

# Live from Duxbury, it's Mickey White and the Washington Street Carolers

When COVID hit, the actor and Boston Conservatory at Berklee grad started a new carol-singing tradition that's still spreading joy today

By [A.Z. Madonna](#) Globe Staff, Updated December 15, 2022, 11:50 a.m.





The Duxbury-based Washington Street Carolers, shown here in 2020, will be returning to spread holiday cheer around the South Shore. COURTESY OF MICKEY WHITE

In the next few days, several Christmas parties and restaurants in and around Duxbury will be visited by a band of seasonal merry-makers. They'll arrive with bells on, wearing elaborate Victorian costumes, and sing a few songs in eight-part harmony: "Deck The Halls," "We Wish You a Merry Christmas," "Frosty the Snowman." There might even be a visit from Santa Claus. And this Christmas, unlike the last time they assembled, they won't have to do it all masked.

"It was so hard!" laughed Mickey White, the Duxbury-raised actor who founded the Washington Street Carolers in 2020. "Our masks would get wet . . . and then they would freeze in the cold, and then we were inhaling . . . oh, my God, it was crazy. No masks is going to be great."

White, who currently plays Sketch in the national tour of "Hairspray," was in his first performance season after graduating from Boston Conservatory at Berklee when the pandemic shut down live theater. His family's Christmas Eve tradition of seeing "A Christmas Carol" at Providence's Trinity Repertory Company was

still off the table once the holidays rolled around, so White decided to take on the task of making “the Christmas magic,” as he calls it. He pulled on some local connections to assemble a group of carolers, and they rehearsed masked and distanced at Duxbury’s historic Odd Fellows Hall during the first December of the pandemic.

“I was just trying to keep arts alive, and actors employed, and offer entertainment to everyone because nothing was happening. I thought of caroling because we could still be outside,” explained White, who credits his time working on Disney cruises, and regular family vacations to Disney World before that, as his inspiration for wanting to give his audiences “an exceptional guest experience.” (Perhaps fittingly for an actor named Mickey, his resume includes “Mickey Mouse Impersonation.”)

Because White was performing on cruises through the 2021 holidays, the caroling group did not reassemble last year. He wasn’t sure if he was going to revive the caroling group this year either, until he realized the “Hairspray” touring schedule allowed for it. By that time, “right after the Fourth of July,” he was already getting inquiries about whether the carolers would be available for holiday visits, he said.

“I don’t know how he does it,” said caroler Rachel Burke, a veteran of the 2020 group who is returning to sing this year. “He’s amazing . . . no one’s spending their own money to buy costumes or anything.” The carolers’ period finery is rented from Emerald City Theatrical Costumes in Rhode Island, and the group is sponsored by Island Creek Oysters and realtor Liz Bone of South Shore Sotheby’s International Realty.

But White knows he wouldn't have gotten anywhere without a little help from his friends. "I couldn't have done all these things without all my people wanting to come and create art still," he said. "I've been lucky to know all these awesome people who have been gung ho about these projects."

At press time, the group were booked for approximately 70 gigs across the six days of their run, with some open slots still remaining. "It's a 10-minute set, and then we have 10 minutes to drive to the next place. Mickey makes everything magical," said Burke, a music educator who met White while they both attended Duxbury High School. "I think the first weekend [in 2020] we did 24 shows in one day . . . and everyone appreciated it. I felt like it just brought joy."

If you haven't booked the carolers for your own party, you can catch them in public at Duxbury locations including Windsor House, Duxbury Pizza, and Chestnut Street Grill at various times between Dec. 15 and 22. These and other public performances will be announced on the group's Instagram, @washingtonstcarolers.

## **WASHINGTON STREET CAROLERS**

Various locations through Dec. 22. [www.mickeytwhite.com/caroling](http://www.mickeytwhite.com/caroling)

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