heritage of their Maritime home with a new album and contemporary composers** Directed by Nick Halley, "Songs of the Sea" features new arrangements of traditional folk songs by Grammy-award winning Nova Scotian Paul Halley and others

Capella Regalis Choirs, based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, is proud to announce the release of their latest CD, *Songs of the Sea*, featuring choral works inspired by the sea performed by Capella Regalis Men & Boys Choir under the direction of Nick Halley.

This new album from one of Canada's premiere choral ensembles presents both traditional and contemporary pieces arranged for choir, piano, organ, and percussion, with new arrangements by multi-Grammy Award-winning composer Paul Halley and Capella Regalis founder and artistic director Nick Halley, which were written especially for this recording project. The roster of performers on this CD is multi-generational, including young singers from age 7 up to professional musicians age 70, making for a uniquely meaningful exploration of maritime song traditions carrying through the generations.

"Being a maritime choir, it seemed only right to do a sea songs recording. What I hadn't fully anticipated was just how right it would feel, with this particular group singing these particular songs," says Nick Halley, the choir's founder and a multi-instrumentalist. "The whole process was a joy, from start to finish: choosing the songs from our wonderfully rich maritime heritage, hearing my father Paul's

arrangements take shape, working up my own arrangement of *Skye Boat Song*, watching the choristers fall in love with each tune – poetic and melodic gems, with their evocations of seafaring scenes past and truly present to us here – and ultimately getting to record them with the brilliant John Adams in the control room. What a privilege. Now the Capella Regalis team has decided we just want to make another one!”

*Songs of the Sea* includes new takes on Maritime classics like “Farewell to Nova Scotia” and Cape Bretoner Alistair MacGillivray’s “Away from the Roll of the Sea”, alongside traditional folk songs from Scotland and England such as “Skye Boat Song” and “Blow the Wind Southerly”. The selections reflect the deep ties of people and communities to the sea, drawing on themes of naval and fishing expeditions, historical events, and folklore. For instance, “Petty Harbour Bait Skiff” tells the story of a tragic 1852 boat sinking in Newfoundland, while “The Grey Selchie” recounts a legend from the Orkney Islands about a shapeshifting creature who is a man on land and a seal in the sea.

The album was recorded in Halifax’s historic, stone All Saints Cathedral by John D. S. Adams (Stonehouse Sound). Released on June 6, 2025, *Songs of the Sea* is now available on all major streaming platforms, including Apple Music, Spotify, and YouTube Music. The physical CD, which includes a 20-page album booklet complete with archival photos from the Nova Scotia Archives and liner notes by Executive Producer Vanessa Halley, is available through Capella Regalis’s online shop. Visit [capellareglais.com/audio](https://capellareglais.com/audio) for details.

## TRACKLIST

1. “Petty Harbour Bait Skiff” – John Grace, arr. Paul Halley
2. “Away from the Roll of the Sea” – Allister MacGillivray, arr. Paul Halley
3. “Farewell to Nova Scotia” – Trad., arr. Paul Halley ([+ MUSIC VIDEO](#))
4. “O Waly, Waly” – Trad., arr. John Rutter
5. “They That Go Down to the Sea in Ships” – Herbert Sumsion ([+ MUSIC VIDEO](#))
6. “The Leaving of Liverpool” – Trad., arr. Paul Halley ([+ MUSIC VIDEO](#))
7. “The Grey Selchie” – Trad., arr. Paul Halley
8. “Skye Boat Song” – Trad., arr. Nick Halley
9. “Blow the Wind Southerly” – Trad., arr. Paul Halley
10. “United in Song” – Paul Halley

[DIGITAL ALBUM BOOKLET \(click to view\)](#)

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**ABOUT CAPELLA REGALIS MEN & BOYS CHOIR [capellaregalis.com](http://capellaregalis.com)**

Capella Regalis Men & Boys Choir is the flagship choir of Capella Regalis Choirs, a Canadian charity dedicated to training singers within a centuries-old choral tradition and performing choral music of the highest excellence. Founded in Nova Scotia by director Nick Halley in 2010 to build upon the best aspects of a centuries-old European choral tradition and to revitalize this method of music training in Canada, Capella Regalis now comprises a Boys Choir, Girls Choir, and professional Men's Choir (including Young Men with recently changed voices). Its children's choirs are free and open to any child who is keen to learn music.

Capella Regalis Choirs regularly sing Choral Evensong in the Cathedral Church of All Saints, Halifax. The choirs also perform concerts around Nova Scotia and beyond in a busy September – June season, and have collaborated with professional soloists and instrumentalists from across Canada in major productions including J.S. Bach's *Easter Cantata BWV 4*, Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols*, Fauré's *Requiem*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Schütz's *Musikalische Exequien*, Rutter's *Visions*, and the Paul Winter Consort's *Missa Gaia/Earth Mass*. Capella Regalis has completed seven performance tours in the Maritimes, and has released five CDs: *Songs of the Sea* (June 2025), *Benjamin Britten: A Ceremony of Carols* (2023), *Love Came Down: Carols for Christmas* (2019), *Greater Love* (2017) and *My Eyes for Beauty Pine* (2014), as well as many online performance broadcasts.

Video recordings of Capella Regalis performances can be found at [youtube.com/capellaregalis](https://youtube.com/capellaregalis).