

Syd Birrell F.R.C.O, G.R.S.M., A.R.C.M.

The life of Syd Birrell is a coat of many colours. Syd was born in Sarnia, Ontario, and began his musical career as a young chorister at St. George's Anglican Church, Montreal. He studied at the Royal School of Church Music in London, England, and the Royal College of Music, winning a Sawyer Prize in Organ performance. Returning to Canada in 1975, he took the post of organist and choirmaster at St. John's Anglican Church in Peterborough until 1984, and then held the post of Director of Music at Murray St. Baptist Church until 2008. Syd is now organist and choirmaster at All Saints' Anglican Church in Peterborough.

He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists and has been organist at Lakefield College School for 32 years, where the Friday morning "Sing with Syd" has become a much loved tradition for generations of students. Syd is the founder and conductor of the Peterborough Singers, one of Canada's top-ranked choral societies. A talented entrepreneur, Syd has interests in real estate, church organ sales, and is a published writer and a motivational speaker. Syd is also active in providing innovative in-home care for the brain injured.

Syd and his wife Pamela, herself a cancer survivor, launched the James Fund for Neuroblastoma Research at Sick Kids Hospital in Toronto while their young son James was still fighting cancer. Since James' death, the James Fund has become a major force in the search for a cure for the childhood cancer neuroblastoma, in great part due to the drive and commitment Syd pours into the Fund as an ongoing testament to the courageous life of his son. Syd is the author of "Ya Can't Let Cancer Ruin Your Day." Syd and Pam continue their adventures in living with their surviving children Rebecca and Ben.