

Obligations...

Each financial member is obliged to:

1. Read the rehearsal schedules and other notes carefully in order to be aware of all rehearsals, official functions and performances and each member is to attend as many as possible.
2. Read emails regularly to make sure all important choir information is received.
3. A) Attend a minimum of 75% of rehearsals to be able to join a performance.
B) Seek guidance from the musical director if more absences are incurred. The musical director reserves the right to audition the singer prior to a performance.
3. Attend all specified rehearsals in the final two (2) weeks prior to a performance.
4. Record attendance at each rehearsal on the attendance record sheet.
5. Register an apology with the nominated person or on the attendance sheet for any rehearsal that will be missed.
6. Take good care of all music issued and return this music in good condition after each performance. (Only light pencil marks are allowed on the score. Music should not be folded, bent or creased. Lost music will be expected to be paid for.)
7. Be punctual for all rehearsals.
8. Be financially responsible for their uniform or for its hire and return.
9. Wear the uniform stipulated by the Committee at each performance. (If you do not wear the appropriate uniform the Committee or the nominated person on its behalf reserves the right to exclude you from the performance.)
10. Promote the choir in a positive light especially in the recruitment of new members and the selling of tickets for our concerts.



Member Information

Welcome to the Brisbane Concert Choir

The Brisbane Concert Choir at St Andrew's is an auditioned adult mixed-voice community choir of between 40 and 50 members drawn from all walks of life, based in Brisbane, Australia. Formed in 1996 by Dr Guy Jansen, it was directed by Christopher Kiver until July 2002, and thereafter came under the direction of Graeme Morton, until the end of 2003. Following an extensive search for a new Musical Director, Debra Shearer-Dirić was appointed to the position in May 2005. The Brisbane Concert Choir has quickly established an excellent reputation for its performances of diverse repertoire ranging from *a cappella* pieces to full symphonic works, including a number of Australian premieres. The choir regularly performs with the Sinfonia of St Andrew's and in 2000 performed Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* with the Queensland Orchestra and Brisbane Chorale. Other performances have included appearances for ABC Television and in prestigious festivals such as Brisbane's Cathedrals Week.

The choir was the first to trial the Gold Level Choral Assessment offered by Trinity College London in 1998, and has been used for numerous workshops throughout the city.

In 1999 the Choir embarked on a highly-successful ten-day tour of New Zealand, and toured North Queensland in June 2002, shortly after the release of its first CD "Journey".

The Choir plans to release a new CD in 2008 and perform at Advent music festivals in Vienna and Prague.

Getting to know your fellow singers

Each week at rehearsal we have a "tea-break" for about 20 minutes. Tea, coffee and biscuits are available for a gold coin donation. This is a great chance to have a chat to other choir members—particularly those from different sections. Singers are expected to wear supplied nametags for the benefit of new members.

From time to time social events are arranged where everyone is invited to come along with their family.

Communication

At each rehearsal the Chairman will provide an update of any relevant information to all members in attendance. Rehearsal schedules and other notices will often also be available (in hard copy) at each rehearsal.

The main form of communication to all members, however, is via regular email so it's important that you read your emails regularly. If you do not have email please find an "email buddy" who will ring you to let you know any important information.

Member Rights and Obligations

Members are those who have paid their fees (as per the Constitution) and who have completed the audition requirements to the satisfaction of the Musical Director.

Rights....

Each financial member has the right to:

1. Vote upon any decision of the choir at the Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting.
2. Elect the management committee officers or be elected as an officer of the organization.
3. Be informed of the financial standing of the choir.
4. Suggest songs and repertoire for future performances.
5. Join all performances and tours provided no stipulated limit for a specific performance applies.
6. Insurance cover at rehearsals and performances and for travel to and from these events.

Uniform

The Brisbane Concert Choir has a formal uniform which is worn for all concert performances. Uniforms may be purchased or hired. An announcement will generally be made a few weeks prior to the next performance and you will be directed to the committee member responsible for uniform distribution at that time.

Women

Long Black skirt, Black blouse, black stockings and black court shoes. Concert Choir Red scarf.

Men

Black long-sleeved collared shirt, black long trousers, black shoes and socks Red kerchief.

Jewellery and Perfume

Please keep jewellery modest (in size and quantity!) Please also avoid wearing strong smelling perfumes or after shave for performances.

Folders

For performances music is to be held in a Brisbane Concert Choir folder which members purchase for a small fee.

Security

The church and hall where we rehearse are accessible to the general public. This means it is essential to keep your valuables with you at all times. Choir members should take the initiative and speak immediately to any strangers (“Can I help you?”) and report their presence to a committee member.

The same applies when we are rehearsing upstairs in the church. You should be particularly vigilant during the tea break. Unfortunately, neither the choir’s insurance nor that of the church covers loss of personal possessions.

During performances, a locked room is normally provided for securing of valuables. The safest way is to bring a bare minimum of valuables with you and to carry them on your person at all times if possible.

Transport and Parking

Due to our City location parking can be difficult. There are Public car parks close by. The nearest moderately priced car park is under the Novotel Hotel in Astor Terrace. This is only 5 minutes walk from St Andrew’s. Central Railway Station is a short walk from rehearsal if you prefer to catch the train.

If you’re lucky you may find on-street parking. Wickham Terrace has parking meters and some streets are free after 6pm. It’s first in best dressed—and a good incentive to be at rehearsal early!

Our Musical Director

Dr Debra Shearer-Dirié



Dr. Debra Shearer-Dirié, completed her Undergraduate degree at the University of Western Australia. She holds a Diploma of Kodály Education from the Kodály Institute, Kecskemét, Hungary, a Master of Music Education degree and Doctorate of Music in Choral Conducting degree from Indiana University, USA. While at Indiana University she was director of the Indiana University Children’s Choir and assistant director to Paul Hillier with the Pro Arte Singers. From 2000-2001, she was selected as Artistic Director of the Northwest Girlchoir in Seattle, a 400-voice ensemble which performed frequently with the Seattle Symphony

Orchestra. Dr. Shearer-Dirié has presented at the National Conference of the American Choral Director’s Association in New York 2003, and at the Australian National Choral Association conference in 2004. In 2005, she was appointed Musical Director of the Brisbane Concert Choir and in 2006, founded the Vox Pacifica Chamber Choir which has just returned from a very successful tour of Tasmania including several well-received performances at the National ANCA conference. Dr. Shearer-Dirié lectures at The University of Queensland and has been editor of the Australian National Choral Associations Journal publication. She travels nationally adjudicating and conducting.

Share Our Vision

The purpose of our choir is to:

- develop members' choral singing ability
- Provide an enjoyable experience for its members
- Perform public concerts
- Encourage members of the public to listen to choral music
- Contribute to St Andrew's Uniting Church mission in its arts outreach

Choir Management

All choir activities are managed by an elected Committee consisting of: a chairperson, secretary, treasurer and four general committee members. All committee positions are voluntary and honorary. The committee is elected each year at the AGM (usually held in March.)

The Musical Director also sits on the committee. The Musical Director and the Accompanist are appointed by the Committee and paid a fee for their services.

A librarian looks after all our music requirements.

Membership

As a community choir, membership is open to anyone who satisfies the audition criteria. You do not have to be a member of St Andrew's church to join.

Becoming a Member

Auditions apply for people wishing to become members and will be arranged with the Musical Director when you apply for membership and at other times throughout your membership if required. We aim to hold auditions for applicants at the end of their second rehearsal with us.

The audition will consist of:

- your own choice of piece
- vocalizing led by the Musical Director
- an ear test—singing notes in a chord
- a short sight-singing exercise

Rehearsal Commitments

At the first rehearsal you attend, a copy of the current rehearsal schedule will be available. Please read this carefully so that you know when and where the rehearsals will be held.

The Choir usually rehearses Tuesday evenings from 6.15—8.15pm at the St Andrew's Uniting Church Hall, Corner Creek and Ann Streets, Brisbane. Entrance to the Hall is on Creek Street.

Details of extra rehearsals or changes of venue will be provided as necessary. Remember to tick off your attendance on the attendance sheet at the start of each rehearsal.

Fees

As per our constitution the Management Committee sets the membership fees which must be paid either annually or per term.

The current fee schedule for our choir is listed on our website.

These fees are to be paid to the Treasurer by two weeks into the concert season. For insurance purposes, everyone must be a current financial member before performing with the Choir at public performances. Payment may be made by cash, cheque or direct deposit.

Music

On arriving at your first rehearsal you will be directed to our librarian who will provide you with the music you will need. You will be required to return this music to the librarian at the end of the rehearsal. This will apply until you have been auditioned and become a fully paid up financial member of the choir at which time you will be issued with music you can take home and practice.