

Senior shares songs from the past

By [Cara Brady - Vernon Morning Star](#)

Published: **January 19, 2010**

John A. Cochrane likes nothing better than sharing his love of music.

“I think I’ve learned by heart at least five songs a year for 80 years so that’s more than 400 songs of all kinds. We have a wonderful heritage of music and some beautiful songs came out of the Depression era,” he said.

Cochrane, 93 wants to make sure these songs are enjoyed by the people who remember them and those who are hearing them for the first time.

A recent performance of *The Impossible Dream* at the Silver Star Rotary Club brought him a standing ovation and led to the club and the Schubert Centre putting together a show for him Jan. 24.

He was raised in Coronation, Alta. and started playing the violin at age 10. It wasn’t long before he was playing for local dances which he did until he joined the Canadian Army Service Corps in the Second World War. It wasn’t long before his skills and training in wireless equipment were needed for war production and 12-hours shifts meant there was no time for music.

After the war, he took up the banjo and led sing-alongs for the YMCA, Scouts and other groups. He also brought his baritone to the Edmonton Mixed Chorus and was a soloist in the Westmount Presbyterian Church. He retired from a career in refrigeration technology in 1981 and kept entertaining around Edmonton.

“I took up the keyboard because the keyboard and singing work so well together,” he said.

He moved to Vernon in 2003 and lost his wife in 2004. He lived at Coldstream Meadows for several years and was happy to take part in the Meadows School Project.

“It was such a pleasure to work with the children on the old songs. Some of the children, well, they are teenagers now, will be coming to show on Sunday and it will be so good to see them,” he said.

Cochrane now lives at Carrington Place where he often entertains. He is also a composer, including a special song for his wife.

“My music, that is, the songs I play, is 50-years-old and beyond and tends to be soft and sentimental but it will live forever and it appeals to all ages,” he said.

“People tell me they appreciate the feeling I put into the songs. It’s wonderful feeling for me to see people enjoying the music, it makes me feel loved that I can do that for them.”

John’s show, sponsored by Silver Star Rotary and the Schubert Centre, takes place Sunday at 2 p.m. at the Schubert Centre. Admission is by donation, with the proceeds going to Silver Star Rotary and Schubert Centre community projects.



John A. Cochrane checks out the venue for his show at Schubert Centre Sunday.

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