

Local choristers Scotland-bound with 'Love Notes'

By Marni Walsh

The Headwaters' Concert Choir has performed at Carnegie Hall, New York; St. Peter's Basilica, Rome; Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris; Esterhazy Palace, Vienna; Lincoln Cathedral and St. Alban's Cathedral, England; Salzburg; Prague; and this July, St. Giles' Cathedral Scotland will be added to the choristers' impressive list.

Headwaters-area residents will get an opportunity to hear the Canadian premiere of the Love Notes concert this Saturday, (June 11), at St. Joseph of Nazareth Anglican Church in Brampton.

Shelagh Tyreman, the choir's tour conductor, who is also the music director at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Brampton, said when the invitation came to present a concert at St. Giles, the mother church of Presbyterianism in Edinburgh, 'we jumped at the chance.'

Founded and usually directed by Tyreman's husband, Rob Hennig, the local choir has gained a reputation for its 'blended and expressive sound,' winning awards for interpretations of composers such as Handel, Rutter, and Beethoven. Formed about 20 years ago with members from across the Headwaters area, it has grown from an initial group of 16 to more than 50 members. The ethereal refrain of those many voices floating from their rehearsal space in recent weeks, in preparation for June 11 and the tour abroad have been nothing short of heavenly.

Tyreman holds three music degrees, attended specialist programs at the Britten-Pears School for Advanced Musical Studies in Aldeburgh, England and the Banff Centre for the Arts, and is a busy classical singer, musical theatre performer and private teacher. She says, 'The concert highlights Love Notes to our beautiful country, featuring Canadian compositions from all across the country - the West Coast, the Prairies, Central Canada, and the Maritimes.'

The Choir has commissioned a new work, Autumn's Orchestra, by composer James Brown, based on the poetry of E. Pauline Johnson.

Johnson was 'a late 19th-century Canadian poet and performance artist, whose themes of nature, gender and racial discrimination still resonate today,' the conductor said.

A duet composed by Tyreman will also be an exciting part of the repertoire, and the audience will have the pleasure of hearing accompanying clarinets, violin, banjo, bongos and percussion instruments.

'The sound of the choir is spectacular,' Tyreman said. 'They are putting their hearts and souls into the music and as the conductor, I have to say it is life-affirming and deeply moving for me to hear. The depth and quality of the Canadian compositions is inspiring. We are so proud to be Canadian artists, representing Canada internationally.'

She said singing abroad and touring together brings 'a renewed dedication to the members. During the actual tours, the choir members socialize and have so much fun, and support each other in a way that can only be described as magical.'

Aside from the honour of singing at St. Giles' Cathedral, the group is excited to be going on the Harry Potter, Hogwarts train, a ferry ride to the Isle of Skye, and taking a Loch Ness cruise. As fans of the book and television series Outlander, the group will visit the Clava Cairn stones, and Culloden battlefield, where young Scots lost their lives fighting for Bonnie Prince Charlie in 1745, as well as the Scottish Highlands.

For those interested in becoming involved with the Headwaters' Concert Choir, members 'span all ages and walks of life' and are 'open and excited to have new talent.'

Call or text for a consultation at 647-529-6752; no auditions are required and rehearsals are every other Monday night, currently at Claude Presbyterian Church in Caledon.

The June 11 concert Love Notes takes place at 4 p.m. at 290 Balmoral Dr. in Brampton. General admission is \$20, ages 12 and under free. For further information, please contact robertbhennig@gmail.com