

‘It’s a pretty loud house, in a good way’

ALISON JENKINS TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

Singer **Claire Dingee** was recently awarded the 2018 Judith Waite Memorial Scholarship from Harmony, Inc. PHOTO: SUBMITTED

SAINT JOHN • When Claire Dingee joined the Sea Belles a cappella chorus at the age of 14, she didn’t realize she’d be gaining some extra moms.

Ann Connolly, who handles public relations for the Sea Belles, said there are some 50-something mothers supporting Dingee in fulfilling her life’s ambitions.

Dingee’s mom, Valerie, brought her into the choir. The scholar has always loved to sing.

“It’s such a foundational part of how I relate to the world. It’s so inherent to my experience of life I don’t know how I would express myself otherwise,” said the 20-year-old.

She lives in Waterloo, Ontario with three other singers.

“It’s a pretty loud house, in a good way.”

Dingee was at home when she found out she was awarded the 2018 Judith Waite Memorial Scholarship from Harmony, Inc. She’ll be able to put the funds toward her studies at Wilfrid Laurier University, where the alto is taking classical voice.

“I’m just so happy that this particular scholarship is a part of my life and also that it’s going to enable me to do more of what I love to do,” said Dingee.

The scholarship goes to a daughter of a Harmony Inc. singer. There are three Harmony choirs in New Brunswick that sing a blend of barbershop harmonies and music from traditional to contemporary.

The goal is to “empower all women through education, friendship and a cappella singing,” said the website.

Dingee joined the Sea Belles as soon as she could at 14 years old. Already a performer in the Rothesay Rotary Girls choir, she learned a lot from joining the women’s choral group.

“When you’re performing with people that you really care about, you start to think about who else you’re performing with,” she said.

“It does make me more cognizant of what I’m bringing to the group.”

For fun, Dingee said she loves to sing songs from the 1800s.

“I love singing German Lieder, whenever I get the opportunity,” she said. “I find the language incredibly beautiful and the style during that era was incredibly expressive.

“It’s a lot more unpredictable than music from eras before, and I enjoy that.”

Dingee is planning a career as a soloist and, inspired by her own instructors, as a music educator “in some capacity.”

The Sea Belles are welcoming new singers in open auditions on Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. until Oct. 30 at Portland United Church.

For more information contact Bernice at 506-214-1449, or by email inquire@seabelles.ca , or online on Facebook or www.seabelles.ca.

The Elm City Echoes will join the Sea Belles on Sunday to host a concert at the newly named Harmony United Church at 8 Upland Rd.

Concert is at 2 p.m. Admission is a free will offering.