

The below invitation was prepared by W.S. Gwynn Williams for distribution by the British Council. This was the original summons sent out to call overseas competitors to the first ever International Musical Eisteddfod in Llangollen back in 1946 and the sentiment behind it still holds true today.



This is a cordial British Invitation to the . . .

WORLD'S CHOIRS

To compete at the

LLANGOLLEN INTERNATIONAL
MUSICAL EISTEDDFOD, WALES

June 11th to 15th, 1947

(FIVE DAYS)

A festival contributing, through the making of music together, to international amity and understanding.

ADVANCE ANNOUNCEMENT

DETAILS OVERLEAF

LLANGOLLEN, a picturesque North Wales town with swift-running mountain streams flanking the romantic - and to the ancient Britons, sacred - river Dee, invites choir of armature singers of other Islands to join those of Wales in three choral competitions to be held at an international musical eisteddfod from June 11th to 15th, 1947.

The competition will take place at Llangollen, heart of what has been described as "some of the loveliest brook and glen scenery in the world," within five hours' train journey from London. It is one of the homes of the Welsh people's national festival of song, poetry and literature, called the Eisteddfod - meaning a gathering of poets and singers - which still continues annually traditions founded 800 years ago on a love of the arts.

The people of Llangollen, among them postman, municipal employee, quarry and factory worker, tradesman, school teacher, professional man, industrialist, the housewife and young people - indeed, representing all who form the life-pattern of a busy, well-equipped town - are co-operating, with the leading musicians of Wales to guide them, in organising the competitions.

The winning choirs will become the custodians of a notable award, symbolic of international unity through the arts.

GESTURE OF GOODWILL.

Llangollen promotes the competitions as a gesture of good-fellowship to help in bringing peace-loving and democratic peoples into closer personal association within the sphere of a genuine common interest.

Llangollen believes that in the age of atom and rocket bombs, which ignore national boundaries in their capacity for destruction and death, peace demands a boldness equal to that shown in war. Though this expression of a small mountain town's boldness for peace may be far less spectacular than a deed of war, it is at least constructive, opening a door, maybe a narrow one, through which men and women of many lands may meet freely in friendship stimulated by their mutual love of music-making.

The Welsh people have long been passionately devoted to peace and to the arts of peace. It is no accident that the children of Wales, using the magic carpet of the modern world, radio, send each year a message of good-will and peace to the children of the world, to which the youth of as many as 35 nations sometimes reply.

Wale's reputation for choral singing does not necessarily mean that she attains the highest standards reached by professional choirs. The

significance of Welsh choral achievements is that it is the singing of the amateur. This is the root and core of its reputation.

These people who have called each other "Comrades" - "Cymry" in their own language - for nearly nine centuries. Have found in singing a stimulus to their love of freedom, and to their self-expression.

In brief, in a land which contains one of the first examples of harmonised singing - in the 12th century - most of the people choose to sing themselves, rather than to listen perpetually to the professional musician

HAPPY RIVALRY.

The conductors of their choirs may, or may not, be professional musicians, but their choirs, competing in happy, friendly rivalry at their many festivals, or singing in their churches and chapels, are always amateurs - a mixture of men and women of all sections of the community, providing an example of how an active love of culture over rules distinction of class or wealth.

It is this atmosphere, created by a people nurtured among colourful mountains and valleys which inspire their romanticism and warm-heartedness, that choirs of other lands are invited to share in June, 1947.

Welsh people have long experienced of organising festivals of music attracting audiences sometimes of 20,000 people. They have been keen radio listeners to the singing of other nations - but listening by radio is no longer enough. Welsh lovers of choral music want to meet and hear in person the amateur singers of other lands.

Many thousands will welcome the overseas choirs of armature singers to Llangollen. They will be thrilled by a note of true national pride in the singing of the visiting choirs because all nations have their own peculiar gift to make to the treasured unity of the tively, as they have learned to do during many generations of listening to competitive singing. Their pleasure will be to give their overseas visitors a truly warm welcome, their concern will be to hear the best that each choir can offer.

They will, too be eager to hear the overseas choir' own national songs at evening concerts. The Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod is not merely an annual festival promoted by one nation for international audiences but a festival of music- making in which representatives of the peoples of other nations can take an active part.

The competing choirs in 1947 are limited in size because of the prevailing travel difficulties. As traveling improves, there will be provision for larger choirs in later years.

The adjudicators of the competition in 1947 will be a panel of prominent musicians.

THE CONTESTS.

There are three contests in which international choirs are invited to compete:-

- (1) For Mixed choirs, comprising men and women, numbering 50 to 60 voices.*

Each choir will be required to sing the following:-

- (a) AVE VERUM CORPUS. William Byrd, 1543-1623. To be sung in Latin. Publisher : Oxford University Press, 36, Soho Square, Oxford Street London, W.1.*
- (b) CLOSE OF DAY (Diwedd Dydd). Vincent Thomas. To be sung in English or Welsh. Publisher : Gwynn Publishing Company, Llangollen, North Wales*
- (c) *Any one of a competing choir's own national songs, sung in the choir's own language.*

- (2) For Female choirs, numbering 25-30 voices.*

Each choir will be required to sing the following:

- (a) ET MISERICORDIA J.S. Bach, 685-1750. To be sung in Latin. Publisher : Oxford University Press, 36 Soho Square, Oxford Street, London, W.1.*
- (b) THE LITTLE BABE. Benjamin Britten. To be sung in English. Publisher : Boosey & Hawkes, Ltd., 295 Regent Street, London, W.1.*
- (c) *Any one song of a competing choir's own national songs, sung in the choir's own language.*

- (3) For Male Choirs, numbering 25-30 voices.*

Each choir will be required to sing the following:-

- (a) O SACRUM CONVIVIUM. Lodovico Viadana, 1564-1645. To be sung in Latin. Published : J. and W. Chester, Ltd., 11 Great Marlborough Street, London, W.1.*
- (b) HEY NONNY NO (Hal, Noni No). Bryceson Treharne. To be sung in English or Welsh.*
- (c) *Any one of a competing choir's own national songs, sung in the choir's own language.*

**Competing choirs from Welsh communities overseas may, if they so desire, choose in Section (C) in each of the three competitions a Welsh song*

or a song of the country of their adoption, using the language of that country.

HOW TO ENTER.

Choirs proposing to compete should give notification of their entry on the form enclosed in this pamphlet, which should then be sent to reach the Honorary Secretary, Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod, Town Hall, Llangollen, Wales, Great Britain, or a British Council Representative in any country, as soon as possible and before February 28th 1947.

Copies of the music may be purchased from the publishers at the addresses mentioned after each of the test pieces given above, or may be obtained from the British Council, either through its Music Department, 3, Hanover Street, London, W.1., or any of the British Council's offices or British Institutes in the various capitals of the world.

A competing choir unable to secure the sheet music required should communicate with the Honorary Musical Director, Plas Hafod, Llangollen, North Wales, who has a supply of copies available.

The decision of the Executive Committee or the Adjudicators acting on its behalf in any matter concerning the Competitions is final and binding upon all parties and this is an agreed condition of entry.

All members of competing choirs must be amateurs - i.e. people who do not earn their whole livelihood from singing, but the choir conductors may be professional musicians.

The British Council's offices may be consulted for advice or enquiry, including, for example, difficulty over traveling arrangements. Choirs will pay their own expenses including traveling to and from Llangollen.

Every effort will be made to minimise the expenses of the visiting choirs while they are in Great Britain, and to secure accommodation suited to their requirements.

Further information will be sent to competing choirs on receipt of their entry form.

There will also be competitions for soprano, mezzo-soprano, contralto, tenor, baritone and bass non-professional soloists, and for pianoforte and violin non-professional soloists. The test pieces chosen for these competitions will be announced later, when the titles will be supplied on application to the Honorary Secretary.