

## **Chapter History of Clallam County Threshold Singers**

**2025**

### **Chapter Formation**

The Clallam County Threshold Singers, originally called Clallam County Threshold Choir, was founded in October 2016 by Betty Marcoux. After reading about Kate Munger, Betty explored the Threshold Choir community, visited the Port Townsend Threshold Choir, and connected with Threshold Choir International to learn how to establish a chapter in Clallam County. Her research and outreach laid the foundation for a local group rooted in the broader mission of comfort through song.

### **Early Connections and Recruitment**

Betty partnered with a local hospice where she met staff member Astrid Raffinpeyloz, who remains involved with the chapter today. Astrid helped spread the word to recruit new singers and brought deep historical ties—she was among the original singers who met with Kate Munger in March 2000 at Katharine Osburn’s home in California’s Bay Area. True to her pattern across many moves, Astrid quickly joined and encouraged others, reflecting her history of seeking out or starting choirs in the East Bay, San Francisco, Ashland, Mount Shasta, and Fresno.

### **Building Community Roots**

Several singers joined early through Betty’s outreach in the Northwest Women Chorale, where they already sang together. Astrid also invited interested hospice volunteers, and word-of-mouth expanded the group further. This blend of choral networks, hospice partnerships, and community referrals established a durable base of mission-aligned singers.

### **Practices and Membership**

Initially meeting once a month, the choir shifted to twice-monthly gatherings after three months to support stronger musical cohesion and readiness for bedside sings. Membership has fluctuated over time, at one point reaching about 20 singers and currently stabilizing around 6.

### **Community Service**

The choir now averages about two bedside sings per month. While community sound baths have not yet been offered, the idea is under consideration as a way to engage broader audiences and deepen outreach. Clients come through two local hospices, assisted living and nursing facilities where promotional materials are shared, and word-of-mouth recommendations from families and care teams.

### **Pandemic Impact and Continuity**

COVID-19 brought significant disruption, leading to the departure of several members. Even as a relatively young chapter, the choir has already experienced the loss of two members and now sings for one former singer living with dementia. Despite these hardships, the chapter continues to welcome new members whenever interest arises and maintains its focus on bedside service.

### **Leadership and Roles**

Leadership has evolved with the chapter’s needs.

- **Musical direction:** Betty Marcoux currently serves as musical director.
- **Administration:** Doris Kirby supports operations as administrator.
- **Shared responsibilities:** Other members have taken on roles in promotion, organizing bedside sings, and onboarding new singers, distributing tasks to sustain continuity and care.

### **Chapter Outlook**

With steady bedside service, resilient leadership, and a core of dedicated singers, the Clallam County Threshold Singers remains an active chapter committed to gentle presence at the bedside. The group continues to explore new ways to connect with the community while honoring the core Threshold Choir tradition of comfort through song.