



VOCAL SECTION
25-27 September 2026

Convenor: Martha McSoriley - southlandvocalcomp@gmail.com

Adjudicator: Zara Ballara

Invercargill Repertory Society, 167 Esk Street, Invercargill

Entries open: Friday 31 July 2026
Entries close: Friday 7 August 2026

SPECIFIC RULES – VOCAL

Please ensure you also read and understand the Southland Competitions Society General Rules (pg 9-10)

1. **Copyright/Sheet music:** Original sheet music for each song being performed is to be handed into the admin desk at least 20 minutes before the commencement of each class. The music must be stapled together and bear at the head of the front page the competitor's name, class number, and competitor number. Almost all contemporary, musical theatre, sacred solo and traditional/folk songs have widely available sheet music. For some genres sheet music can be difficult to source - for example in the waiata and NZ music classes. Typed lyric/chord sheets will be accepted in these classes **if the original sheet music cannot be sourced**. Sheet music should be provided on a session-by-session basis - you cannot hand in all of your music at the same time. **If sheet music is not handed in before the class, the competitor will not be able to perform.**
2. **Accompaniment/backing tracks:** Competitors must provide their own accompanist or backing track. Instrumental accompaniment can be on piano, guitar or ukulele. **Backing tracks must not have backing vocals, harmonies or full orchestral arrangements.** Pianotrax.com is an excellent source of piano-only backing tracks. The quality of the backing track is the responsibility of the competitor. The competitor must upload their backing tracks to the competition App before the competition weekend.
3. **Time limit:** No longer than four minutes per item, including introductions. If the item goes over four minutes a bell will be rung to indicate to the accompanist to stop playing or for the backing track to be cut off. It is at the adjudicator's discretion if the breach of time limit affects the competitor's overall mark/placing.
4. **Novice Classes:** are open to competitors who have not been awarded first place in any class in a previous vocal competition.
5. **Repetition of Items:**
 - a. Items can only be performed by a competitor once during the competition weekend - the exception being in the scholarship class where you can sing a song you performed in an earlier class.
 - b. Once you have been awarded first place with a song in the Southland Vocal Competition you cannot perform the song again in the Southland Vocal Competition.
6. **Class limit:** competitors can enter no more than eight classes each (excluding scholarship classes i.e. you can enter eight classes + scholarship).

CUPS:

All cups mentioned in the Syllabus remain the property of the Society but are held by the winners and must be returned by the dates specified. Damage to cups is the responsibility of the competitor. Cups are to be returned in a **CLEAN AND UNDAMAGED** condition. Failure to comply may result in a fine of \$10.00 per trophy.

Cups won at our last competition in 2024 are to be returned by **Friday 7 August 2025** to:
Martha McSoriley, 34 Kildare Drive, Invercargill.

Note: - If cups are not returned by the due date, then entries from those holders will not be accepted.

ENTRY FEES (Mandatory):

Administration Fee:	\$15.00 per competitor. Includes Society Membership fee.
Family Door Passes	\$20.00 per family. If entering the following multiple artforms one family door charge applies to: • Ballet/Modern, Vocal and Instrumental

- **App fees are additional and paid on entry.**

VOCAL CLASS ENTRY FEES:

Solos:	\$6.00
Duet:	\$8.00

Scholarships:	Junior/Senior Vocal Scholarships	\$15.00
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All fees are paid on entry via the App and are non-refundable.

VOCAL SYLLABUS:

CLASS	AGE GROUP	Class No.	Notes
Novice Own Selection	9 years under	100	<i>Novice classes are open to competitors who have not been awarded first place in any class in a previous vocal competition.</i>
	10-12 years	101	
	13-18 years	102	
Own Selection	9 years under	103	<i>A song of your own choice from any genre (traditional/folk, waiata, sacred solo, country, contemporary, jazz, blues, RnB, pop, classical).</i>
	10-11 years	104	
	12-13 years	105	
	14-15 years	106	
	16-18 years	107	
Song from Musical Theatre	9 years under	108	<i>A song from a musical - no costume.</i>
	10-11 years	109	
	12-13 years	110	
	14-15 years	111	
	16-18 years	112	
Traditional or Folk Song	9 years under	113	<i>Songs originating among the people of a country or area. Some examples are "Scarborough Fair", "Molly Malone", "Auld Lang Syne", "Go Tell It on the Mountain".</i>
	10-11 years	114	
	12-13 years	115	
	14-15 years	116	
	16-18 years	117	
Sacred Song or Hymn	9 years under	118	<i>Historically sacred solos are hymns or songs written for the church or religious audience, usually Christian songs of praise. Any hymn or song with a religious or spiritual theme will be acceptable.</i>
	10-11 years	119	
	12-13 years	120	
	14-15 years	121	
	16-18 years	122	
Song in Character	9 years under	123	<i>Musical Theatre typically combines singing, dialogue and dance in a full stage musical. The vocalist is expected to dress, sing and act as the character from the musical/song (no dancing necessary). Props are optional and if used must be minimal.</i>
	10-12 years	124	
	13-15 years	125	
	16-18 years	126	
Waiata	9 years under	127	<i>A song sung entirely in te reo Māori. The waiata can be written originally in English, as long as it is translated with accuracy into te reo. It is particularly important in this class to introduce your waiata before your performance and explain the origins and/or meaning of the song.</i>
	10-12 years	128	
	13-18 years	129	
New Zealand Composer	9 years under	130	<i>A song written by a person born in New Zealand/a resident of New Zealand, from any time period, in any genre.</i>
	10-12 years	131	
	13-18 years	132	
Duet	12 years under	133	<i>A two person performance of a song in any genre. If one competitor is under 12 and the other over, you will need to compete in the over 12 class.</i>
	13-18 years	134	

Secondary School Girls' Own Selection	13-18 years	135	<i>Own Selection song for High School aged girls (13+)</i>
Secondary School Boys' Own Selection	13-18 years	136	<i>Own Selection song for High School aged boys (13+)</i>
Unaccompanied Folk Song	13-18 years	137	<i>A folk song sung unaccompanied. You are allowed to have your first note/chord played on the piano/guitar before you begin singing.</i>
Unaccompanied Own Selection	16-18 years	138	<i>A song of your own choice sung unaccompanied by any other instrument. You are allowed to have your first note/chord played on the piano/guitar before you begin singing.</i>
Singer Songwriter	13-18 years	139	<i>The competitor entering the class is the composer - an accompanied or unaccompanied original piece of their own music.</i>
Entertainment Class	Open to all ages	140	<i>A non competitive class; no report is received from the adjudicator. It is an opportunity for those starting out in singing to perform for a supportive audience or for anyone who feels like performing a song non competitively. Soloists, duets and small groups are welcome in this class.</i>
Junior Scholarship Two items: ● Adjudicator's test piece - four options, choose one ● Own Choice of contrasting style to test piece <i>Songs to be performed one after the other - test piece first.</i>	13-15 years	141	Adjudicator's Four Test Pieces (choose <u>one</u>): Option 1: "Somewhere" West Side Story BERNSTEIN any key https://www.musicnotes.com/sheetmusic/west-side-story/somewhere/MN0104260 Option 2: "Live out loud" A Little Princess LIPPA any key https://www.musicnotes.com/sheetmusic/a-little-princess-2005-musical/live-out-loud/MN0106193 Option 3: "Dream Valley" QUILTER https://www.musicnotes.com/sheetmusic/roger-quilter/dream-valley/MN0199277 Option 4: "Danza danza fancuilla gentile" DURANTE any key https://www.musicnotes.com/sheet

			music/francesco-durante/danza-danza-fanciulla-gentile/MN0131563
Senior Scholarship Two items: • Adjudicator's test piece - four options, choose one • Own Choice of contrasting style to test piece <i>Songs to be performed one after the other - test piece first.</i>	16-18 years	142	Adjudicator's Four Test Pieces (choose <u>one</u>): Option 1: "Nice work if you can get it" Crazy for you GERSWHIN any key https://www.musicnotes.com/sheetmusic/tony-bennett/nice-work-if-you-can-get-it/MN0015667 Option 2: "Speak Low" One Touch of Venus any key WEILL https://www.musicnotes.com/sheetmusic/one-touch-of-venus/speak-low/MN0043408 Option 3: "Sure on this shining night" BARBER any key https://www.musicnotes.com/sheetmusic/samuel-barber/sure-on-this-shining-night/MN0114146 Option 4: "Le Violette" SCARLATTI any key https://www.musicnotes.com/sheetmusic/alessandro-scarlatti/le-violette/MN0145770
Scholarship accompanists: This year we have two accompanists available to play for local competitors entered in the scholarship classes. Please make contact with either Michael Forde or Clare Lenihan (details below) who will pass on their details regarding sheet music, rehearsals, and rates/payment. Engaging the services of the competition accompanists is optional - you are entitled to use your own accompanist or backing track for the scholarship classes. You can choose to have the accompanist play for the test piece, your own selection, or both items. If we have large entry numbers for the scholarship classes, Michael and Clare may have to cap the number of students they are able to play for.			
Junior Scholarship: Michael Forde, michaeljforde@hotmail.co.nz			
Senior Scholarship: Clare Lenihan, clare.lenihan@environmentallawyer.co.nz			

Adjudicator's Choice/Special Awards	
Most Promising Unplaced Competitor	Margaret McRae Cup
Most Promising Local Competitor 12 years and under	Rebecca Farr Memorial Cup
Most Promising Local Competitor 13 - 18 years	Zoontjens Memorial Trophy
Most Memorable Performance across the competition	McSoriley Trophy
Spirit of the Competition Award	Vocal Competition Trophy (Donated by the Kerr family)

Trophy awarded by the committee to the competitor who exemplifies good character, gracious conduct, and friendliness toward fellow contestants, the audience and volunteers throughout the competition.	
<i>Hazel Christie - Southland Incentive Award</i> Competitor's effort, attitude, and demonstration of passion for their chosen art-form. Monetary prize for tuition is paid directly to the applicable Singing teacher/school.	Hazel Christie Trophy

All other monetary prizes and trophies TBC. Please note, due to the vocal committee's continued work to streamline and improve the competition, there will be changes made to both trophies and monetary prizes previously awarded in the vocal comp.

Adjudicator Biography:



Kia ora, my name is Zara Ballara (Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Kahungunu and Whakatohea). I am a cross-training voice teacher at the University of Canterbury in Ōtautahi Christchurch. I returned to Aotearoa New Zealand in 2012 with my family, Carlo, Lucca, and Matteo after 16 years of studying and working in London.

Following the completion of my Master's degree in performance singing, I undertook postgraduate study at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where I participated in festivals, operas, and masterclasses. During this time, I performed the soprano solo in Haydn's *The Creation* under the baton of Sir Colin Davis. In 2000, I was awarded the prestigious Maggie Teyte Prize, which included a recital at the Royal Opera House with pianist Simon Lepper. I made my début at Wigmore Hall, London, in 2002.

I have been teaching singing for nearly 30 years and am passionate about working with singers of all ages and levels of experience. In 2016, I completed my FTCL as a personal challenge to prove that I could.

I have recently submitted my thesis and recordings for a Doctorate of Musical Arts (DMA) at the University of Canterbury. My research explores waiata Māori and the journey of becoming an Indigenous voice on the classical stage. Alongside my teaching and research, I am co-convenor of the Christchurch Singing Competitions and Co-Vice President of the New Zealand Association of Teachers of Singing (NEWZATS).

Frequently Asked Questions:

How do I enter the vocal competition?

Follow the Southland Competitions page or the Southland Vocal Competition page on Facebook for updates on when the competition entries open. Entries are accepted via an App which you will need to download onto your phone. Make sure you read the syllabus thoroughly before you do your entry, so you are clear on what classes you would like to enter and what is required. We use the App for entries and to help run the weekend of the competitions - it updates competitors and audience members on start and finish times and also the results of each class. You upload backing tracks to the app and you can also include the name of your songs - they will then appear in the programme.

Do I need a singing teacher to enter?

It is better if you do have a singing teacher, as teachers provide invaluable support and knowledge, but if you don't have one you can still enter. Just be very thorough in reading the rules in the syllabus and the specific rules for each genre and class.

Can I Use Backing Tracks?

While we would recommend the use of an accompanist (especially with young singers), backing tracks are absolutely fine. If you choose to use backing tracks there can be no backing vocals, and the simpler the track the better - we need to be able to hear your voice. In the past competitors have used tracks with full orchestral scores; this makes it very hard to hear a voice over top of multiple instruments, particularly as we are a microphone free competition. If you choose to sing "A Million Dreams" from the Greatest Showman, it would be better to find a piano or 'lighter' version of this song, and not the full track as heard in the film. Pianotrax.com is the best site as all of the backing tracks are piano only. You upload these to the App closer to the time of the competition, and they are preloaded and played for you by our backstage helper on the day. Once you upload the track you don't have to do anything more - but it pays to have a copy on a phone on the day in case of technical difficulties!

What should I sing?

These decisions are best made in conjunction with a singing teacher or someone who has musical knowledge. We encourage teachers and performers to ensure that all song choices are age appropriate - make sure you look at the lyrics and the main idea of a song and decide if it is appropriate for a young singer.

Can I use a microphone?

We are not able to provide microphones as we are not equipped to provide a full sound system. We position a speaker behind the competitors; this helps them hear the track and also ensures their voice is not overwhelmed by the backing music. The vocal committee has carefully considered how to incorporate microphone use into the competition and for now we are just not able to do so. That being said, we do believe it is important for young vocalists to practice projecting their voice - how well you are able to do this forms part of your performance and is something the judge considers as well.

What is the adjudicator looking for?

Every adjudicator is different - and has different areas of expertise and focus, but on the whole adjudicators are looking to see if you are honouring the music (for example, are you singing quietly when it is noted to do so on the music?). They are wanting to see that you are using expression and emotion in your face and body - that you are telling the story of the song and the lyrics. Another consideration is if you are using appropriate pronunciation of the words, particularly if the song is in another language.

Do I need to introduce myself on stage?

Yes, it is good etiquette to introduce your song. Introductions can also help establish for the adjudicator and audience that you are meeting the requirements of the class. When you walk out on stage, state your name and the name/writer of the song you are performing and if necessary, how/why the song qualifies for that class. For example, contemporary songs need to be songs that were released in the last 20 years. So, for a folk song you might say, "Hi, my name is Laura Brown, and I am going to be singing the traditional American folk song This Land is Your Land". When you practice your songs at home you should also practice your introductions so you are well prepared.

When/where do I get my prizes/report cards?

At the end of each session the results/winners will be read out, as well as any relevant trophies. After the session ends the results will be published and made 'live' on the App, and you will be able to collect your music and report cards from the office. The majority of cups and prizes are handed out after the final session of the competition, once all of the aggregate marks have been added up and the overall prizes assigned to the winners.

What is the order of performance?

Singers will perform in random order. The programme is made available on the App in the weeks leading up to the competition. On the day of competition changes might be made to the order if there are any last minute scratchings, however any changes will be announced via the app.

What happens if I go over the time limit?

The time limit for each performance is four minutes. We schedule the competition to allow for a precise amount of time per song. If every performance goes over four minutes this affects our overall running time and has a flow on affect to the start times of each session (and how late we finish). The four minute timeframe is for operational reasons but also to keep the performance concise and enjoyable for the audience. At four minutes a bell will be rung and that is to indicate to the accompanist to stop playing or for the backing track to be stopped. It is possible your overall mark/placing will be affected as a result. Please be careful in your song selection and ensure you choose songs that are under four minutes.

What do I do if I enter the competitions, then have to pull out?

When you arrive at the competitions on performance day, we ask that you 'check in' via the App. You can also mark yourself as 'scratched' in any class, at any time. This lets us know that you will no longer be performing in that class. You can do this in the week leading up to the competitions, and on the day itself. It is important you scratch yourself from any class you are not competing in - the timings on the app will then be adjusted accordingly. It also saves our admin team from chasing up and wasting time looking for you. If you can't work out how to scratch yourself from the app you can email and let us know at southlandvocalcomp@gmail.com

What if I want to do a duet with someone in another age group?

There are two age groups for our duet classes - 12 years and under, and 13 - 18 years. If you are pairing up with someone from a different age group, then you must enter the class of the oldest person (i.e. in the 18 and under class).

How do I ask any further questions?

Message the Convenor Martha via the vocal comp Facebook page, or email southlandvocalcomp@gmail.com



<https://www.southlandcomps.org.nz/>

GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR COMPETITORS

Please read over the general rules and applicable syllabus before entering.

1. **Status:** These competitions are open only to amateurs. An amateur means “one whose income is not derived mainly from the use of his/her talents in the particular section in which he or she is competing”. The Executive reserves the right to determine the status of any competitor. Any competitor who has received tuition (except group workshops) from the judge within the past two years is not eligible to compete. Some genre exemptions may apply.
2. **Age Requirements:** The entry age is determined as at the commencement date of the applicable competition. All competitors must enter their correct age group, except in duo, trio, or group performances, where all competitors are required to compete in the age group of the eldest performer.
3. **Entry:** All entry fees must be paid at the time of entry when completing online registration on the [WE Development App Portal](#). All fees are non-refundable. The Executive reserves the right to refuse any entry. Entries will be deemed invalid until payment has been received and all cups and trophies from previous competitions have been returned.
4. **Videoing/Photographs:** Anyone wishing to digitally record an item must have permission from the parent or guardian of the competitor(s). By entering this competition, competitors and their parent or guardian also consent to any images or recordings being used by the Association for publicity and promotional purposes.
5. **Class Adjustments and Scheduling:** The Executive reserves the right to merge, split, or otherwise adjust classes as required. The order of performance and scheduling will be allocated by the convenor.
6. **Competitor Reporting Requirements:** If the live app is in use, it is the responsibility of competitors and guardians to check for any adjusted times. All competitors must report at least 15 minutes prior to the commencement of their class. Please note that classes may run earlier than scheduled.
7. **Stage and Dressing Rooms:** Only caregivers, family members, or teachers of competitors are permitted in the dressing rooms. Dressing rooms must be always kept clean and tidy.
8. **Adjudicator Communication:** Communication with adjudicators by competitors, teachers, parents, or other interested parties prior to or during the competition is strictly prohibited. The Committee reserves the right to disqualify any competitor who directly or indirectly attempts to communicate with an adjudicator before or during the competition.
9. **Prompting:** No prompting or assistance of any kind shall be given during the performance except by the Adjudicator.
10. **Adjudicator Reports:** Will be available from the venue after the results have been announced, or via the App.
11. **Health and Safety:** All competitors compete at their own risk, and the Executive accepts no

responsibility for any accidents or mishaps.

12. **Protests:** Any competitor wishing to lodge a protest, including a challenge to the amateur status of another competitor, must do so in writing, clearly stating the grounds, and submit it to the Secretary together with a \$5.00 deposit as a sign of good faith. If, following investigation, the Executive deems the protest to be frivolous or unfounded, the deposit may be forfeited. No protest will be considered unless lodged within 24 hours of the announcement of results. No protest may be made against the decision of the adjudicator.
13. **Dress and Music Standards:** Competitors are expected to present a neat and tidy appearance. All costumes, music, and choreography must be age and audience appropriate.
14. **Cups/Trophies:** All cups mentioned in the syllabus are challenge cups and remain the property of the Society. They are held by the winners and must be returned by the specified dates. Trophy winners are responsible for engraving their names on cups. In the case of shared prizes, it is the responsibility of the first recipient to ensure the trophy is passed on in time so that each winner holds it for an equal period. Any damage to cups is the responsibility of the competitor. Cups must be returned in a clean and undamaged condition. Failure to comply may result in a \$25.00 fine per trophy.
15. **Copyright Compliance:** To comply with New Zealand copyright law, competitors must provide the "original" version of their music. For the purposes of this competition, an "original" includes a legally purchased copy, including digital downloads. Competitors are responsible for ensuring their selected music has not been re-released in a way that may reactivate copyright restrictions under current law.

PROGRAMMES:

Each genre will be scheduled and published separately and will be available on the [Southland Competitions Society](#) website and via the [WE Development App Portal](#).

PRIZES:

All prize monies are subject to confirmation and at the discretion of each artform. Ribbons will be issued for placings from First to Commended where applicable.

The adjudicator may withhold, at their discretion, the first or any prize if the standard is not sufficiently high. Where there are three (3) or fewer entries in a class, the awarding of any prize is at the discretion of the convenor/adjudicator.

All prize money will be awarded to winners at the award ceremonies on the day. All competitors must sign for monetary prizes. In the case of shared prize money, recipients are responsible for dividing the amount equally.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:



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SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & AWARD

HAZEL MARGARET CHRISTIE MNZM AWARDS FOR SOUTHLAND COMPETITORS

Southland Competitions Society Inc. kindly acknowledge and remember past Patron Hazel Christie (MNZM), who sadly passed away in 2019. Hazel was an avid supporter of our competitions, being our official pianist from 1963. In 1996 Hazel joined our committee whilst continuing being our accompanist. In 2009, in recognition of her service Hazel became our Patron and continued to support the arts until her health deteriorated.

In remembrance of Hazel, we honour her dedication, love of our competitions (in particular Vocal and Instrumental), ongoing support and recent gift, with the introduction of the **“Hazel Christie - Southland Incentive Award”**. This will be awarded to a Southland competitor in each of the seven artforms, for further tuition. The award will be at the sole discretion of the art form Adjudicator and based on the competitor's effort, attitude, and demonstration of passion for their chosen artform, (as was demonstrated by Hazel) over the duration of the art-form competition.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF HAZEL MARGARET CHRISTIE (MNZM) – A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

(Kindly provided by Hazel's niece)

Hazel Margaret Christie was born in Invercargill 1926, into a musical family and passed away on 23rd March 2019. Hazel from an early age, alongside her sisters Joan, followed later by Janet, learned the piano from Miss Ruth Ritchie. She excelled in Trinity of College London, music exams, passing her LTCL at about 17 years of age. Hazel was a frequent competitor in the Annual Southland Competition Society festivals successfully competing in both Pianoforte and vocal sections. It is fitting that she later would become patron of the Southland Competition Society.

Music was the primary interest in Hazel's life. She began playing the pipe organ at Central Methodist church at age 14 and accompanied both the Church and Choral Society choirs for many years. Hazel was a recognized accompanist for local children's exams and festivals, visiting artists, brass bands, and many local events.

Hazel was awarded Citizen of year award from the Invercargill Host Lions club in 1990 and the **MNZM** medal (NZ order of Merit member) in the 1998 New Year's Honours list for services to the community.