

Arts & Entertainment

Concert on Sunday

The Milton Youth Chorus will present its last concert directed by Monette Gould Sunday at Southside Community Church.

The 2 p.m. concert will feature performances by the junior and senior choirs.

Ms Gould came to Milton

from New Brunswick 12 years ago. Her three years as the Milton Youth Chorus' director included a trip last June to New Brunswick where the choir had the opportunity to sing with the world-renowned Young Acadian Singers.

Andrew set to launch solo CD 'Dream a Little Dream'

By FANNIE SUNSHINE
The Champion

From the first time she took to the stage, Lesley Andrew knew this was her destiny.

After years of opera and theatrical experience, the former Milton resident will launch her first solo CD, *Dream A Little Dream — A Collection of Lullabies for Young and Old*, tomorrow at the Living Arts Centre in Mississauga.

"For a first CD, artists tend to go to with their best work," the singer/actress said.

"I went with a lullaby theme. The CD is for children, mothers, lovers and friends. It's not baby oriented, although a friend of mine told me her little one falls asleep to the CD. When people hear the songs, it's sure to bring back memories."

Unlike most recordings, the instruments and vocals were recorded together, not separately, she said.

"It was rather fatiguing," she said. "But I wanted to record it all together to get a different feel for the album. I'm very much into live performances so I wanted the feel of what you hear is what you get. The purpose of the CD is to get work as a live performer."

Songs include Gershwin's *Summertime*, Brahms' *Wiegenlied*, Puccini's *Senza Mamma*, Grieg's *Solvjgs Vuggesang* and Andre, Khan and Schwadt's *Dream a Little Dream*.

Ms Andrew was introduced to the world of the performing arts when she entered E.C. Drury High School as a grade 9 student.

After her first school performance of *Fiddler on the Roof*, she was hooked on the adrenaline rush she felt when performing for live audiences.

"I don't know if I chose my career or if my career chose me," Ms. Andrew said.

After high school, she attended Wilfred Laurier University in Kitchener where she obtained an honours bachelor of music and voice performance and a fine art and opera diploma.

Two days after graduation, Ms Andrew moved to Stratford and began rehearsals with the Stratford Festival.

She's performed in many theatrical productions including the *Mikado*, the *Pirates of Penzance*, *Twelfth Night*, *Cyrano De Bergerac*, *Alice Through the Looking*



Lesley Andrews' solo CD will be released tomorrow at the Living Arts Centre in Mississauga.

Glass, the Music Man and Patience.

Besides the positive aspects of being in the public eye, there are also drawbacks, she admitted.

"People witness a performance and they think they know me," Ms Andrew said. "If you go out and you don't look so good, people think there's something wrong."

Despite performing the same musical over and over, each performance is different, she said.

"(Shows) take a lot of memory work. You have to keep your instrument in shape. The challenge is making it seem like it's the first time you've sang that song or said that word. The shows are different each time because the audiences are different. I could say a particular line one show and everyone will laugh and the next show everyone might remain quiet."

But a good performer doesn't have to "try" to create the feelings of a first time performance because it should just come naturally, Ms Andrew added.

"Singers have to be actors but actors don't have to be singers. If I know I have to hit a high note, I'm thinking about that throughout my performance but I can't let it show that it's on my mind. It's tricky."

Ms Andrew also travels across Ontario as a motivational speaker, speaking on topics

such as beating the odds — taking the responsibility for personal change and growth, overcoming obstacles, facing fears and attaining goals.

She's already begun thinking of ideas for her next album, which will be completed in the next few years, she said.

"I'm very critical of myself when I hear one of my performances," Ms Andrew said. "All I hear are the bad things."

One of the highlights of her career came when she finished high school and took a trip to New York City.

"We saw (Broadway show) *42nd Street*," she recalled. "At the end of the show when everyone was leaving, I jumped up on stage, faced away from the audience and sang 'Never Walk Alone'. When I turned back around, everyone applauded — no one had left."

But there were low points in her career, which lasted about a year.

"I was desperate for employment. I was cleaning houses, waitressing at a local restaurant. In order to audition you have to feel confident and happy. If you don't get the job you go way down, then back up to the top again to get ready for the next audition. This type of work is completely subjective. Sometimes people have a hard time handling that."

Naming Barbra Streisand as one of the entertainers she would "love" to perform with, Ms Andrew has also entertained the idea of performing a duet with Canadian musician Bryan Adams.

"Our voices are so different — it would be like Pavarotti performing with Sting. I also admire Loreena McKennitt, and Maureen Forrester told me I had great checks for singing when I snuck into her dressing room at one of her concerts."

When she's not performing or travelling to speaking engagements, she teaches voice and drama at her studio in Stratford.

"The youngest student I had was 3 and the oldest was 70," Ms Andrew said. "We do all types of music — rock, Beatles, Broadway, classical. I never have any down time."

So what's her advice for aspiring entertainers?

"Go to school, train, train, train and always keep your doors open. Audition for everything you possibly can, go see as many shows as you can and learn from the people around you. Be responsible for your own performance — you're the one that has to do it."

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