

A new Musical Director for Chansons

Chansons is Perth's chamber choir, established in 1979. We are proud of our reputation for the high standard of our choral performance, our versatility and varied repertoire.

Our current Musical Director, Howard Duthie, an accomplished music teacher, conductor and organist, will retire from this role after our 40th anniversary concert in April 2019.

We are seeking a new Musical Director, to take up duties from the autumn of 2019. Would this role be of interest to you?

Are you a skilled and enthusiastic musician with:

- experience of conducting, especially choral, and of working with a variety of accompanying resources (piano, organ, chamber group or orchestra)?
- the ability to make rehearsals enjoyable and to motivate an adult choir to produce best results?
- the skill and creativity to put together interesting concert programmes which develop flexibility and breadth in Chansons' repertoire?
- sufficient time available to enable an adequate rehearsal schedule to be arranged?

Would you be willing to participate as a member of the choir committee? Could you help us to develop the choir's reputation and would you be willing to remain with the choir over a period of years?

If you are interested in this position we would be delighted to hear from you. Please write or email with a brief account of your musical experience, particularly as a choir conductor, and why you are interested in Chansons. Please feel free to make contact as soon as you wish but at the latest by 30 September 2018. This approach will be received in confidence by the Chansons Committee and will be entirely without commitment at this stage on either side.

In December 2018/January 2019 we will wish to meet with prospective candidates who match our desired profile. We hope through this process to be able to invite suitable candidates to run a trial rehearsal in February/March 2019, with a view to making an appointment shortly thereafter. We would expect the successful candidate to take up post in or around August 2019.

An honorarium is offered to the successful appointee. We would wish to discuss the level of honorarium sought when meeting with a prospective candidate.

Please come along to hear Chansons in action. We are happy to arrange complimentary tickets for you at any of our concerts scheduled as follows:

Sunday 22 April 2018	7.30pm	St Mary's Monastery, Kinnoull, Perth
Saturday 12 May 2018	12 noon	Old High Church, Inverness
Sunday 27 May 2018	2.30pm	Alyth Parish Church
Sunday 30 September 2018	3pm	Innerpeffray Chapel, near Crieff

If you have any questions about the appointment, please feel free to contact me by email or phone. Information about Chansons is enclosed and can also be found on our website - www.chansons.co.uk. On request we would be pleased to supply a more detailed list of concerts and repertoire and/or a sample recording of Chansons in concert. I look forward to hearing from you.

Bill Band
Chansons Administrator
March 2018

tel (01350) 727806

email bill.band@btinternet.com or bill.band@lineone.net

About Chansons

Our Members

Our members are drawn from Tayside and Fife. The number of singers in Chansons is held at around 40. Entry is by audition. Successful auditionees may be placed on a waiting list until a vacancy arises in their voice part. Soloists are normally drawn from within the choir.

Singers are expected to make themselves available for our main 'home' concerts in spring, autumn and at Christmas. In addition, they are invited to commit to other concerts and associated rehearsals as they arise. Typically, Chansons will appear as a choir of 30-35 for larger choral works or in smaller groups according to the occasion. We are happy to perform 'a capella' or accompanied by keyboard, organ or orchestral ensemble to suit the performance. In Perth, we have excellent working relationships with reliable and talented accompanists and instrumental groups.

Our Concerts

In recent years Chansons has routinely put on three 'home' concerts per year in some of Perth's prime venues: St John's Kirk, St Mary's Monastery and St Ninian's Cathedral. In addition, we take on a range of other engagements including weddings, private functions and charitable events. In recent years we made regular appearances at the annual Ruthven Parish Music Festival. We have also performed in Edinburgh, the Western Isles, Aberdeen and this year in Inverness. Other performance venues in the United Kingdom have included Builth Wells (Wales), Cork (Ireland) and the Ribble Valley (England). Chansons has also visited Perth's twin towns of Cognac (France) and Aschaffenburg (Germany). We have developed a strong link with Ars Antiqua Kammerchor in Aschaffenburg with whom we have performed joint concerts either here in Perth or in Aschaffenburg. There is no fixed pattern and we respond actively to new concert opportunities.

Chansons operates throughout the year - though we usually arrange a break during the summer or after particularly busy spells.

Although we would expect the Musical Director to conduct the choir for our main concerts, we are open to the option of making use of a guest conductor on occasion, or a suitably skilled choir member for smaller engagements.

Our Rehearsals

Regular rehearsals are held on Monday evenings in the Perth Christian Centre Annex, 28 Glasgow Road, Perth from 7.15 to 9.30pm. A 'dress rehearsal' is arranged at the concert venue on the day of a concert especially if this involves orchestral or ensemble accompaniment. Typically we will meet for some 25-30 rehearsals in the course of a year. Usually there are no regular rehearsals during the summer (e.g. June to mid-August).

Our Repertoire

We have a varied repertoire, largely classical, both secular and sacred, but including traditional or folksong arrangements, occasionally excerpts from musicals and opera choruses. Please see the enclosed list of our concerts since 2002 showing the principal programme items in each.

Our Musical Directors

Chansons has had only two musical directors. From 1979 to 2002 our Musical Director was the choir's founder, Henry C Neil, a principal teacher of music for whom Chansons was one of his keenest interests. He was awarded an MBE in January 2000 for services to music.

Howard Duthie became our Musical Director in 2002. After a successful career in music education at The Royal High and George Heriot's Schools in Edinburgh and latterly at Morrison's Academy in Crieff, Howard retired from full-time teaching in 2010. He has since become involved in a wide range of professional musical activities in Perthshire and beyond. In 2012 he was appointed Director of Music and Organist at St John's Kirk, Perth.

Howard will lead us up to our 40th Anniversary Concert in April 2019, after which he will retire from the choir. We are therefore seeking a new Musical Director to begin with the choir in the autumn of 2019. The exact handover timetable is open to discussion.

Our Committee

Chansons is a non-incorporated association (that is, it is not a limited company), and is registered as a Scottish Charity. The choir is run by a Committee of up to six persons: an Administrator (who chairs the committee), the Musical Director, Treasurer and three others. Under the choir's constitution, the Musical Director has a specific role as follows:

The Musical Director shall be entrusted with the musical direction of all performances and with the selection and musical training of the participants in the works to be performed.

The Committee shall, when possible, invite the Musical Director to suggest suitable works to be performed and shall be guided by his technical advice in making the final choice.

Financially, the choir covers the majority of its costs through fees charged for performances, or ticket sales. This income is supplemented by an annual membership subscription and various grants or sponsorships which are sought from time to time for special occasions. Chansons does not receive any standing annual grant.

Our Publicity

Chansons has a website www.chansons.co.uk with an online ticketing facility. We also have a Facebook page @ChansonsPerth and a Twitter account @ChansonsChoir.